



Prosodic Experimentation in Hopkins' Poetry

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Abstract: The paper aims to explore prosodic experimentation and musical sensibility designed for limning the dynamism observed in the Victorian world by the poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poetry, especially, in "The Windhover", "God's Grandeur", "Pied Beauty", "Inversnaid" and "Spring". Through a close reading of the prosody, rhythm, rhyme, metrics, alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia in Hopkins' poems from the theoretical paradigms of the prosody, and sprung rhythm, propounded by Hopkins himself, and some other theorists, the study is an attempt to prove how Gerard Manley Hopkins exploits the rhythmic novelty to give each poem a distinctive design to capture his apprehension of dynamism, the intense thrust of energy in nature. The finding is that it was the Victorian culture and milieu evoked by the Second Industrial Revolution, technological advance, and Hopkins' conviction that God manifested in the material world that influenced him to use innovative rhythmic patterns in his poetry so that we could perceive how the universe is characterized by a distinctive design that constitutes individual identity. It is expected that researchers intending to observe the prosodic techniques in poetry in general and Hopkins in particular can take the paper as a reference.

Keywords: Dynamism, Majesty, Music, Rhyme, Sprung Rhythm.

About the Author



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1. Introduction

Prosodic skills employed by the poets have the magnetic pool as they enhance music in poetry and appeal to the readers' emotions. Gerard Manley Hopkins has been a theological, philosophical advocate and a key figure in the academic discourse for centuries for his experimental verse and theological subject-matter. Gerard Manley Hopkins, "an outstanding searcher in the science of poetic language" (Jacobson, 1964, p. 27), composed each poem with his own distinct rhythmical patterns, unconventional syntax, ellipsis and repetition, coining of compounding words that make his poems seem modern (Abrams & Greenblatt, 1999). Hopkins is widely hailed as a pioneering figure of modern literature, meticulously unconnected with his fellow Victorian poets (Mariani, 1970; Sobolov, 2004). The career of Gerard Manley Hopkins began in 1918, twenty-nine years after his death, when his friend, Robert Bridges helped to publish Hopkins' poems. Hopkins' sense of his own singularity gives us an indication of the organizing structure of his poetry. Inspired from the theosophy of the medieval philosopher, Duns Scotus, Hopkins hypothesized that everything in the universe was characterized by 'inscape'. Inscap is the special natural design that characterizes individual identity (Urban, 2018). The human being, the most individually distinctive being in the universe, recognizes the inscape of other beings in an act that Hopkins calls 'instress'. Elaborating Hopkins' philosophy



on inscape, [Abrams and Greenblatt \(1999\)](#) state, "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" (p. 1650). Instress is "the apprehension of an object in an intense thrust of energy toward it that enables one to realize its specific distinctiveness" ([Urban, 2018, p. 49](#)). The research paper studies how Hopkins makes brilliant use of 'inscape' and 'instress' through the prosodic experimentation in his poetry.

In his endeavor to give each poem a unique design and musical note, Hopkins seeks to capture his initial inspiration when he is caught by the subject. "Pied Beauty" takes a beautifully detailed look at the world in all its variety, and sees in this variation and abundance the glory of God's creation ([Ross, 1999](#)). "The Windhover" is the most startlingly experimental of this gorgeous tranche of sonnets ([Kaczyński, 2018](#)). Hopkins deals with themes of natural beauty, wildness, harmony, and aesthetics in the poem, "Inversnaid" (Baldwin, n. d.). In "God's Grandeur", Hopkins conveys his reverence for the magnificence of God and nature, his distress about the way that humanity has lost to note this in their materialistic drive during the Second Industrial Revolution ([White, 1966 & Miller \(1944\)](#) observes the poem, "Spring" as a powerful evocation of the beauty of spring. Many of the characteristics of Hopkins's style, his experimentation with musical beat, his disruption of the conventional syntax, his use of ellipse and repetition, can be understood as ways of representing the stress and action of the brain in moments of inspiration ([Mariani, 1970](#)). Hopkins uses a new rhythm, 'sprung rhythm' to give each poem a distinctive design, inscape ([Stephenson, 1981](#)). In the new metric system he created, which he called 'sprung rhythm', lines have a given number of stresses, but the number and placement of unaccented syllable is highly variable.

