Coleridge and Hopkins

Michael Raiger

IN 1856, WHEN GERARD MANLEY WAS TWELVE, the Hopkins family moved to Highgate, where "[e]ach morning [he] walked past Keats's Hampstead House, over the Heath, past S. T. Coleridge's tomb, to school, and back each evening."[1] His boyhood friend at Highgate was Ernest Hartley Coleridge; the two later maintained a correspondence which centered on religious and poetic matters. Hopkins's friendship with Coleridge's grandson continued after his conversion to Catholicism; letters from the late 1860's show Hopkins attempting to schedule a time for Ernest Hartley to visit Birmingham in order to hear Newman preach at the Oratory. It seems likely that on his visit to Ernest Hartley at his home in Hanwell in June 1868, Hopkins looked at Coleridge's notebooks, which were then in the grandson's possession. Hopkins's own private journals bear a remarkable resemblance to Coleridge's notebooks; both contain descriptions and sketches of nature, fragments of quotations and comments on reading, lines of poetry, theological and philosophical speculation, and personal reflections; Hopkins even uses the same kinds of odd punctuation and diacritical marks employed by Coleridge, a point which Humphry House has noted.[2] While Hopkins seems to share with John Henry Newman an expressed admiration for the poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley, it is Coleridge who most influences the particular form which Hopkins's Romantic poetics takes. I take my inspiration from J. Robert Barth, who claims that Hopkins's sacramental poetics finds its roots in the Romantic conception of nature expressed by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and especially Barth's claim that Hopkins gives poetic expression to Coleridge's famous definition of symbol as "the translucence of the Eternal through and in the temporal."[3] And as another Jesuit scholar, Hans Urs von Balthasar, claims, Hopkins's spiritual and cultural heritage is English, both in his religious life, which returns to England's Catholic roots, and in his aesthetic sensibility, which is informed by English Romantic poetry.[4] While the spectre of the Sage of Highgate may have haunted his walks as a boy, Coleridge, for Hopkins, is a living and vital influence on his poetic theory and practice.

My strategy here is to locate the traces of Coleridge's influence on Hopkins's undergraduate essays written for Walter Pater at Oxford. These essays are not products of a juvenile mind, but establish the foundation for Hopkins's later aesthetic thought. Part of my purpose is to place the development of Hopkins's most important poetic terms—"instress" and "inscape"—at an earlier time than most Hopkins scholars have supposed. Rather than seeing Hopkins's deep concern for the particular as originating in

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1 Norman White, *Hopkins in Ireland* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2002), 2.

2 *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins,* ed. Humphrey House (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), xxx.

3 LS 210-25.

4 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, 7 vols., translated by Andrew Louth, John Saward, Martin Simon, and Rowan Williams (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 3: 353-4.

the aesthetics of Ruskin and the metaphysics of Duns Scotus, the genealogy of Hopkins's aesthetics of the individual is located in Coleridge's ideas of Imagination and symbol.[5]

In his essay from 1865 titled "Poetic Diction," Hopkins argues that the fundamental structure of poetry "reduces itself to parallelism," which can be located in the two image-making faculties of Imagination and Fancy. "[W]hile the faculties of Fancy and Imagination might range widely over both kinds, Fancy" is associated with "metaphor, simile, parable," in which "the effect is sought in likeness of things," while Imagination is concerned with a "transitional class" of unity "where it is sought in unlikeness."[6] This distinction closely follows Coleridge's in the *Biographia*;[7] this idea of unity in unlikeness is a key one which Hopkins will develop into a radical understanding of the particularity of things which grounds his poetic theory and practice. Hopkins's idea of parallelism as the key constituent of poetry, in which "words and sense" cohere in an organic unity where "parallelism in expression tends to beget or pass into parallelism in thought,"[8] is consistent with Coleridge's account of poetic diction in the *Biographia*, in his rejection of Wordsworth's "rustic" theory of common language: "The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination…."[9]

