It has been suggested that Hopkins is close in "method" and "intention" to the early Romantics than to any of the Victorian poets. His two major contemporaries, Tennyson and Browning, do not show, according to Hopkins, the quality of "being in earnest with your subject: reality", nor is their poetry characterized by what Arnold calls "high seriousness" in his essay on The Study of Poetry. They seem to be shorn of that distinctive quality of inspiration which is the hallmark of such poems as The Wreck of the Deutschland and The Windhover.

It is quite necessary to analyze the poetic tenets and ideals of Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth in order to form an idea of the individual poetic stature of Hopkins — the more so because he has certain underlying connections with them, although he also makes major departures from their poetic practice.

Hopkins was not a revolutionary like Shelley. His poetry does not show an ardent passion to liberate mankind from the shackles of tyranny or to "quicken a new birth over the universe". All the same, there seems to exist a
certain kind of kinship between Hopkins and Shelley in respect of the "unforced surge of energy" which characterizes Hopkins' *The Deutschland*, *The Windhover* and *Hurrahing in Harvest*. Besides, Hopkins' birds in *The Windhover* and *The Caged Skylark* are sources of Romantic ecstasy and revelation like Shelley's skylark.

For Wordsworth it was necessary that emotion should be "recollected in tranquillity." The sudden cry of ecstasy and anguish that one hears in Hopkins' *The Windhover* or the "terrible" sonnets are alien to Wordsworth's poetry. Earnestness and resignation are obviously the two major qualities of Wordsworth which Hopkins seems to share with him. Hopkins' "terrible" sonnets have the quality of resignation to some extent but it is always coupled with the hope of an unexpected arrival of divine grace:

... let joy size
At God knows when to God knows what;
whose smile
's not wrung, see you; unforeseen times
rather— as skies
Betweenpie mountains — lights a lovely mile.
(My own heart ...)
Hopkins perhaps never agreed to Wordsworth's plain style. There is yet a close agreement between their theories of poetic diction. Wordsworth firmly believed that a poet was like most common people and the language of poetry ought to be the language of the "commonalty spread". It should, however, be chosen and manipulated in accordance with poetic exigencies. Hopkins was likewise of the opinion that "it seems to me that the poetical language of an age should be the current language heightened". Hopkins' use of the word "heightened" seems to suggest Wordsworth's choice and manipulation of language in accordance with poetic exigencies. Both the poets reject the idea that there can ever be a hiatus between the language of poetry and that of common parlance. Hopkins' use of Sprung Rhythm is obviously a prosodic attempt to bring his poetry closer to common parlance. Besides, both the poets look to the common man as far as the subjects of Felix Rendal and The Old Cumberland Beggar are concerned.

A close analogue between Wordsworth and Hopkins perhaps lies in their "abstract thinking". Wordsworth reads like Hopkins particularly in those poems where he writes of landscape as a moral inspiration. His sonnet
Upon Westminster Bridge and the description of the ascent of Snowdon in The Prelude may well be taken as examples of the unconscious incorporation in his poetry of Hopkins' theory of inscape. Hopkins perhaps sensed this quality of Wordsworth's poetry when he wrote to R.W. Dixon:

What I suppose grows on people is that Wordsworth's particular grace, his charisma, as theologists say, has been granted in equal measure to so very few men since time was — to Plato and who else? I mean his spiritual insight into nature ... ¹

Hopkins' most ardent admiration of Wordsworth is for his *Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. Hopkins includes Wordsworth among those few people in human history through whom "human nature saw something, got a shock". He again wrote to Dixon:

... in Wordsworth when he wrote that ode human nature got another of those shocks, and the tremble from it is still spreading. This opinion I do strongly share; I am ever since I knew the ode, in that tremble. ²
The major ideas of the ode are expressed in quite many poems of Hopkins. The line "trailing clouds of glory do we come, from God who is our home" is analogous, to a large extent, with the following lines of Hopkins' *Spring*:

> What is all this juice and all this joy?  
> A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning  
> In Eden garden.— Have, get, before it cloy,  
> Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,  
> Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,  
> Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

Hopkins' poetic relationship with Keats is of a different nature because the former poet was directly influenced by the latter with respect to his text "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty" — a line which was of extraordinary interest for the Victorian aestheticians. Hopkins was closely familiar with Keats' poetry and he responded with an open heart to the sensory richness of his poems. Keats' influence was not only limited to Hopkins; it is perceptible in one way or the other in Tennyson, Browning and Arnold. "Moon-blench'd night" in Arnold and "dew-pearl'd" in
Browning are examples of this. Hopkins and Tennyson assimilate the example of Keats in a fuller manner. Hopkins' juvenile prize poem *A Vision of the Mermaids* is primarily a reproduction of the sensory richness of Keats blended with a certain measure of Hopkins' poetic individuality:

Anon, across their swimming splendour strook,
An intense line of throbbing blood-light shook
A quivering pennon; then, for eyes too keen,
Ebb'd back beneath its snowy lids, unseen.
Now all things rosy turn'd; the west had grown
To an orb'd rose, which, by hot pantings blown
Apart, betwixt ten thousand petall'd lips
By interchange gasp'd splendour and eclipse...