Many researchers have probed into Hopkins' poetic prosody, diction and syntax to prove how he exploits these tenets to celebrate the majesty of the God. But they haven't highlighted Hopkins' potential in using the prosodic variation for a revolutionary motive. The paper, therefore, attempts to explore how the unconventional rhythm in Hopkins's poetry serves as a tool for limning the dynamism of nature, and how it makes his poetry modern. Hopkins displays a new mannerism that paradoxically combines elaborate aestheticism with a more complex representation of consciousness, a characteristic of the Victorian revolutionary lifestyle.

2. Methods

The study develops a theoretical modality based on prosody and "sprung rhythm". The primary data of this research have been Gerard Manley Hopkins' poems, "The Windhover", "God's Grandeur", "Pied Beauty", "Inversnaid" and "Spring" and secondary resources such as literature from journals, and websites commentaries. The systematic sampling method and a qualitative approach are used to justify the working hypothesis.

Prosody refers to the pattern of rhythm and sound in poetry. The word, 'prosody' comes from ancient Greek signifying a "song sung with instrumental music" ([Curzan & Adams, 2009, p. 134](#)). Later on, the word has been used for the 'science of versification' and the 'laws of meter', governing the modulation of the human. Rhythm is a dimension of musical structure, but it also plays an important role in poetic meter ([Attridge, 1990](#)). Rhythm, in general, suggests a repeated occurrence of some prosodic processes in an interval of speech that is relatively organized ([Crystal, 2003](#)). The term 'foot' has been used to refer to the unit of rhythm in poetry and in music ([Tartakovsky, 2015](#)).

Sprung rhythm is an irregular prosodic system, a meter propounded by Gerard Manley Hopkins. It is based on the determinate number of accented syllables in a line permitting an indeterminate number of unaccented syllables ([Hurley, 2005](#)). In a sprung rhythm, a foot may be composed of one to four syllables, while in English meters it is composed of two or three syllables. Hopkins argued that sprung rhythm was the natural speech of the common speech and written in prose, as well as of music ([Abbott, 1935a](#)). For Hopkins 'sprung rhythm' was a more natural speech of a poem and music, with the emphasis on a wider range of stresses in a foot as opposed to the usual pattern of two or three accented syllables.

The prosodic concepts discussed above are the useful tools used to analyze the prosodic experimentation in Hopkins' poetry and his motif behind using this.



3. Results and Discussion

From his influential mentors, Mathew Arnold, and the Victorian aesthete, Walter Pater, G. M. Hopkins learned to replicate his apprehension of sensuous beauty in his poetry (MacKenzie, 1990). A researcher gets astounded at marking the exertion of the prosodic oddity, rhythmic originality, and musical cadence by Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poems, "The Windhover", "God's Grandeur", "Pied Beauty", "Inversnaid" and "Spring", all composed in 1877, but published posthumously in 1918 in *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Through the rhythmic novelty, Hopkins intended to reflect the dynamism in nature, Victorian cult of going away from the tradition and celebrate this. Poetry, for Hopkins, is instress, apprehension of an object in its intense texture; and it paves the way to grasp the inscape of the subject in its own distinctive design inscape (Hurley, 2005). Hopkins takes poetry as an enactment for celebration.

"Pied Beauty", a curial sonnet, Hopkins' own innovation of the form, showcases Hopkins' trademark prosodic inventiveness, 'sprung rhythm' which is intended to sound like natural speech. The poem, one of his best known, celebrates the singularity and variety of nature, challenging the Platonic ideal of perfect beauty (Reid, 2020). The challenge is confirmed by the development of Hopkins' own form. Instead of an octave and sestet, "Pied Beauty" has a sestet followed by a quintet. To appreciate the dynamic variety of nature, the sheer variety of the labor of mankind, and the majesty of the divinity in the abstract categories that people use to understand their experience of the world, Hopkins uses an irregular form of meter, 'sprung rhythm' in which in each foot, the basic unit of meter, consists of an initial stressed syllable followed by any number of unaccented syllables in total. Each foot usually contains one to four syllables, compared to two, or sometimes three, in a more structured meter such as iambic pentameter.