In his essay "On the Origin of Beauty: A Platonic Dialogue," also from 1865, Hopkins develops his idea of parallelism, drawing a distinction between two basic forms of unity in difference: i) "chromatic," in which differentiation is continuous, shaded, without sharp lines, e.g., as in simile, metaphor, tone; and ii) "diatonic," which is characterized by parallelism, antithesis, contrast.[10] "Diatonic" parallelism is most clearly found in the Psalms, upon which English poetry is modelled.[11] In English lyrical poetry, he states, parallelism "lives," especially in Shelley.[12] In the structure of parallelism, antithesis founds the unity, whereby "one central idea… makes the essence of lyrical poetry."[13] One

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[5] Walter J. Ong in *Hopkins, The Self, and God* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, (1986) refers to Hopkins's preoccupation with individuality as deriving from his "Victorian particularist temperament" (11, 17). More precisely Patricia Ball, "Appendix 'An Uncollected Letter from Hopkins to Nature, 30 October 1884'," in *Science of Aspects: The Changing Role of Fact in the Work of Coleridge, Ruskin, and Hopkins* (London: Athlone Press, 1971), while arguing that "All intensity which the Romantics brought to the study of personal identity, Hopkins inherits, and it goes into his concept of inscape" (60), nevertheless claims that Hopkins inherits Ruskin's "ability to keep us in the presence of the thing itself while he demonstrates its properties and exposes the laws of its being" (123). Philip A. Ballinger, in *The Poem as Sacrament: The Theological Aesthetics of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Louvain: Peeters Press, 2000), follows Christopher Devlin's account of Duns Scotus's idea of individuation as the ontological ground for Hopkins's aesthetic ideas (113-5). According to Ballinger, "Hopkins 'glimpsed in Scotus the possibility of making poetry a theology'" (149).

[6] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by Humphry House (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 85.

[7] BL I 304-5.

[8] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 85.

[9] BL II 54.

[10] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 104-5.

[11] Ibid., 106.

[12] Ibid., 109.

[13] Ibid., 112.

is reminded of a similar comment made by Coleridge in his letter explaining the origin of his *Hymn before Sun-rise* on Scafell: For the Greeks, he says, "All natural Objects were *dead*—mere hollow Statues—but there was a Godkin or Goddessling included in each."[14] This is the work of mere Fancy, in contrast with the Hebrew poets who possessed "*Imagination*, or the *modifying*, and *co-adunating* Faculty."[15] Coleridge continues: "This the Hebrew Poets appear to me to have possessed beyond all others—& next to them the English. In the Hebrew Poets each thing has a Life of it's own, & yet they are all one Life. In God they move & live, & *have* their Being—not had, as the cold system of Newtonian Theology represents / but *have*."[16] Hopkins' remarkable similarity to Coleridge in these early writings lies not merely in the idea of parallelism defining Hebrew and English poetry, but in the turn to faculties of image-making to explore poetic form, which grounds aesthetic discussion in the subjective acts which create them. This turn to subjectivity in order to raise to critical reflection the mind in act is central to Hopkins's Coleridgean cast of thought. Furthermore, Coleridge's idea that the vitality of Hebrew poetry springs from the sense of the unity of being in God, is central to Hopkins's mature poetic practice.

While one might expect a more focused attempt to establish hierarchical patterns in a Platonic account of the formal unity of objects, Hopkins develops an idea of unity founded upon the relationship between subject and object; in this, the aesthetic intuition of objects, as with Coleridge, becomes the model for all symbolic acts of knowing. Hopkins's focus on the self-reflective act of knowing which intuits, as it participates in, the act of being in created things, is the basic expression of selfhood which binds subject and object. In what follows I will trace the similarity of Hopkins's aesthetic theory to Coleridge's stress on the vital and active effort involved in aesthetic intuition. What emerges is an account of poetic form which is grounded, for both Hopkins and Coleridge, in an account of the unity of beings which resists philosophical resolution in an appeal to philosophical essences or universals, but rather, is resolved in the participation, as part to whole, of the particular and individual in the life of Christ. Hopkins follows Coleridge in articulating a Romantic theory and practice of poetry grounded in a Christocentric understanding of the unity of all things, discovered in the stress that binds subject and object in a world of beings. In this, the second Person of the Trinity makes intelligible the particular forms of all beings, with the incarnate Logos replacing the Forms of Plato in a neo-Platonic Christian account of the unity of being.[17]