It has been pointed out that "Hopkins' recording of sense-impressions, in all his work, is in fact rarer and more precise than that of Keats; at many points he goes far, perhaps too far, beyond the earlier poet, in imagery of disconcerting extremity, where the reader cannot be expected to master the poet's intention immediately".

The Hopkins style is, to a large extent, determined
by his appreciation of the medieval or dialect poems characterized by alliteration and assonance, the chief of which is Langland's *Piers Plowman*. Hopkins' style also bears the stamp of Keats and other Victorians influenced by Keats. Hopkins shows a mixed feeling towards Tennyson's work when he writes:

.... his gift of utterance is really golden, but go further home and you will come to thoughts commonplace and wanting in nobility.³

Indulgence in langour and melancholy is one of the major qualities of Victorian poetry. These qualities provided the Victorians with a certain kind of relief from their spiritual and worldly troubles. Restraining grief and the feeling of self-pity coupled with extraordinary sensitivities are the common qualities of the poetry of this epoch. But Hopkins' case was quite different in this respect. His "terrible" sonnets are an uninhibited expression of his spiritual anguish:

With witness I speak this. But where I say Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away

(I wake and feel...)

Tennyson's verse-lines are characterized by smoothness,
technical expertise and a control of vowels:

... and may there by no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound or foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

(Crossing the Bar)

Hopkins admired the qualities of Tennyson's poetry
shown, for example, by the above passage. The Victorian
poets were generally interested in the phonic aspect of
their verse — in alliteration, assonance and internal
echo — and Hopkins shared this interest with them:

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-
drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady
air, and striding

High there, how he rung upon the rein of a
wimpling wing

In his ecstasy!...

(The Windhover)

Browning also liked to use the same devices in a way
which was obviously not so ornate as that of Tennyson. The
following is an example from Abt Voglar:

And another would mount and march, like the
excellent minion he was,

Aye, another and yet another, one crowd but
with many a crest ...

Alliteration and assonance also seem to be the innate
qualities of the poetry of Swinburne:

For winter’s ruins and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins...

(Chorus from Atlanta)

More important than this is the quality of swinging rhythm
in his verse. All these qualities find recurrent expression
in the poetry of the time and Hopkins is decidedly their most able exponent. His poetic experiments were more original and interesting than those of his contemporaries.

The freedom and variety of metre shown by the Romantic poets can be attributed to their predilections for "things medieval". Hopkins was very much alive to the metrical liveliness of medieval poetry and he was much influenced in this respect by Langland's *Piers Plowman*. This tendency is perceptible, to a certain extent, in most poets of the epoch, although their experiments in this regard were not as consistent as Hopkins'.

A study of Hopkins' Preface, which is printed with his poems, is necessary to form firsthand familiarity with his theory of Sprung Rhythm. In his Preface, Hopkins tries to counter in the formal language of prosody the charge which most of his readers would not like to endorse — that his verse is "slovenly" and unbridled. Hopkins' defence of his verse makes an interesting reading to us especially because we are accustomed to reading much of modern verse which is more unbridled than that of Hopkins and yet rated as good poetry. Most of the modern English poets were conspicuously
Influenced by Walt Whitman in whom Hopkins was also interested, although he perhaps did not read his *Leaves of Grass*. Having read extracts of Whitman's poems in reviews, Hopkins regarded him as a technical innovator. Had Hopkins read more of Whitman's verse, he would easily have known that it is characterized by an absence of metrical system, the results of which are frequently excellent. They, however, bear no relation whatsoever to Hopkins' poetic practice.

Hopkins' freedom of rhythm does not raise any queries in the mind of the readers of modern poetry. It is of utmost importance to study the working of Hopkins' theory of rhythm in his poetic technique. It was on account of his keen interest in music that he wrote a whole poem on Henry Purcell. Hopkins' final draft of *Harry Ploughman* shows markings similar to those of written music. They are intended as essential guides for the readers of his poetry. The term "counterpoint", which Hopkins uses more than once in his Preface, also pertains to the language of music. A careful study of Hopkins' verse clarifies the fact that he primarily aimed at writing music in words. That is perhaps why he laid considerable emphasis on
declaming his verse: "my verse is less to be read than
heard"... "you must not slovenly read it with the eyes but
with the ears, as if the paper were declaiming it to you".4
One can, therefore, say with a reasonable amount of
certainty that Hopkins firmly believed that poetry was
another thing from prose.

