

Bibliografia

- Nair Alexandra: *Sereias, Trições, Nereidas*, em: "História", no 48, Setembro 2002, ano XXIV (III série), pp.26-31.
- Aristóteles: *Poética*, 5ª ed., (trad., pref., introd., comentário e apêndice), Eudoro de Sousa, Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda, Lisboa 1998.
- Bernardo G. de Brito: *História trágico-marítima*, Edições Afródite, Lisboa 1977, vol. I e II.
- Luís Vaz de Camões: *Os Lusíadas*, (introd. S. A. Benedicto, notas A. Leitão), Ulisseia, Lisboa s.d. (1988).
- Horácio: *Arte Poética*, 2ª ed., (introd., trad., notas e comentário:) R. M. Rosado Fernandes, edição bilingue, Inquérito, Lisboa 2001.
- Giulia Lanciani: *Sucessos e naufrágios das naus portuguesas*, Caminho, Lisboa 1997.
- Literatura de viagens I e II, em: *História e Antologia da Literatura Portuguesa século XVI (fascículos)*, no 22 e 23, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisboa 2002.
- Ana Maria Magalhães, Isabel Alçada: *Portugal – História e Lendas*, 2ª ed., Caminho, Lisboa 2001.
- George Monteiro: *The African Lives of Adamastor*, em: "Revista da Faculdade de Letras", no 19/20, FLUL, Lisboa 1995-96, pp. 115-125.
- Manuel dos Santos Alves: *Dicionário de Camões*, Editora Universitária, Lisboa 1994.
- (org., introd. e notas) M. Ema Tarracha Ferreira: *Literatura dos Descobrimentos e da expansão portuguesa*, Ulisseia, Lisboa s. d. (1993).
- (Via internet) [http://rutas.no.sapo.pt/Mitologia e Adamastor/htm](http://rutas.no.sapo.pt/Mitologia_e_Adamastor/htm), 3.05.2003.

LUBELSKIE MATERIAŁY NEOFILOLOGICZNE NR 27, 2003

Aleksandra Kędzierska

**The Diamond Turned Ash: Some Remarks
on Barañczak's Translation of G.M. Hopkins's
"As Kingfishers Catch Fire"**

Anybody familiar with the work of Gerard Manley Hopkins realizes the cardinal importance of his notion of "inescape" – the foundation determining the specificity and uniqueness of his poetry. Though in existence since 1868, "inescape" – one of Hopkins's most famous coinages (cf. MacKenzie 232), indeed "the most famous word he contributed to our [English] language" (Martin 205) – revealed its full significance at Stonyhurst where, in the writings of Joannes Duns Scotus, the medieval Franciscan scholastic, Hopkins found "a philosophical framework for his poetic attitude to nature" (Kenny 9). At the heart of this attitude lay the poet's awareness of the infinite variety of and abundance in creation, whose every single species possessed its God-given distinctive character, "the inner coherence of the individual, distinguishing it from any other example" (Martin 205). In his sacramentalized world "full of inescape", any apprehension of beauty invariably led the onlooker "deep down things", where, inherent in each unique selfhood, the divine presence manifested itself, both as stress and "instress" – the energy producing and sustaining "inescape", the selving force of each thing without which it becomes meaningless. "Whenever an ecstatic, visionary or a workaday effort", "inescape" was "the insight by the Divine grace into the ultimate reality" (McChesney 204), allowing as W.H. Gardner

puts it, to see "the pattern, air, melody in things from, as it were, God's side" (1:27), "a soul-leap through Nature to the divine in the beyond" (Downes 61). No wonder that so God-inspired and oriented, "in-scaped" was for Hopkins — "the priest of poetry and the poet of priesthood" (Kelly 119) — the soul of his art, that "which above all I aim at in poetry", he himself but a shuttlecock, always carried away and brightened into a state of sublimity.

One would expect that a translator of Hopkins's works, especially when himself a poet, would do his best to preserve and recreate the precious inscapes of the original and, recapturing them on the level of sound and meaning in his own language, would again make them the core of the vision which they made possible and so exquisite. More importantly, one would expect such treatment especially for "As Kingfishers Catch Fire" (henceforth "As Kingfishers"), that sonnet by Hopkins which is the most representative exposition of his "aesthetic philosophy in poetic form" (Miliward 115) and contains Hopkins's "most striking illustrations of Scottist theory of the inscapes to be found among natural and man-made things" (Mackenzie 148). This, however, is hardly the case with the only Polish translation of the poem authored by Stanisław Barańczak. Hence discussing the difference in Barańczak's and Hopkins's treatment of fire/light indicative of their respective attitude to the Divine and, consequently, of their depiction of the man-God relationship, this essay concerns itself with demonstrating how actually anti-Hopkins in spirit is Barańczak's rendition of "As Kingfishers" and how the violation of things inscape must unavoidably result in the warping of the vision of the universe as "stressed and instressed" by God.