In another Oxford essay, "On the Signs of Health and Decay in the Arts," Hopkins introduces the idea of hierarchy to explain the aesthetic cognition of

[14] CL II 865.

[15] Ibid., II 866.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Damian Walford Davies in his recent book *Cartographies of Culture: New Geographies of Welsh Writing in English* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), establishes a theory of Hopkins's "geopiety" in his "profound attachment to a real-imagined Holy Land" (49), grounded in an understanding of Christ's incarnation as local (44-5), whereby through "sacramental transposition and emplacement…. Wales becomes a sacred space" in a "Christic act of cartographic transubstantiation…with Hopkins as its priestly mapper" (68).

beauty, arguing that while art involves the likeness to reality, mere imitation is not sufficient: art is reached by an "intuition" of "proportion," which is attained by "the power of genius."[18] Hopkins goes on to state that the advancement or progress in the arts involves moving beyond mere representation to the "subordination" of parts in a hierarchy of values, which is "caused by the desire for Perfection: that is, when any art is established and strong, the desire to see all harmonious, to blend all the elements, to treat all the subject matter with the same amount of realism and to raise it to the same pitch of idealism… . The sense of perfection is strong with us all; once attained all which wants it becomes painful."[19] Great art will "fulfill, we feel, the laws of their being."[20] One can see here the trace of Coleridge's idea in the *Biographia* that the Imagination "at all events struggles to idealize and to unify,"[21] and the description in *The Statesman's Manual* of the Imagination which "gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the *conductors*."[22]

The full development of Hopkins's poetic theory and poetic practice involves a focus upon the trajectory of art towards this ideal perfection in unity, in which the individual being fulfills its end, what Coleridge calls *natura naturans*. This is not the attainment of an abstract formal unity, but a real, ideal perfection inhering in the living activity of the concrete being itself. The artist most clearly articulates this, seeing the vital form, what Hopkins will call "inscape," of the actual being, through what he will calls the "instress" of intuition, the effort to understand the world of beings. The attainment of what Hopkins calls here "the same pitch of idealism" in the real form of beings, and expressed in the perfection of the art form, is both active and receptive, as the artistic expression of harmony is both from within and without, an idea articulated in one of Hopkins's mature nature sonnets, "As kingfishers catch fire": "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."[23] This idea is expressed in a more homely fashion in a journal entry from Spring of 1870; after a lengthy description of the evaporation of clouds in which Hopkins attempts to catch their particular inscape, Hopkins remarks: "What you look hard at seems to look hard at you, hence the true and the false instress of nature…. Unless you refresh the mind from time to time you cannot always remember to believe how deep the inscape in things is."[24]

For Hopkins, the artist sees in the form of a particular being the expression of that being's self. Coleridge's 1805 Malta notebook entry captures the stress of effort, the desire for unity with another being, and the pursuit of an ideal

[18] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 75.
[19] Ibid., 78.
[20] Ibid.
[21] BL I 304.
[22] LS 29.
[23] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by W. H. Gardner and N. H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 90.
[24] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 204-5.

perfection, that characterizes Hopkins's sense of aesthetic unity:

> All minds must think by some *symbols*—the strongest minds possess the most vivid Symbols in the Imagination—yet this ingenerates a *want, ποθου, desiderium*, for vividness of Symbol: which something that is *without*, that has the property of *Outness* (a word which Berkeley preferred to "Externality") can alone fully gratify/even that indeed not fully—for the utmost is only an approximation to that absolute *Union*, which the soul sensible of its own imperfection itself, of its Halfness, yearns after….[25]