Hopkins' main innovation in his theory of Sprung
Rhythm consists in counting stresses without counting the
syllables. He decides on a number of stresses per line
and sticks to it, but he accompanies them with as many or
as few unstressed syllables, and in whatever position, as
he likes. The more light syllables accompany each stress,
the quicker and lighter the line. The following is an
example from stanza 25 of The Wreck of the Deutschland:

The keener to come at the comfort for feeling
the combating keen.

The fewer light syllables go with each stress, the slower
and heavier the line, as in the following example from
stanza 11 of The Deutschland:

The sour scythe cringe, and the blear share come.
Hopkins expounds his theory of Sprung Rhythm in terms of feet by allowing one stress per foot in a line.

Some other prosodic devices Hopkins mentions in his Preface are "counterpoint", lines "rove over", "hangers" or "outrides", and pauses. Hopkins uses counterpoint by "putting the stress where, to judge by the rest of the measure, the slack should be and the slack where the stress". This is very common in the first foot of a line in Shakespeare, Milton and Pope but is rarely to be noticed thereafter with the exception of Hopkins. The following line from God's Grandeur is an example:

```
  x  x  x  /  x  x  \\
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod.
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In the above line, the metre seems to be iambic pentameter although the first four syllables form two trochees. The rhythm Hopkins commingles with the basic metre is heard at the same time as, and against, that metre like two different tunes in a musical counterpoint.

A line, according to Hopkins, should be regarded as
rove over if its scansion goes on into the next line from which it may borrow some slack syllables. Hopkins further explains in his Preface:

....the scanning runs on without break from the beginning, say, of a stanza to the end and all the stanza is one long strain, though written in lines asunder.  

This clarifies the fact that Hopkins always kept the listener — not the reader — in mind. It also helps us understand his startling enjambments like "King-Don" in The Windhover as well as some of his rhymes like "leeward" which should be pronounced "lyoo-ud" and "drew her Dead" in stanza 14 of The Deutschland.

In Hopkins' verse, outrides are extra light syllables, not to be normally counted. Hopkins writes in his Preface that "the strong syllable in an outriding foot has always a great stress and after the outrider follows a short pause".

Hopkins rightly mentions the fact that Sprung Rhythm was common enough in medieval English verse,
especially in Langland's *Piers Plowman* but poets discontinued its use about Shakespeare's time. He, however, excepts the choruses of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. He writes further about Sprung Rhythm in his letters to Bridges dated 3 April 1877 and 21 August 1877, and to Dixon dated 5 October 1878 and 27 February 1979. One's real understanding of Sprung Rhythm is, however, possible only by reading Hopkins' poetry.

Hopkins' stress pattern sometimes operates in a controversial manner. His poem *That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire* ..., according to common knowledge, is written in six-stress lines. Jim Hunter, however, regards it as an "impossible gabble" because he counts eighteen stresses in the first two lines alone. He, therefore, readily agrees with Yvor Winters who believes that Hopkins' stress pattern is "perverse", "wilful", "a deformation of the language", "indefensible", "grotesque", "ludicrous", "irresponsible", "ridiculous", "unpronounceable" and "preposterous". Although Winters advises us to read Hopkins' poems "in the normal rhythm of the language", he regards it as "a melancholy compromise". Entangling oneself with Hopkins' stress patterns kills much of the enjoyment of declaiming his
verse. Winters' advice, therefore, shows a good deal of validity. Hopkins' stress pattern carries importance only insofar as it sometimes becomes necessary to know what his reading of a particular line was so that the reader may understand its correct meaning in a given situation. Most editors of Hopkins' poetry seem to share this view by doing away with his markings in the text of his poems.

The use of pause and of continuity that we find in Hopkins' verse is of a distinctive character. On the one hand, one finds repeated use of enjambment in Hopkins' verse; on the other, he speaks in comparatively short utterances which are separated from one another.

Hopkins regarded a stanza as a continuous unit and this stanzaic continuity is almost a uniform feature of his verse. But this continuity is sometimes broken not only by the use of enjambment, but also by the placement of the caesura and other pauses. Caesura, which is marked in this chapter, serves as a kind of longer pause which one finds in longer lines of his verse. This is sometimes so light as to go unnoticed. It usually occurs in the
middle of a line, though its placement is at times also changed. In Hopkins, it can be found anywhere in a verse line producing surprising results. The following are some examples:

My own heart let me more have pity on; II let ...

(My own heart...)

Crushed. II Why do men then now not reck his rod?

(God's Grandeur)

Hopkins also uses secondary pauses, as in the following lines of *The Windhover*:

No wonder of it; II sheer plod makes plough down sillion

Shine, II and blue-bleak embers, I ah my dear,