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;¹

As tumbled over rim in roundy wells

Stones ring: like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's

Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;

Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:

Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves—goes its self; myself it speaks and spells
Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.*

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.

I wążek wartkie wrzenia, zimorodków zimne
Ognie; I krągła studnia, gdzie kamień zrucony
Brzmi echem; I ton struny kłnietej, I skłon drzwom
Co swą szeroką mową głosi własne imię --
Wszelka rzecz tego świata czyni to jedynie:
Wydziała z siebie wnętrze swe, kwitąc w nim jak w domu;
Trwa sama w sobie ---- I swe ja rzuca nam do nóg,
Krzycząc Po tom powstała: by być tym, co czynię.

Więcej powiem: czełk prawy sobą prawo tworzy;
Łaska jest w nim --- I w tym co czynić mu się zdarzy;
Tym chce się Bogu wydać, kim jest w oczach Bożych ---
Chrysussem --- bo w tysiącach miejsc Chrysus się jarzy
Blaskiem, co ciała przświeciła i oczy,
By Pan mógł dostrzec światłość w rysach ludzkiej twarzy.²

In his *Contemplation for Obtaining Love* Hopkins wrote: "All things are (...) charged with Love, are charged with God, and if we know how to touch them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of him" (Miliward 115). These God-given inscapes or "'inner shapes'", as Barth calls, "must express themselves outwardly" (216) and it is via this selfhood-in-action (cf. Ellis 166) that the eucharistic status of nature can be experienced, made manifest through "the unique incarnations of the Word in matter" (Ballinger 226). It follows that Christ, the enfleshed Logos, is

¹ Phillips, Catherine, (ed.), *Gerard Manley Hopkins. A Critical edition of the Major Works*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1986, p. 129.

² *Gerard Manley Hopkins: 33 wiersze*, Wybór przekład, wstęp i opracowanie Stanisław Barańczak, Arka, Kraków 1993, p. 59.

“the model for all inscapes”, the All in All allowing for “the oneness; pressure and response, [act and reflection], not only giving] off the of God to be expressed in (...) language and creation as multiplicity” God-derived flame in selving but giving] it off in a reciprocal way” (Ballinger 220).

Striving to recapture in the world of “As Kingfishers” the Christic and the bird, soon spreads out, the scintillation taken over and inscapes he divined in creation, Hopkins works through the dappled repeated, though differently, in the flame-jetting dragonfly. Thus, image of light, the fire “caught” and catching through the sonnet’s adjusted to a species’ individual parameters and scales, the spectacle opening: “First and most crucially”, Ellis notes,

the opening line’s serious wordplay assumes and implies the higher origin of all of communication between God and “mortal things”, the dialogue of this fire and selfhood; relating physical brightness to its metaphysical source colour and motion the creatures play back to the Creator and use The pun on the nearly dead metaphor “catch fire” brings out the verb’s literal and transitive meaning and is paralleled in the primarily literal senses of “draw” (receive, attract, elicit); the line therefore announces that it is from God’s instress – Son-light and not merely sunlight -- that these bright creatures derive flows and from and to which everything radiates” (Ballinger 220), their iridescent fire. (171)

If so, the iridescence of the dragonfly as well as the royal blue of a note”, each thing “gives out again the special quality given to it and the sacrificial red of the KINGfisher – the bird’s status uniquely by its Maker” (MacKenzie 148). Hence in the same way as “catching and inextricably linked to its name – can not only give out the fire” works for animate nature, the language of sound will help creatures’ most individual characteristics but also effectively “point establish the divine core of inanimate objects: of pebbles, of the out to the divine in the beyond”. Hence, for instance, the kingfisher’s swing of the bell and the subtle music of the string, each and all busy hunting nature reflects that of Christ,

the fisher of souls³ and the exquisite design of the insect’s wings “sparks off for this came to the world” (John 18:37; Barth 216), the reflection of that Loveliness Who “father[ing] forth” all beauty is this And yet, determined as they are, to stress their otherness, all mortal “beauty’s self and (...) giver”. Turned through the interplay of the sunlight in things are united in the homage they pay to their Creator whenever the creatures that symbolize the harmony of fire and water, both the kingfisher they advertise their selfhood. The trace of this common origin – their and the dragonfly enhance the paradoxical character of the Divine, their action: Springing from the same source of existence is well documented revelatory of the fact that “from and in water is fire, [that] from and in descent through the chiming effects Hopkins creates while characterizing his is rising flame [and that] in all and from all is God-derived splendor” (171).