This idea is articulated by Hopkins in the context of an essay on morality (again, written at Oxford), where Hopkins turns to what he calls "subjective," as opposed to "objective," morality: "All thought is of course in a sense an effort an [sic] unity. This may be pursued analytically as in science or synthetically as in art or morality."[26] Both art and morality are characterized by a desire for unity; in art, unity is found in "difference, variety, contrast: it is rhyme we like, not echo, and not unison but harmony. But in morality the highest consistency is the highest excellence."[27] Hopkins goes on to point out that the unity of the self is known by self-reflection, which requires the self to pitch itself towards the ideal: "But why do we desire unity? The first answer would be that the ideal, the one, is our only means of recognizing successfully our being to ourselves, it unifies us, while vice destroys the sense of being by dissipating thought."[28] Art then fulfills, in ideal form, the desire for harmony in the self by unity with another—artistic representation gives the self an image of itself, taken from another, and presented in unified, ideal form.

Hopkins's early reflections on art struggle to articulate this self-reflexive awareness in which the self knows itself in another, an idea given poetic expression in his poem 'Henry Purcell': "It is the forged feature finds me; it is the rehearsal / Of own, of abrupt self there so thrusts on, so throngs the ear." The phrase "forged feature" refers to the music of Purcell, who has, Hopkins claims in an introductory note, "*uttered in notes the very make and species of man as created both in him and in all men generally*."[29] The power of Purcell's music to lift the self, to raise it to a pitch of activity which is its act of perfection, is elaborated in a simile taken from nature, though fitted to human shape and action by Hopkins's lexical and syntactic torsions: "so some great stormfowl, whenever he has walked his while / The thunder-purple seabeach, plumèd purple-of-thunder, / If a wuthering of his palmy snow-pinions scatter a colossal smile / Off him, but meaning motion fans fresh our wits with wonder."[30]

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[25] CN III 3325; emphasis in original.
[26] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 83.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 80.
[30] Ibid.

In all of Hopkins's Oxford essays, the attempt to uncover what Coleridge referred to as "organic" unity drives Hopkins to the subjective origins of those formal elements. This strategy informs the development of Hopkins's aesthetic thought, which can be shown by tracing the emergence of key words in Hopkins's aesthetic lexicon at crucial junctures of this development. Hopkins's self-reflexive approach to beauty in which the beholding subject strives to "instress" the "inscapes" of being in its own sphere of interiority, and in so doing, achieves a unity with the world, is an attempt to articulate one of Coleridge's key claims in regard to the willed effort involved in the act of Imagination, that the act of self-reflexive willing is the ground for attaining the reconciliation of humans and the world: "Only in the self-consciousness of a spirit is there the required identity of object and of representation; for herein consists the essence of a spirit, that it is self-representative."[31] In Hopkins's essay on the origin of morality, the word "stress" is first used to express the effort of the mind to attain unity; in seeing the unity of aesthetic forms, the subject attains a form of unity in itself. This is the basis for the development of Hopkins's ideas of "instress" and "inscape," which W. H. Gardner has succinctly defined in this way: "*[I]nstress* is not only the unifying force *in* the object; it connotes also the impulse *from* the 'inscape' which acts on the senses and, through them, actualizes the inscape in the mind of the beholder (or rather 'perceiver', for inscape may be perceived through all the senses at once)'."[32] Hopkins's idea of "instress" which realizes the "inscape" of things find its roots in Coleridge's explanation of the dynamic power of the Imagination, which in realizing the formal unity of objects, brings the faculties of the soul into harmony with one another while drawing the self into a higher spiritual pitch, thereby unifying the object with the subject in bringing the self into harmony with the world. For Coleridge, this act finds its highest expression

> [i]n the Scriptures [where] they [symbols] are the living *educts* of the Imagination; of that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the Reason in Images of Sense, and organizing (as it were) the flux of the Senses by the permanence of and self-circling energies of the Reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the *conductors*.[33]

Hopkins's act of aesthetic cognition, whereby the "inscape" of an object—its particular intelligible form—is "instressed" in a subjective act of cognition, finds its model in the correlative relationship between the subjective form of Imagination and the objective form of the symbol.