Fall, I gall themselves, II and gash gold-vermillion.

The caesura or pause is at times of unusual violence and is found after a full stop, colon and semicolon or at a turning point in a poem. In such cases, it can also be called a hiatus. The following are two examples:
Surf, snow, river and earth

Gnashed: W but thou art above, thou
Orion of light; ...

(The Deutschland, St. 21)

As I am mine, their sweating selves; II
but worse.

(I wake and feel ...)

The real strength of Hopkins' verse lies in its variety in addition to its rhythmic freedom. While examining the various stanzas of The Deutschland, one is bound to notice that enjambment and end-stopping do not occur in a uniform pattern in any two successive stanzas.

Punctuation and enjambment are also intended by Hopkins to engender emotional excitement in the reader. This quality of his verse is quite perceptible in lines 9-10 of The Windhover:

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle!

The following sestet of To seem the stranger ... is
full of an excessive use of heavy pauses which are highly conducive to the projection of the feeling of isolation and artistic sterility in Hopkins:

I am in Ireland now; I now I am at a third remove. Not but in all removes I can
kind love both give and get. Only what word
wisest my heart breeds dark heaven's baffling ban
bars I or hell's spell thwarts. This to hoard
unheard,
heard unheed, leaves me a lonely began.

Hopkins, after writing The Deutschland, mostly used the sonnet form as the medium of his poetic expression from 1877 till his death in 1889. According to Jim Hunter's enumeration, Hopkins wrote thirty-four of his forty-eight mature and finished poems in the sonnet form. The amount of thought and association that he compressed in his sonnets is really formidable. It is only to be expected of the poet of The Deutschland. The following is the rhyme scheme of Hopkins' sonnets which are modelled on the Italian or Petrarchan form:

abbaabba-cdcdc
Hopkins' sonnets can be regarded as the culmination of a rich poetic tradition which came to England from Italy about the Elizabethan Renaissance. During this time, the sonnet was generally regarded as a form of love poetry and almost every major poet of the age wrote a whole series of sonnets eulogizing an imagined or real beloved. Shakespeare gave a new orientation to the sonnet form: it became a medium of the expression of his profound reflections on human mortality, time and beauty *vis-a-vis* the experience of love. The sonnets of Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare exhibit an implicit religious tendency which was subsequently developed by Donne in his *Holy Sonnets*. The original motif of love came to an end in these sonnets. In the later sonnets of Milton, the religious theme was replaced by one which is more personal and autobiographical. The romantic sonnets of Wordsworth and Keats exhibit the influences of Shakespeare and Milton. Wordsworth's sonnets show an additional element of natural description. All these diverse qualities of the sonnet tradition were fused in the sonnets of Hopkins which are a blend of metaphysical, religious, personal and descriptive elements. Romantic love is the only element which remains unrepresented in Hopkins for obvious reasons.
Like The Deutschland, Hopkins' sonnets are characterized by the twisting of vocabulary and grammar in order to recapture the inscape of the objects of perception. In this particular respect, he seems to have outstripped even Milton. With his emphasis on metrical stress and alliteration, Hopkins establishes his link through the sonnet tradition with the native genius of the English language, as expressed in Piers Plowman, Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight and Pearl. Hopkins, by adopting the sonnet form, also establishes an additional link with the tradition of meditative poetry. It is in this way that he forms a close association with the Elizabethan Jesuit poet, Robert Southwell. In accordance with the traditional sonnet form, there mostly lies a dividing line in Hopkins' sonnets between the octet, describing an experience, and the sestet, drawing a religious conclusion from that experience.

One of the distinctions of Hopkins as a poet lies in exploring the "utmost possibilities" of the sonnet form by making certain innovations. He was the first to write the "curtal" (or curtailed) sonnet, the two of which are Pied Beauty and Peace. In these sonnets, the usual division of octet and sestet is replaced by that of sestet and a
quatrain followed by a short line. Instead of the usual fourteen lines, there are only eleven in a Curtal Sonnet. The metrical scheme is abc abc - dbc dc. Hopkins wrote several sonnets, including the curtal sonnet Peace, in which the usual five-stressed line is replaced throughout by a six-stressed alexandrine. He also made the sonnet form longer in a variety of ways. Hopkins uses eight stresses per line in Spelt from Sibyl’s Leaves (which he called the “longest sonnet ever made”), burden lines in Harry Ploughman and codas linked with fourteen five-stressed lines in Tom’s Garland or with fourteen alexandrines in That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire .... Regarding the above two caudated sonnets, Jim Hunter writes:

Tom’s Garland and the Heraclitean sonnet are regular Petrarchan sonnets with the addition of six lines (two being short) in the former and ten lines (four being short) in the latter, at the end. The added lines have their own rhyme-scheme, with the exception of the first, which is short and rhymes with the line of the sonnet proper. These additions Hopkins called codas. The word is familiar from classical music, meaning a tail-piece; but there is only