Participating in the communion of light, nature is invited to play “stones ring”, “string tells”, “bell’s swung hung finds tongue” etc. -- “within a larger scheme of unity to a system of action and echo; they possess some element which, like the “ng” sound cluster, makes them recognizable as the family whose members come from the same Father.

³ Hopkins explored the image of Christ/bird also in „The Windhover”, also In his translation of the octave, Barańczak generally succeeds in endowing the Falcon with numerous indications of royal status: “morning”, “recreating Hopkins’s poetic language, unfortunately however, this by mignon, kingdom of daylight’s dauphin”, “chevalier” etc.

no means small fete is accomplished at the price of falsifying the truth of the original meaning, which, regrettably, must bring about the destruction of that which was meant to be the "soul" of Hopkins's poem. Already the opening line does much to mar the selfhood-in-action and almost extinguish the fire which Hopkins made the determinant of this selfhood's specificity. Consequently, neither Barańczak's kingfisher nor his dragonfly is capable of expressing its uniqueness through an active response to fire/light which thus cannot truly become a characteristic of their selves. Granted, fires ("ognie") still feature in the portrayal of the bird, but, tragically, they are cold ("zimne"), this deadness incapacitating the kingfisher, preventing it from "dealing out", "selving" and sharing its innermost being with the dragonfly. Though transposing Hopkins's verbs into blocking noun phrases ["catch fire" becomes "zimne ognie" (cold fires); "draw flame" becomes "warkie wrzenia" (rapid wavers)] Barańczak allows at least the insect for some motion, cruelly, he deprives it of the connection with light/fire which in the original marks both the kingfisher and the dragonfly as the creatures of the same Maker. Such lack of symmetry in Barańczak's depiction of winged beings (the bird: cold fire/no motion; the insect: no fire/som motion) seems to derive from his treatment – though mistreatment – would be a truer word – of the symbolic image of Light, "crucified" before it has even had a chance to brand His species with His fier intensity. Executed through Barańczak's "cold fires", the death Light renders dead that which Hopkins made the center of life, of movement, of passion, colour and warmth. Having thus quenched that divine spark in creation, Barańczak not only breaks the organizing principle of the poem which made Hopkins's setet logical extension of the octave, but, worse even, he breaks the incarnational principle of the universe. As a result Barańczak's world -- as unique as it is godless -- emerges as alien to the vision of Hopkins for whom nature, the indelible sign of the God Incarnate would invariably sing its news of the Creator.

Another consequence of Barańczak's mishandling of the light/fire image suggestive in his version of the breaking of the bond between

of each other rather than allowing an insight into their similarities. Hopkins's opening recognized the value of the creature's status and position, its place in a chain, hierarchy of beings. Hence only the KINGfisher, the creature of authority could be chosen to set the example for other beasts. Thus, Barańczak's shifting the dragonfly to the leading, initial position in the line (and also in creation) seems hardly justified. But then, as the change from "As" to mere "and" seems to indicate (see line 1), it is the multitude of things in creation rather than their qualities that matters most for the translator.

As is the case with the octave, also Barańczak's setet leaves much to be desired, especially when the reader refuses to be satisfied with the rendition that seems to completely ignore the dogmatic core of "As Kingfishers". Juxtaposing "the just" and wiser man, the crown of creation, with the "mortal things" of the octave, Hopkins's setet is an extended definition of "selving" through "justicing", the action which characterizes the man as a conscious reflector of the God-given spark of grace. Tuned by and to this grace, knowing that he "ought to reflect to God the image of Christ Who is God made man" (MacKenzie 151), and hence realizing that "the ideal of self-expression is insufficient" (MacKenzie 149), the speaker strives to reach out to the source of Light so that he too could shine ("catch fire" or "draw flame") with it and play it back.

With holiness being one of the Greek meanings inherent in the word "justice", the man's "justicing" must naturally involve his striving towards sainthood, possible to accomplish when, being in

God's eye and keeping grace, one "plays at Christ"⁴ and with Christ All these practices characterize the man from the sestet who can thus secure his place in the game of Love and Light, the game which directed and produced by the Father and the Son, is performed simultaneously on the stage of the universe and in the soul of an individual man.