The poem is the manifestation of the prosodic experimentation. Hopkins uses a few stresses in a row, to create a burst of energy, a sort of spring, an instress in the poem, "Pied Beauty". Instress is the perception of an object in an intense thrust of energy toward it (Urban, 2018). Hopkins skillful use of the meter makes the poem musical, allowing us to grasp flexibility, 'pied' beauty. In the first three lines, we can note that there are four stressed syllables, denoted by the bold letters:

Glory be to God for the dappled things
 For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim; (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653)

The first line, intended to glorify God, sounds stately. Because the stressed syllables often occur sequentially in fixed patterning rather than in alternation with unstressed syllables, the rhythm is said to "sprung" (Stephenson, 1981, p. 97). Beginning with the stressed syllable of "Glory", the poem opens emphatically, appealing to the reader to listen up and do what the speaker says: "Praise him" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653), in particular for the "dappled things." But the fourth line is completely different. It can be read as having three stresses within the first four syllables alone:

Fresh-fire coal chestnut-falls; finches' wings; (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653)

The rhythmic flow of the stresses creates a sense of enthusiasm and energy as the speaker details the glory of god's creation. Accordingly, in line 9, the intensity of the stresses, combined with heavy alliteration, underscores the equal beauty of the qualities being listed:

With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim; (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653)

Through the sonorous quality, the poet renders his homage, ecstasy, astonishment to the god for creating wonderful things in the universe. Surprisingly, Hopkins is so committed to metrical experimentation that he places his own stresses to portray the dynamism of nature in lines 7-8:

And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
 All things counter, original, spare, strange; (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653)

Pied Beauty, keeping its take on the sonnet form, is a scrupulously rhymed poem. The rhyme scheme of the poem is ABCABC DBCDC deviated from the traditional Petrarchan pattern. The clear, perfect rhymes in "Pied



Beauty" makes the poem sound purposeful in its organization. This is intended by the poet to claim about God and the world. Kuhn (1978) assesses that Arnold's laments at humankind's loss of faith in God in "Dover Beach" while Hopkins' poem, "Pied Beauty" seems to affirm this faith. Thus, the meticulous organization of the rhymes speaks to god's divine will, his brilliant design of the universe.

The skillful employment of alliteration, a trademark of Hopkins' prosodic originality, adds to the beauty of the poem's music, reflecting the "pied beauty" that the poem celebrates. The very first line is embellished with alliteration. The alliteration in "glory to God" is an indication of the poet's homage to the god. It speaks to the belief that the world is full of God's splendor, and that God, therefore, deserves praise. The alliteration of the second line "For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653), combines with consonance (of /l/ sounds) and assonance (of short /u/ sounds) to create the fresh phrase, "couple-color." Through the use of identical sounds, the poet makes the word embody dual colors. This is indicated by the use of the alliterative sounds /c/ and /l/. Likewise, mark the alliteration of /f/ sound in line 4: "fresh," "firecoal," "falls," and "finches". These portray the diversity of beautiful nature. This very subtly evokes the noises people make when handling or blowing on something hot, and also creates a sense of abundant beauty. The second half of line 5 introduces an alliterative /p/ with "plotted", "pieced", and "plough". This /p/ sound is further linked via consonance to "stipple" in line 3, which is a word that describes a visual effect. There are many instances of this percussive /p/ sound designed to make an auditory reflection of the visual nature of "stippling". The /p/ and /f/ sounds in line 5 also represent the way in which humans work the land through agriculture, the line itself sounding as if these sounds have been planted there to grow. Lines 8 and 10 continue with this /f/ sound, with line 10 providing the key phrase "fathers-forth". The /f/ is linked to the idea of a paternalistic God, making all the other instances of /f/ seem like evidence of God's design for the world. In line 6, the expression "gear and tackle and trim" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653) relates specifically to farm-based labor or more varied "trades" like fishing and cloth-making, they are certainly meant to build this sense of beauty in variety. The alliteration in the poem heightens the musical cadence, making us realize not just the natural world that shows God's glory, but also human activity. This is a unique way of limning the dynamism of the universe.