one tail to an animal and only one coda to a musical movement, nor does a musical coda contain the first resolution of earlier problems — the real meat, in fact, of the argument, as happens in the coda of the Heraclitean sonnet. The technical invention in these two poems seems more or less irrelevant to their subjects. It may be simply because the poet found the traditional fourteen lines gave him too little space.6

The subject-matter of Hopkins' sonnets expands between two opposite poles of light and darkness. There are the "bright" sonnets, the majority of which was written at St. Beuno's College in North Wales during 1877. They exhibit for the most part, Hopkins' sacramental attitude to Nature. The frequency of the composition of these sonnets decreased during his visits to Oxford in 1879, to Liverpool in 1880-1, and to Stonyhurst in 1882. In a letter to Bridges, dated 26 July 1883, Hopkins writes about declining health which perhaps affected his poetic inspiration:

I shall be very sorry to leave Stonyhurst; but go or stay, there is no likelihood of my
ever doing anything to last. And I do not know how it is, I have no disease, but I am always tired, though work is not heavy, and the impulse to do anything fails me or has in it no continuance.  

Mention should also be made of the "dark" and "terrible" sonnets composed during his stay as Professor at the University of Dublin. Most of them were written in 1885. In these sonnets, Hopkins expresses an acute consciousness of the absence of God from his life along with feelings of isolation and artistic sterility. Yet they are characterized by the sanguine expectancy of comfort which gradually dawns on him through faith and patience. The celebration of this comfort is also found in his philosophical poem, *That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire* ... :

_Across my foundering deck shone_

_A beacon, an eternal beam. _Flesh fade and mortal trash_

_Fall to the residuary worm; world's wildfire, leave but ash;_

_In a flash, at a trumpet crash,_

_I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am, and_
This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, I patch,
matchwood, immortal diamond,
Is immortal diamond.

One who undertakes a study of Hopkins' poetry is scared in the beginning by the strangeness of his vocabulary and syntax. The feeling is, however, coupled with the impression that the kind of language Hopkins uses in his poems has two contrasting aspects. It is, on the one hand, an affirmation of his theory of poetic language based on its Anglo-Saxon connections:

It seems to me that the poetical language of an age shd. be the current language heightened, to any degree heightened and unlike itself, but not (I mean normally; passing freaks and graces are another thing) an obsolete one. This is Shakespeare's and Milton's practice...

His language, on the other hand, is a negation of the foregoing quotation inasmuch as his coinages are streaked with eccentricity and he seems to be committing a deliberate kind of violence to the rules of English grammar. The
violence is sometimes of such a severe nature that it seems to be outstepping the limits of poetic licence:

... let joy size

At God knows when to God knows what; whose smile
's not wrung, see you; unforeseen times rather -
as skies

Betweenpie mountains - lights a lovely mile.

(My own heart ...)

A close perusal of Hopkins' early diaries clearly indicates the fact that he approached words with the keen interest of a philologist. His numerous notes on words in his diaries not only seem to be serving a philological purpose, they are also intended to be used for repeated reference during the composition of his poems. He made the following oft-quoted entry in 1864:

In Slavonic bugti = terreo. cf. Bug-bear, boggle (North-country name for ghost), bogy, bug. Liddell and Scott connect φιγγειν , with Sanskrit bhug, bhugamì (flecto); Gothic biuga, (biege); Slavonic bega (fugio), bugti (terreo); Latin fugio. They might have added our budge which is almost iden-
tical in sound with the Sanskrit bhug, i.e. bhuj. And perhaps goblin for hoglin, but of this I have no certainty. 9

While reading Hopkins' poetry with comparative experience, the reader is unavoidably led to believe that Hopkins' distinctive use of poetic diction is not only the upshot of his philological interest, it also depends, to a large extent, on his innate knack for the varied feelings and associations behind words and his exceptionally good ear for the colloquial idiom. The following are a few examples of this:

Why, tears! is it? tears ...

(The Deutschland)

He leans to it, Harry bends, look.

(Harry Ploughman)

Felix Rendal the ferrier, O is he dead then? my duty all ended.

(Felix Rendal)

The line "Forward-like, but however, and like favourable heaven heard these" (The Bugler's First Communion) reveals a certain kind of "affectation" in Hopkins but it,
at the same time, shows a close awareness of the spoken idiom. Besides being an example of Hopkins' extraordinary audacity of vocabulary and syntax, the line comprises words from the "genuine living stock of language". One encounters in Hopkins words like "dear", "lovely", "sweet" which seem to have spent their appropriateness for being used in poetry. They are, nevertheless, used by him because they are compatible with his principle of the current language.