In February of 1868, after having been received into the Catholic Church,

[31] BL I 278.
[32] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 64-5.
[33] LS 29; emphasis in original.

Hopkins was staying with Newman at the Birmingham Oratory where he was in the process of discerning his priestly vocation. While there, he wrote a gloss on Parmenides's fragments, which Hopkins interprets not as a series of metaphysical speculations, but as a form of contemplation on being, in which the object is folded into subjective intuition, a strategy which predates Heidegger's famous attempt to deconstruct Western philosophy through a reflection on the Pre-Socratics, grounding an ontology in the phenomenological method.[34] In this commentary, Hopkins first uses the words "instress" and "inscape" as technical terms, over three years before their appearance in the famous "bluebell passage" of May 9, 1871.[35] In the reflection on Parmenides's fragments, the terms are used to express an intuition of being, whereas in later journal entries, they reappear in the context of an aesthetic intuition of nature. An account of the way these terms are used as a gloss on the role the subject plays in apprehending being will shed light on their later deployment as terms which articulate aesthetic intuition. Hopkins initially attends to Parmenides's *sense* of being: "His feeling for instress, for the flush and foredrawn, and for inscape / is most striking and from this one can understand Plato's reverence for him as the great father of Realism."[36] Parmenides's attempt to translate the most fundamental metaphysical term "ἐστι," Hopkins claims, "may be expressed by *things are* or *there is truth*. Grammatically it = *it is* or *there is*. But indeed I have often felt when I have been in this mood and felt the instress or how fast the inscape holds a thing that nothing is so pregnant and straightforward to the truth as simple *yes* and *is*" (127). The grammar of assent to being grounds all other apprehensions. The act of assent to being acknowledges that being itself constitutes the relationship between subject and object, for without this, "[t]here would be no bridge, no stem of stress between us and things to bear us out and carry the mind over."[37] We see here a deepening of Hopkins's earlier account of aesthetic intuition, the deep bond of being which unites subject and object.

The attention to the proposition that "*things are*" or "*it is*," which yields the fruitful reflection on the stress which binds subjects to things, is a key principle articulated in Coleridge's "Essay on Method," a text which Newman consulted while writing the *Grammar of Assent*,[38] while Hopkins was at the Birmingham Oratory:

> Hast thou ever raised thy mind to the contemplation of EXISTENCE, in

[34] Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, translated by Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).

[35] See John Wain, "An Idiom of Desperation," in *Hopkins: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Geoffrey H. Hartman (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 57-70, for an account of the development of Hopkins's idea of inscape as a response to a need for explaining the experience of the unity with objects, articulated in his *Journal* entries from around 1866, which culminate in the "bluebell" passage. While he acknowledges that Coleridge's definition of symbol finds its parallel in Hopkins's idea of inscape (62-3), Wain fails to develop the textual connections by which this relationship can be established.

[36] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 127.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Stephen Prickett, *Romanticism and Religion: The Tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Victorian Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 170.

> and by itself, as the mere act of existing? Hast thou ever said to thyself thoughtfully, IT IS? heedless in that moment, whether it were a man before thee, or a flower, or a grain of sand? Without reference, in short, to this or that particular mode or form of existence? If thou hast indeed attained to this, thou wilt have felt the presence of a mystery, which must have fixed thy spirit in awe and wonder. The very words, There is nothing! or, There was a time, when there was nothing! are self-contradictory. There is that within us which repels the proposition with as full and instantaneous light, as if it bore evidence against the fact in the right of its own eternity.
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> Not TO BE, then, is impossible: TO BE, incomprehensible.[39]