The manifestation of the prosodic experimentation is marked in the poem, "The Windhover". The rhythmic experimentation deployed by Hopkins in the sonnet, "The Windhover" is intended to record an inspirational apprehension of the dynamic role of divinity, a creed refuted by Hopkins' contemporary poets. Ross (1999) argues that the poem is intended to expose the beautiful imprint of the God's design all around, not just in the numbers. To meet this aim, the poem, "The Windhover", is composed in 'sprung rhythm'. The 'sprung rhythm' is a special meter in which the number of accented syllables in each line is counted, but the number of unaccented syllables does not matter (Abrams & Greenblatt, 1999). Hopkins uses this unique meter to capture the speed of his lines to reflect how he captures the bird's race and pause. We can mark Hopkins using 'sprung rhythm' for this purpose in the first three lines of the poem:

I caught this morning the 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, (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652)

The bold letters stand for accented syllables and rest unaccented. We can listen to the hovering rhythm of "the rolling level underneath him steady air" (line 3) and the arched brightness of "and striding high there" (line 3-4). The poem demonstrates abruptly at the end, pausing in awe to reflect on Christ. Sacks (2007) contends that variation is a feature of rhythm that avoids the monotony of experiencing. This approach best describes Hopkins' tact. The poetic feet of sprung rhythm usually begin with a stress, followed by another one to three unstressed beats. One can most significantly focus on where the stresses fall, and how the variation in foot length contributes to the poem's overall tone. The first line sounds like iambic pentameter line:

"I caught | this morn- | ing morn- | ing's min- | ion, king-" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652)

The poem, then, starts with a steady rhythm that is evidently typical of sonnet at the time. But then this regularity is turned on in the very next line:

"dom of | daylight's | dauphin, | dapple- | dawn-drawn | Falcon, | in his | riding" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652). The speaker's ecstatic feelings towards the sight of the windhover are evoked through the alliterative line and similar initial consonant sounds. Other than the first line, no others in the poem strictly conform to iambic pentameter, which



is part of what makes Hopkins's poetry so original. Hopkins was very concerned with maintaining the musical effects of his poems. The two stressed syllables in "Sheer plod" (in line 12) depict the tough task of tilling the soil.

The poem, "The Windhover" uses a noteworthy rhyme to capture Hopkins' perception of the lively contents of nature. Unusually, the entire octave shares the same rhyme sound, though with one important variation. All eight lines end in the /ing/ sound, but sometimes this is stressed, and sometimes it is not, for instance, "wing" (line 2) vs. "riding" (line 4). When the final /ing/ is not stressed, the prior syllable rhymes too; look at "riding" and "striding" (line 12). The octet's scheme, then, might be regarded as: AaaA AaaA. The capital letters mark accented syllables and the lowercase unaccented. Lowercase and uppercase are used to illustrate the interesting relationship between these sounds. The striking point about the rhymes in the octave is the way that most of them refer to action and movement: "riding", "striding", "wing", "swing", and "gliding". Readers can draw the picture of the falcon as a master of aerial skill, manipulating the wind to hover and dive at will. The rhymes in the sestet follow the pattern of CDCDCD. The C rhymes, "here", "chevalier", and "dear", all relate to the religious aspect of the poem, while the D rhymes, "billion", "sillion", and "gold-vermilion," all signify beauty and abundance. This music of the poem provides justice to both the magnificent sight of the windhover soaring through the sky and, even more importantly, to the majesty of God's creation.

The rhythm attached to the alliteration in "The Windhover" aims to make the poem sound musical and to make us realize the zestful experience of the poet derived from the Victorian prosperity toward the science. The alliteration can create a rhythm to the text, even if there is no other rhyme or meter (Kermode, 2018). The alliteration used at the beginning of the poem, "The Windhover", is immediately arresting: "morning morning's minion", "daylight's dauphin", and "dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon" ("The Windhover", p. 1652). All the alliterative expressions sound bright and clear, reflecting the clarity of the speaker's experience, the awe sensed by the speaker in observing the bird, and the instinctive connection felt by the speaker between nature and God. And the subsequent use of alliteration conveys the way the speaker limns the state of delight onto the bird. This ecstasy is a kind of dynamic fervor, felt and perceived by the speaker. Alliteration thus heightens the sense that this poem is an attempt to render the dynamism evoked by the poet's conviction on the marvels of god. Here, Hopkins stands against the Victorian craze to disbelieve god. As with the poem's meter and rhyme, alliteration comes and goes with a kind of rhythm that creates a sense of stasis and motion, exactly the rhythm that the bird observes in the air. In lines 5 to 6, the /s/ alliteration gives the poem a smooth, gliding quality that relates to the comparison of the bird's flight to the heel of an ice skater: "then off, off forth on swing, / As a skate's heel sweeps smooth" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653). Another example falls in lines 9-11:

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! (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1653)

The alliteration here still works to maintain the presence of beauty and deliberate design. The hard /b/ and /p/ sounds are used to evoke a sense of power. These sounds match with the toughness, and beauty of the falcon described as "brute". The /b/ sound is intended to iterate God is a "billion times" more adorable and deadly. In line 12, "plod" chimes with "plough" for painting a picture of farm labor, the closeness of the sounds suggesting repetitiveness. The initial consonant sound /g/ as in "gall," "gash," and "gold-vermilion" in the last line intensifies the fire, the power that erupts inside the creative process of God.

Thus, by using an accentual meter, sprung rhythm, and alliterative lines in "The Windhover", Hopkins succeeds in attaining a mission of appreciating the god. Harrison (1957) interpreted that the extent to which God is present in the world is knowable by man (p. 448). The musical beats of the poem embedded in the sprung rhythm, meter, and alliteration, assists us to view the dynamism of the universe, and the beauty as an expression of God's own beauty, power, and craftsmanship.

Hopkins makes skilful use of sprung rhyme, alliteration, enjambment, assonance, and refrain in the poem, "Inversnaid" to emphasize the rhythmic originality of the nature to celebrate natural wilderness, a characteristic of the Victorian milieu. Hopkins had travelled at Inversnaid, located on the east bank of Loch Lomond in Scotland. This



poem was composed at Inversnaid and it miraculously depicts the wild wonders of nature (Spurgin, 2015). Sprung rhyme is a typical rhyme that brings the accented and unaccented syllables together (Abrams & Greenblatt, 1999). The syllables appear at the same time to stress the dynamism of the nature. The first stanza of the poem is an example of the "sprung rhyme", not just the sprung rhythm:

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home. (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144)

The speaker, the poet Hopkins himself, refers to a "darksome burn" using alliterative line, and the repetition of the "b" consonant sound in "burn," "horseback" and "brown" in the first stanza of "Inversnaid" to embody the beauty of the Inversnaid locality. According to Baldwin (n. d.), "the poem speaks on themes of natural wonder, wildness, peace, and the future" (para. 1). Its dynamism, dark and perhaps gloom, the color of a "horseback brown" is painted by the poet with these prosodic experimentations. The rhyme scheme of quatrains of "Inversnaid" is AABB CCDD. This pattern, accompanied by the sprung rhythm, inherent to the lines, is used to glorify the brook. Hopkins uses alliterative experimentation. The alliterative words are used in succession, or begin with the same letter, for example, "rollrock" and "roaring" to personify the brook as male. Hopkins writes "His rollrock highroad roaring down" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144). The stream's parts, its "coop" and "comb" demonstrate the power of the water and the "fleece of his foam" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144). The brilliant use of vowel sounds within closely placed words, assonance such as the /o/ sound in "coop" and "comb", and the use of the enjambment force a reader to note the transition of the brook experienced by the poet all of a sudden. Hopkins further speaks of the "windpuff-bonnet" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144) to describe the foam. The substance of the river bed is turned up as the water flows down the route of the brook.

Now let us observe the alliteration used in the second stanza: "over the broth/ Of a pool so pitchblack" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144). This technique is used to depict the color and dark atmosphere around the pretty pool of water. The color is created by the "fell-frowning" around it. The alliterative line heightens the image of the fells or hills around the pool. Hopkins coins his own word in his alliterative lines to highlight his perception of the unique energy of nature. For example, let us see the first line of the third stanza: "Degged with dew, dappled with dew" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144). The word "Degged" is drawn from the Lancashire dialect; and it means sprinkled. It helps to describe the "braes that the brook treads through" (line 10). The hillsides, signified by "braes", are covered by the dews. The alliteration in lines 10-11, stanza three, gives the scene a new texture:

Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through?
Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern, (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144)

In the fourth stanza of the poem, "Inversnaid", Hopkins' muses on the importance of natural places. He asks, rhetorically, "What would the world be, once bereft/ Of wet and of wilderness" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 144). The enjambment in this line intensifies the significance of the wilderness. He expresses his longings for the "wildness and wet". It should exist without tampering. Hopkins wishes the "weeds and wilderness" to reside on. The final stanza sets the atmosphere, describing the astonishing burn as it makes its way downwards. The poem questions the reader what the realm would look like without "wet and wildness" (line 15). The 'Long live' echoes the slogan "Long live the King", of course intended to admire royalty marked in the lowly weeds.