Hopkins' assimilation of the colloquial idiom has also a different aspect. This idiom enables him to make direct poetic statements through short and crisp lines without subordinate clauses or lengthy phrases unlike most poets. While *The Windhover* stands out as an exception to this principle, Hopkins' "terrible" sonnets are perhaps good examples of the terse directness of his poetic style:

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.  
What hours, O what black hours we have spent  
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways  
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.

(I wake and feel ...)

I neither agree with the view that Hopkins' stylistic
terseness "limits the balance of thought, or its subtlety" nor with the view that "Hopkins does not offer us the carefully qualified or related sentence-structures, giving an impression of mature consideration..." The absence of "carefully qualified or related sentence-structures" is perhaps necessitated by considerations of sound patterns which help in deepening Hopkins' meaning. Besides, his mind is at times so much loaded with thoughts that he tries to inscape them in a unified whole. The following lines of *Carrion Comfort* are an example of this:

Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;

Not untwist - slack they may be - these last strands of man

In me or, most weary, cry *I can no more. I can*;

Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be.

The real distinction of Hopkins, then, lies in saying things directly and tersely in current spoken idiom. There is no denying the fact that he is a difficult poet for two reasons: his use of obsolete or dialect words and his twisted syntax.

Hopkins' poetry is full of Anglo-Saxon words and
herein perhaps lies the secret of the force and persuasiveness of his language. Most of the words that he uses are monosyllabic with a vowel surrounded by strong consonants. An analysis of the following lines from *Patience, hard thing!* reveals certain important facts about Hopkins' language:

We hear our hearts grate on themselves: it kills

To bruise them dearer.

Each word in the above lines is characteristically English. The harsh verbs *grate*, *kill*, *bruise* denote precision, concreteness and immediacy of feeling in the poem. This obviously cannot be communicated so effectively by using Latinate diction which is characterized by coolness and remoteness of feeling.

One of the most striking characteristics of Hopkins' poetry lies in the fact that it is a dual structure of sound and meaning. The interplay of vowels and consonants contributes, in a very large measure, to the furtherance and crystallization of his meaning. Hopkins wrote to Bridges: "my verse is less to be read than heard" ... "you must not
slovenly read it with the eyes but with the ears, as if
the paper were declaiming it to you". Alliteration is
also one of the devices that Hopkins uses to construct his
sound patterns. He was in this respect very much influenced
by the medieval alliterative poems *Piers Plowman, Sir
Gawayne and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*. The underlying
connection can well be understood with reference to the
obvious emphasis on the use of consonants in the following
specimens:

The snawe snittered ful snart, that snayped
the wilde...

*(Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight)*

And the sea flint-flake, black-backed in
the regular blow

*(The Deutschland)*

The complex rhythmic and alliterative patterns that
one finds so often in Hopkins are a regular feature of
Welsh poetry where they form a prosodic system called the
cynghanedd. Phrases like "Warm-laid grave of a womb-life
grey" or "the down-hugged ground-hugged grey" are clear
attempts on Hopkins' part to assimilate in his poetry the
Welsh device. The use of this device does not, however,
become a regular feature of his poetry. He uses it as and when he pleases. The prosodic influence of the Welsh 
cynganedd, however, deeply exerted itself on Hopkins' 
mind. It has rightly been suggested that the assimilation 
of this device in Hopkins' poetry plays a major part in the 
"building together of a line or a phrase, or the continuity 
of a thought":

   For Christ plays in ten thousand places ...
       (As kingfishers catch fire ...)
   Why? That my chaff might fly, my grain lie,
       sheer and clear.
       (Carrion Comfort)

Hopkins' poetry is interspersed with obsolete, semi-
obsolete and dialect words like "throng" (Ribblesdale),
"voel" (The Deutschland), "disremembering" (Spelt from
Sibyl's Leaves), "sillion" (The Windhover). The use of 
these words, we are told, is not compatible with his theory 
of poetic diction: "the poetical language of an age shd. be
the current language heightened ... not ... an obsolete 
one". The recurrent use of these words increases the
difficulty of understanding Hopkins, although the difficulty
is made easy by explanatory notes in almost every good
dition of his poems. One can surmise that Hopkins had
to use these words under duress because they are in a way
consistent with the alliterative and assonantal patterns
of his verse or with the subject-matter of a particular
stanza. The most appropriate poem where we find a comming­
ing of the phonic and ideational association and word-play
in Hopkins is The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo:

The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too
too apt to, ah! to fleet...

The following is also an example of this from The Deutsch­