Hopkins's gloss on Parmenides repeats Coleridge's analysis of the grammar of being in which propositions are considered as symbolic expressions that direct the mind's attention to the bare existence of the thing as such. This mode of intuition cuts across the subject/object divide, including the entire scope of natural beings, and in doing so, reveals the inseparable link between the two. As Frederick Burwick has pointed out in commenting on this passage: "The bridge between 'the senses and the soul', the 'it is' and the 'I am', does not connect two discrete spaces. The two are coincident. The bridge is merely a metaphysical bridge that enables thought to pass from one to the other."[40] Coleridge's claim that being precedes non-being in the order of assent to that which exists, is a central idea that informs Hopkins' insight into the instress that binds all beings in a unified whole. The idea is expressed in Chapter 12, of the *Biographia* where Coleridge claims that the coincidence of subject and object in acts of knowledge is "reducible to the one fundamental proposition, THAT THERE EXIST THINGS WITHOUT US,"[41] an assertion which is the ground of all claims to knowledge. He goes on to point out that though "this is Idealism, let it be remembered that it is only so far idealism, as it is at the same time, and on that very account, the truest and most binding realism?"[42] In this, Coleridge rejects the noumenal/phenomenal split of Kant:

> The realism common to all mankind is far elder and lies infinitely deeper than this hypothetical explanation of the origin of our perceptions…. It is the table itself, which the man of common sense believes himself to see, not the phantom of a table, from which he may argumentatively deduce the reality of a table, which he does not see…. It is to the true and original realism, that I would direct the attention. This believes and requires neither more nor less, than that the object which it beholds or presents to itself, is the real and very object. In this sense, however much we may strive against it, we are all collectively born idealists, and

[39] F I 514.

[40] Frederick Burwick, "Coleridge and De Quincey on Miracles," in *The Fountain Light: Studies in Romanticism and Religion in Honor of John Mahoney*, ed. J. Robert Barth (New York: Fordham UP, 2002): 208.

[41] BL I 258-59.

[42] Ibid., I 260-1.

therefore and only therefore are we at the same time realists.[43]

A receptivity to being makes concrete things stand out in their unique particularity; Hopkins gives this poetic expression in his poem "Inversnaid," where he asks: "What would the world be, once bereft / Of wet and wildness? Let them be left, / O let them be left, wildness and wet; / Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet."[44]

The receptivity to being which lets beings be is an *act* pregnant with both ecological and theological significance. In his journals from the 1870s, Hopkins frequently refers to the cognition of beauty as a form of reception which is nevertheless active, using the phrase "I caught" to mark this act. A set of snowdrifts in winter elicits this rapturous response: "All the world is full of inscape and chance left free to act falls into an order as well as purpose: looking out of my window I caught it in random clods and broken heaps of snow made by the cast of a broom."[45] The presence of the human subject in an act of seeing the being of a thing constitutes the relationship between subject and object, as he remarks in his notes to Parmenides: "There would be no bridge, no stem of stress between us and things to bear us out and carry the mind over: without stress we might not and could not say/Blood is red/ but only/ This blood is red/ or/ The last blood I saw was red/ nor even that, for in later language not only universals would not be true but the copula would break down even in particular judgments."[46]

Hopkins's stress on the fundamental intuition of being grounds all other acts of knowing, including the comprehensions of universal classes of things, which informs the methodologies of both philosophy and the sciences. The act of the "stress" of being is the key link between subject and object, guaranteeing not only the individual cognition of things as real beings, but also their relations to other things, discovered in the likeness of form. "Stress" here is both an act of cognition, and an act of being. While nature is there, present to human subjectivity, nevertheless it makes itself manifest only in the instressing of the inscape of the particular thing by a particular subject, an idea expressed in Hopkins's poem "Ribblesdale": "And what is Earth's eye, tongue, or heart else, where / Else, but in dear and dogged man?—Ah, the heir / To his own selfbent so bound, so tied to his turn, / To thriftless reave both our rich round world bare / And none reck of world after, this bids wear / Earth brows of such care, care and dear concern."[47] Coleridge expresses the same idea in *Dejection: An Ode*: "O Lady! we receive but what we give, / And in our life alone does Nature live: Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!.... And from the soul itself must there be sent / A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth, / Of all sweet sounds the life and element!"[48]

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[43] Ibid., I 261-63.
[44] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 89.
[45] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 230.
[46] Ibid., 127.
[47] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 91.
[48] PW 293 47-58.