The rhythmic variation, heightened by sprung rhythm and alliterative lines, stimulates us to celebrate the natural glory, and to mark inscape. Inscap is the distinctive design that constitutes individual identity (Urban, 2018). Hopkins continues making prosodic experimentation in the sonnet, "Spring" to display the wonders of the dynamism evoked by the spring against a backdrop of religious references to the Garden of Eden and sin. The rhythm in the poem, "Spring" adds a new kind of tension to the language so as to capture the distinctive design. Hopkins uses a new rhythm, 'sprung rhythm' to give each poem a distinctive design, inscape (Stephenson, 1981). To connect the beautiful physical features of Spring and sensory impressions to Judeo-Christian beliefs about creation, including the Garden of Eden, Hopkins employs irregular rhythms and syntax in the sonnet. In the first four lines of the octave, the speaker connects the weeds of spring with wheels:



Nothing is so beautiful as Spring

When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;

Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush

Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring. (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652)

The strange association of sound signifies the motion. Everything is moving. The music provoked by the movement is suggested through the alliteration in the second line: "When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652). Though the traditional rhyming scheme of the sonnet, ABBAABBA in the octave and CDCDCD in the sestet, is used in the "Spring", hyperbole, imagery, alliteration, consonance, assonance, repetition, and other literary devices are used to celebrate the season's onset with purity. In lines 2-4, Hopkins uses alliteration with the w, l, t, and r sounds and consonance using l, t, and r. Assonance is used with the long e, short e, and short

i. The sh-sound from "lush" merges into the word "thrush" at the start of line 3, and the l-sound is picked up again in "look/ little/low". The primary use of alliteration and assonance in poetry is to direct attention to particular words, making them stand out and making them more memorable (Kermode, 2018).

While the sonnet typically uses iambic pentameter, Hopkins, influenced by the modern vein of the Victorian era, varies the rhythm by adding or removing syllables. The first and third lines start with an accented syllable. Sacks (2007) suggested that variations in meter embody the successive stimuli perceived, experienced by the poet. The frequent use of alliteration and assonance generates a contrast with the effect of smoothness.

The speaker marks the thrush among the trees, and the instress evoked by the scenario. Instress is "the apprehension of an object in an intense thrust of energy toward it that enables one to realize its specific distinctiveness" (Urban, 2018, p. 49). In the second stanza of "Spring" the speaker begins by asking a question with an alliteration in line 9: "What is all this juice and all this joy?" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652). The expression becomes abstract and rhetorical instead because of its rhythm. Through the bursts of stressed syllables, we perceive a sense of emotion. The pattern of the poem is changed soon. He is addressing a specific listener, Christ. Obviously, the speaker refers to spring as a miraculous object which contains elements of "joy" and "juicy" rich with the potentiality of life. Finally, the music strikes a sort of middle ground with the lofty /o/ sound of "Most, O" in the last line. The rhythm in the language has emerged from the thickest part of the speaker's endeavor, finding some relief, perhaps, in turning things over to God.

In "God's Grandeur", another sonnet of Hopkins, the poet's criticism to the materialistic, industrial passion of human beings in the Victorian era is expressed through the experimentation in the metrical pattern. The sonnets are usually written in iambic pentameter. "God's Grandeur" begins with a four syllabic iambic meter: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652). Technically speaking, this line has two iambs followed by two anapests, rather than having five iambs. The unorthodox shift in meter evokes a notable effect by adding an extra charge to the accented words. The accented words, though they are quite a few, highlight the poet's emphasis on the reflection of the dynamism. Though the poem makes splendid use of the iambic pentameter, it subverts the rhythm embodied in the meter. The poet does this in the first octave of the poem as well. The poet says, "It will flame out, like shining from shook foil" (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652). Here the line is in iambic pentameter, but a pause generated by the comma interrupts the rhythm. The speaker uses the rhythm of iambic pentameter layering other rhythms against it at the same time, mostly noted in music. Though the poem follows the pattern of traditional Italian sonnet, the speaker subverts the rhythm embodied in the meter in the sestet to present the solution of the problem addressed in the octave. The slight difference in the poem's iambic pentameter and rhythm makes it a unique sprung rhythm. The sprung rhythm in lines 5-8, aided by alliteration, refrain exposes people's indifference to nature:

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod. (Hopkins, 1981, p. 1652)



The refrain, 'have trod' in line 5, is implicitly referred to symbolize the continuous destruction of nature by humanity. The refrain "have trod" further suggests the careless ways people are moving across the world. This idea is further elaborated in line 8, where the poet conveys the idea that our feet can't even feel the nature's destruction because our feet are 'shod'. The poet uses experimental feet in "God's Grandeur" to symbolize the human potentiality to get connected with nature. But this potentiality has been blocked by the materialism generated by the rise of industrialism. In poetry, a 'foot' refers to a pair of two iambs; so 'feet' are significant for building a poem's meter (Tartakovsky, 2015). By taking the reference of the foot, the speaker renders his conviction that people are sensitive to God and nature.

"God's Grandeur" looks identical to an Italian sonnet in terms of the pattern because its octave sets out for a proposition to establish a problem and the sestet of the poem presents the solution of the problem highlighted in the octave (White, 1966). A typical Italian sonnet often describes the problem of an unrequited love in the octave and offers its solution in the sestet. But the problem presented in "God's Grandeur" is a bit serious: that humanity has damaged much of nature and, in the process, lost the ability to sense God's power of charging the nature. The poet uses less regular or structured meters in the sestet to describe the healing power of god. We can note the use of sprung rhythm and iambic pentameter in the eleventh line of the poem: "And though the last lights off the black West went" ("God's Grandeur", p. 1652).

Thus, to replicate the inaccessibility of the divinity marked in the nature, Hopkins makes skillful use of sprung rhythm. This rhythm has more varied stresses and patterns than other traditional meters, and the modern free verse. To grasp the complexity and variety of nature, Hopkins uses experimental forms of meter. (Abbott 1935a) records Hopkins putting it, "Poetical language should be the current language heightened" (p. 619). Despite the prosodic experimentation, "God's Grandeur" follows conventional rhyme scheme: ABBAABBA CDCDCD. Hopkins subverts the flow of iambic pentameter in the poem also to emphasize specific words and ideas. The stuttering rhythm used in the poem suggests how human-beings are interfering with the flow of nature and God's power of charging the nature. Though the poem follows this traditional rhyme scheme, it uses various instances of internal rhyme, such as the repeated long /e/ sounds in line 6: "And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil" ("God's Grandeur", p. 1652). Hopkins plays distorts the rhythm that would normally be fabricated by following a regular rhyme scheme (Stephenson, 1981). The prosodic experimentation used in "God's Grandeur" helps us perceive the poet's complaint about the inhumanity of human-beings. In this way, the metrical complexity is used by Hopkins to make us realize that God is suffused with and accessible by worshipping nature. Hopkins' concern about the destruction of nature by people and the forces of industrialization rose in the Victorian period can be comprehended by analyzing the prosodic experimentation used by him.

4. Conclusion

Hopkins' poetry, in some ways, displays a new prosody that paradoxically blends elaborate aestheticism with a more complex representation of consciousness. He renders his bitter concerns about the indecency and corruption of industrialization through his rhythmic experimentation. But, in other ways, Hopkins' poetry seems to connect us to the deeper past, at the same time, to make us hypothesize the future. Deviating himself from the poets of the Enlightenment era, and being close to the verse form of the Romantic poets, Hopkins glorifies the dynamism of nature through his experimentation of the verse. The metrical oddity in his poems serves as a vehicle to refer to the landscape, sheer variety of nature, to praise the Lord and the Holy Spirit, and the energy inside every living thing. Despite their complexity, his poems always fascinate us with their musicality supported by sprung rhythmic lines, and aural effect. They at once make us grasp the unique dynamism of nature and divine manifestation. Through the prosodic experimentation, Hopkins becomes successful to reflect the revolutionary trend of the Victorian instincts, to criticize against the destruction of nature caused by the industrialization, and to appreciate the divine majesty embodied in the nature.

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