land:

The goal was a shoal...

It is equally necessary to examine in Hopkins' poetry
the use of the Latinate diction which is determined by
certain poetic exigencies. He shows a predilection for
longer Latin words on account of the "fluidity of their
rhythm":

He was to cure the extremity where he had
cast her;

(The Deutschland)
And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder Majestic —
(Hurrahing in Harvest)

The idea of nobility and majesty signified by Latinate diction also helps Hopkins in the furtherance of the meaning of his images from the domains of the court, kingdom and chivalry in The Windhover: "minion", "dauphin", "achieue", "mastery", "beauty", "valour", "billion", "dangerous", "chevalier", "vermilion". The "cool" and "intellectualized" strain of the Latinate diction has been exploited with great aplomb by Hopkins in the following line from Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves:

... equal, attuneable, vaulty, voluminous,... stupendous

Hopkins seems to be doing a different kind of thing in his philosophical and religious poem That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection. The basic meaning of the poem is conveyed to the reader through a juxtaposition of the ordinary Anglo-Saxon words and a Latinized phrase signifying grandeur and majesty of stature:
I am all at once what Christ is, since he was
what I am, and

This jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood, immortal diamond,

Is immortal diamond.

The initial unpalatability of Hopkins' poetry subsides considerably when one fully understands the diverse ways in which he exploits the resources of the English language as well as the diverse purposes to which he puts them for an effective communication of his poetic sensibility.

Hopkins' Highgate poems are characterized by a striking sensitivity to the physical world and a marked capacity to distinguish sensation in an abnormal manner. He was initially influenced in this respect by John Keats whose range of mind Hopkins could not develop but whom he undoubtedly outstripped with respect to the presentation of accurate and sharply defined sense-impressions. Hopkins' poetry, written at Oxford, is ascetic in character but shows a conspicuous awareness of sensation. Extreme sensitivity, therefore, seems to be at the root of Hopkins' asceticism. The most satisfying example of this aspect of his early
Poetry is The Habit of Perfection:

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
Upon the stir and keep of pride,
What relish shall the censers send
Along the sanctuary side!

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
That want the yield of plushy sward,
But you shall walk the golden street
And you unhouse and house the Lord.

Poets have always lamented the fact that beauty, although fascinating in character, is finally transient. Hopkins also shares this view in That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire: "all is an unfathomable dark Drowned" — and that is how beauty finally loses its selfhood because it is "mortal" in character. It was, therefore, imperative for Hopkins to find out a way to deal with beauty in accordance with his Jesuit temperament.

Walter Pater, who was Hopkins' tutor, exercised a seminal influence on his undergraduate mind and it was because of him that he mentally prepared himself to explore
beauty as an aesthetic concept.

Keats was basically responsible for an aesthetic debate which was initiated by his exclamation in a letter to Fanny Brawne: "O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts!" He also made another significant statement in his Ode on a Grecian Urn:

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty — that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Pater reacted to Keats' views on beauty by expressing the conviction that man ought to seize every moment of life because death is a moral certainty. He was of the opinion that "Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end". Pater also believed that beauty was the only truth in human life. It was, however, not possible for Hopkins to subscribe to Pater's agnostic philosophy of life.

The Conclusion to Pater's The Renaissance became a manifesto of the Aesthetic Movement but its basic philosophy is characterized by certain limitations. Pater believes that human life is "this short day of frost and sun" and we
ought to be "desperate" in experiencing all that there is to experience. Life is an "interval" before death and "our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time". The use of the word "chance" seems to be related to the actualization of life in an optimum manner. Pater's views strike a chord of similarity with some of the Rubaiyyat of the Persian poet Omar Khayyam. The kind of philosophy that Pater propounds is of an ambiguous nature and does not seem tenable because it has no clear absolutes. His arguments seem to be moving around the periphery of the problem of mortality. It is difficult to accept them as a coherent philosophical doctrine.

Hopkins did not encounter that problem at all, although he was fully aware of the transience of both beauty and human life. He had a clear sense of absolutes, because of the conviction that both beauty and human life can be eternalized through the glorification of God and the event of the Resurrection which, according to him, keeps on recurring in different forms in human life. It will be in the fitness of things to refer in this connection to his Platonic dialogue On the Origin of Beauty. In the