Hopkins argues in his notes to Parmenides that the intuition of the being of things, "the mind's grasp—νοεἰν, the foredrawing act" lies in its contact with being as a particular form; this is particular for each human subject, unique and unrepeatable: "The way men judge in particular is determined for each by his own inscape."[49] Only in the unity of being can the particular become unified with other particulars. The paradox is this: that each subject is itself an instressing of Being, is itself a bridge of knowing a world which exists. In this way, human subjects constitute, in a way that cannot be grasped, the unity of particular beings,

> [a]ccording to the matching of his members / with the thousand turns they take / so for each man is the thought the man will think, for the *sense* that lives in this frame man wears is only the seeing of one self-same thing—one thing for all men and for every man: [there are ten thousand men to think and ten thousand things for them to think of but they are but names given and taken, eye and lip service to the truth, husks and scapes of it: the truth itself, the burl,] the fullness is the thought'."[50]

For Hopkins, Parmenides's reflections on being yield a mystery: that in the radical particularity of each intuition of being, the fullness, the plenitude of being, is revealed, for Being, in being present everywhere, is not an undiluted presence in all things: Being "cannot be greater or less in one place than in another."[51] Thus, there is no need to hurry after being: it is there, present before the subject alive to it. It is in the fullness of the human subjects who dwell in the world that the world comes to be.

Hopkins's radical reflections on being, in which the cognitive form of a thing, its inscape, is carried into the interiority of the subject through an instressing of the act of being, informs Hopkins's poetic practice. Hopkins tells Robert Bridges in 1879 that the character of "oddness" defines his poetry: "But as air, melody, is what strikes me most of all in music and design in painting, so design, pattern, or what I am in the habit of calling *inscape* is what I above all aim at in poetry. Now it is the virtue of design, pattern, or inscape to be distinctive, and it is the vice of distinctiveness to become queer. This vice I cannot have escaped."[52] The particular uniqueness of Hopkins's poetry is informed by his radical account of particularity, founded on the radical individuality of beings intuited in the unrepeatable uniqueness of human subjects. In arguing against the classificatory systems of the French *philosophes* in *The Statesman's Manual*, Coleridge demands, in a vein similar to Hopkins's grounding of the cognition of universal classes on the unity of being:

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[49] *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 129.
[50] Ibid., 130.
[51] Ibid., 129.
[52] *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, edited by Claude Colleer Abbott (London: Oxfird University Press, 1935), 66.

> Canst thou persuade the living or the inanimate to stand separate even as thou has separated them?—And do not far rather all things spread out before thee in glad confusion and heedless intermixture, even as a lightsome chaos on which the Spirit of God is moving?— Do not all press and swell under one attraction, and live together in promiscuous harmony, each joyous in its own kind, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Myriad others that in the system of thy understanding are distant as the Poles?"[53]

Coleridge challenges empiricism to acknowledge its irrational basis:

> If to mint and to remember names delight thee, still arrange and classify and pore and pull to pieces, and peep into Death to look for Life, as monkies put their hands behind a looking-glass! Yet consider, in the first Sabbath which thou imposes on the busy discursion of thought, that all this is at *best* little more than a technical memory: that like can only be known by like: that as Truth is the correlative of Being, so is the act of Being the great organ of Truth: that in natural no less than in moral science, quantum sumus, scimus.[54]

While empiricism clearly falls into nominalism, Coleridge and Hopkins find themselves in perhaps an even more radical position, asserting a unity of beings that resides in acts of human subjectivity which are wholly unique.
For Coleridge, self-reflexive knowledge reveals the co-unity of humanity and nature, but it is a unity that can be grounded only in God:

> Only by the intuition and immediate spiritual consciousness of the idea of God, as the One and Absolute, at once the Ground and Cause, who alone containeth in himself the ground of his own nature, and therein of *all* natures, do we arrive at the third, which alone is a real *objective*, necessity. It is necessarily groundless and indemonstrable; because it is itself the ground of all possible demonstration. The Reason hath faith in itself, in its own revelations.[55]

Coleridge's Logosophia attempts to explain this through a Christocentric philosophy; Hopkins elaborates the idea in a Christocentric poetics. In the sestet of "As kingfishers catch fire," which we have seen expresses the way particular beings "speak and spell" the self, Hopkins transforms phrases from his account of the radical particularity of instressing being articulated in his notes to Parmenides into poetic statement, with Christ ensuring the unity of being:

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[53] LS 77.
[54] Ibid., 77-78.
[55] Ibid., 32; emphasis in original.

I say more: 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. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.[56]

For Hopkins, it is not a stretch to say that human selves *are* the manner in which God acts in particular things. Hopkins's poem "Pied Beauty" similarly refers the beauty of "dappled things" to God, stating the mystery that all things in their transient and temporal individuality, and even their minute shades of differentiation from other beings, point to God's Eternity. This Psalm-like poem begins with a colloquy of praise—"GLORY be to God for dappled things"—and follows with a detailed list of tiny aspects of individual things which give them their unique particularity. The miniscule characteristics which mark one thing as *this* particular being is a source of wonder; God is to be praised for "All things counter, original, spare, strange; / Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)." In Hopkins's Platonic aesthetic, the beings of nature find their origin and pattern in God's Beauty, and so, the praise of its beauty is to be referred to that changeless source: "He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change: / Praise him.[57]

Hopkins's idea of "inscape," I want to suggest, is cognate with Coleridge's theory of symbol in ways that go beyond the strategy of linking an analysis of aesthetic objects to subjective powers; Hopkins follows Coleridge in grounding the power of symbol in the life of Christ. The word "consubstantial" reveals its link to the Second Person of the Trinity, ensuring the participation of the created world in the divine. Symbol "always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representative."[58] The radicalness of Coleridge's formulation lies in the assertion that a thing—individual, particular, wholly itself—can also represent the whole; Hopkins, we have seen, locates this unity in the radical particularity of the instress of subjectivity which makes manifest the inscape of things. A sentence that comes a page before Coleridge's famous definition of symbol marks the central role of Christ in grounding symbolic representation; it reads: "The truths and the symbols that represent them move in conjunction and form the living chariot that bears up (for *us*) the throne of the Divine Humanity."[59] Christ is the symbol which unites all beings, drawing everything, by intuition of the unity of beings, into the life of the divine; the idea is given expression in one of Hopkins's most famous sonnets, "The Windhover: To Christ our Lord." The dedication to

[56] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 90.
[57] Ibid., 69-70.
[58] LS 30.
[59] LS 29.

Christ is part of the title, revealing the way the windhover, a mere thing, becomes, seamlessly in the poem, the symbol of Christ who is addressed throughout. Try to catch the instressing of the inscape by which particular beings become alter Christos, other Christs, in the struggle of the odd syntax and diction of the octave, as the inscape is sought, caught in ecstasis, and instressed in the poet, all of which is released in the realized energy of the sestet:

> I caught his morning morning's minion, king-
> dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
> Of the rolling underneath him steady in, and striding
> High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
> In his ecstasy! Then off, off forth on swing,
> As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding
> Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
> Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!
>
> Brute beauty and valor and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
> Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
> Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!
>
> No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillion
> Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
> Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.[60]

[60] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 69. According to Catherine Phillips, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Visual World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), "if the sestet of 'The Windhover' were taken as referring to an Augustinian model of vision, then 'buckle' could be seen as the fastening of the visual ray, and therefore the movement of the soul that it images, on the element of God perceivable in the kestrel. The resultant 'fire' would be the 'glimpse' of God allowed the faithful and cleansed heart" (259).