dialogue, Hopkins puts forward the theory that "beauty is a relation and the apprehension of it a comparison". The theory is obviously characterized by certain absolutes. One character in the dialogue makes the following comment:

I am either convinced or I really do not know what to say to the contrary, but I am sure there is in the higher forms of beauty — at least I seem to feel — something mystical, something I do not know how to call it.\(^\text{11}\)

Hopkins sympathizes with the theory propounded in the foregoing passage, especially because it is in the fitness of things for him, as a Jesuit poet, to associate mortal beauty with "something mystical, something I do not know how to call it" — in sum, with God who is its real source.

Hopkins' convictions on the subject of beauty were further crystallized during his Jesuit training when he embarked upon reading the medieval theologian Duns Scotus. He writes:

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

Hopkins use of the word "inscape" has attracted much
critical comment. The word has been used repeatedly in
his Journals in so diverse contexts that it is difficult to
offer any single definition for it.

Hopkins seems to deify beauty when he says in The
Wreck of the Deutschland: God is "under the world's
splendour and wonder". The 1877 sonnets are interspersed
with different expressions of this belief which are in
keeping with the Jesuit restrictions on his priestly
vocation. We can particularly cite in this connection
Hopkins' sonnet God's Grandeur. "Mortal beauty" serves in
Hopkins' poetry as a ladder whose highest rung reaches
divine beauty. The point is further corroborated by three
of his poems: Morning, Midday and Evening Sacrifice, The
Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo and To what serves Mortal
Beauty?
In Hopkins' epistemology, everything created by God has its own distinctive character giving it a brand of uniqueness and explaining God's purpose in creating it. In it lies the "self" or "thisness" of the objects of creation which Scotus calls "haecceitas". The haecceitas is, according to Hopkins, further characterized by "sakes", as in The Deutschland:

Five! the finding and sake
And cipher of suffering Christ.

or Henry Purcell:

Let him oh! with his air of angels
then lift me, lay me! only I'll

Have an eye to the sakes of him,
quaint moonmarks, to his pelted plumage under

Wings:

Hopkins also believes in The Handsome Heart that each created thing not only has its own haecceitas but also "its own fine function, wild and self-instressed".

"Instressed", as it occurs in stanza 5 of The
Deutschland, seems to mean "guided by an instinct or pressure from within". The word, in the sense in which Hopkins uses it, signifies a kind of natural urge in all living things towards their proper function. The instress of a devout human heart is, for example, towards God and the practice of rectitude. The octet of Hopkins' As king-fishers catch fire is the clearest expression of this doctrine derived from Scotus:

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

When a thing "speaks" of its function, it reveals God by projecting its self. The beauty of an object of perception, which is thus revealed, consists of its separate qualities which finally undergo a fusion as they do in The Windhover:

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume here

Buckle AND the fire that breaks from thee then...
The separate qualities of the falcon thus reveal Christ inasmuch as the aerial action of the falcon reminds the poet of the godly action of Christ. Both the falcon and Christ had to surmount similar obstacles to make their missions a success. The following extract from Pater's The School of Giorgione has a good deal of applicability to Hopkins' poetry:

All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music. For while in all other works of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, and the understanding can always make this distinction, yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it. ... In its ideal, consummate moments, the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression.

There is no doubt in the fact that Hopkins' poetry "constantly aspires towards the condition of music". The separate elements of experience undergo a fusion in the "ideal, consummate moments" of inscape and finally reveal God or Christ.
Hopkins coined the word "inscape" on the model of "landscape" and "seascape". The prefix "in-" suggests a probing into the essence of a thing or the impact of the inner stress it exercises on the observer. It seems to mean a thing in its "fine function" which projects its form or pattern on the beholder. That is perhaps why Hopkins writes: "Design or pattern or what I am in the habit of calling inscape is what I above all aim at in poetry". Another statement throws further light on the word: "I gathered the separate aspects of the thing together and achieved a sense of the whole, of its individuality, its function, the hand of God behind it". It is noteworthy here that Hopkins uses the word in diverse contexts in his prose writings.

Hopkins' theories of beauty and inscape are obviously interrelated and they had already taken a mature form when he wrote The Deutschland after an "elected silence" of seven years. Stanza 5 of the poem is a good example of the working in Hopkins' mind of these theories:

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


5. Ibid., p. 116.

6. Ibid., p. 124.


9. Ibid., p. 125.

10. Ibid., p. 129.