Accepting in this match for his own sainthood the role of their partner and their instrument, the "just man" lives his life literally "sandwiched" between the divinity of God and Jesus, acting in God's eye the Christ he is in God's eye. Among the rewards for his perseverance is the just man's chance of developing a very personal physical and intimate relationship with Christ and his capability of recognizing Christ's presence and loveliness in other fellow beings. Barańczak's translation conjures up a man who, putting his trust into himself rather than God, "justices" *not* by respecting or/and preserving the divine law, but *by creating* his own. Perceiving himself as the sole foundation of the law – (człek "sobą prawo tworzy" / lays the law all by himself) -- he betrays his self-will and his rebellious streak which eventually make him place himself in a position equal to the Divine. This, no doubt, is not how Hopkins renders the man-God relationship in his sestet, the more so that Barańczak's translation marks a significant departure from the depiction of Christ and divine grace. Confronted with the man's rather irreverent egotism, a religious reader cannot help wondering if such "goings" actually entitle Barańczak's man to be called 'just'. After all, the truly just man -- one who is by definition kept in grace and whom this sanctifying grace enables to obtain other, the so called actual, graces -- should give glory to God by everything he does (cf. Millward 117, MacKenzie 150). Besides, equipped with the potential to become God-like and invited to participate in divinity (cf. *Katolicyzm A-Z* 232), he should strive to act with "Christlike goodness", all his actions "gracious and

pleasing to God" (MacKenzie 150) and reflecting his awareness of and love for the Divine.

Such humbleness, which would normally bring the just man closer to God, is missing in Barańczak's translation where the sanctifying grace not only does not condition all the man's goings, but, paradoxically, results in his separation (or in distancing himself from) from God. What is more, unlike in Hopkins where "grace", multiplied at the end of the line, turns into "graces", "żaska", the Polish equivalent of grace, appears only once, thus actually demonstrating that the man's actions neither allow for nor result in his selving. Thus, largely due to Barańczak's rather unfortunate choice of words in line 11, with Hopkins's "acts in God's eye" rendered as "chce się Bogu wydać" (he "wants to seem to God"), Barańczak's man loses his physical bond with the Divine (no longer "in God's eye") and, deprived of a possibility to act under God's supervision, he proves incapable of playing the God-given grace back to the Giver. This passivity disqualifies him as God's partner in the plan of salvation which, no longer dependent on the man's direct involvement, is therefore settled for him by the Divine. Besides, more interested in pretending (he "wants to seem to God") to be Christ than in wanting to become one (or realizing he is Christ), he appears to be a foul playing hypocrite.

This lack of correspondence between the inscape of Hopkins's and Barańczak's man is further intensified by the translator's changing the attributes Hopkins believed to be vital in his depiction of Christ. Thus, where, uniquely, Hopkins stresses Christ's loveliness and, more importantly, His playfulness, crucial for the feedback between man and God indispensable for salvation, Barańczak, perhaps trying to make up for his downplaying of the image of light/fire in the octave, sets on exploring a sole and far more conventional characteristic of radiance.

Being "lovely" and actively involved in "playing" with each other, which, for a believer like Hopkins, was "no play but truth" (cf. footnote 4), both, the man, "God's son by adoption and Christ, God's son by nature" (Millward 117) share the features which point to their

⁴ Commenting on the correspondences between man and Christ Hopkins wrote "That is Christ playing me and me playing at Christ, only that is no play but truth that is Christ *being me*" and me being Christ". (Millward 118)

common parenthood. This family bond is made even more evident, recognize the true value of man.

God (sic!) who, as it were, is unable -- without Christ's help -- to resonant too, by the "echo" verbs: "acts" and "plays", describing Last but not least, having organized the final tercet round the respectively, the doings of the man and Christ. Hence, in the symbol of Light, a move hardly consistent with diminishing the spectacle which Hopkins seems to enact in the seset, man's individual importance of fire in the octave, Barańczak redefines the concept of response to grace -- his capacity to act in God's eye and "become the Incarnation by demonstrating that after all -- quite against better through emulating Christ's behaviour" -- triggers an actor Hopkins's belief -- "not all things are charged with Love", not all -- from Christ, the response which when magnified "ten thousandfold" among them the kingfisher and the dragonfly and even a just man -- is played up and offered to the Father whose part, in turn, is to keep "give off sparks and take fire". Thus, strikingly, Barańczak's Christ, man in His watchful eye and grace. Interestingly, these are not the no longer "the model for all inscapes" emerges as that All-in-All only roles the Divine assumes due to the complexity of Hopkins's which is available only to the chosen few.

concept of the play⁵. Cast by God, the Arch Director, man is The only thing Barańczak handles really well is the poetry of accompanied by Christ -- the Great Actor who, "in every sense, Hopkins's chiming -- the melodious echoes of words, the rhythms and inspires in and invokes from his cast of human characters his own at the tension within and between the lines, the rhyme scheme -- all of and nature" (Ellis 173) and who like "the star performer" tak[les] over which, together with his clever alliterative solutions worked out the part of an insufficient stumbling amateur -- in fact all the parts despite the difference and specificity of the Polish language, reveal the (Mackenzie 154). Thus a new dimension of the Great Sacrifice imagination and talent which do service to Hopkins's greatness. reveals itself which, performed non-stop, gives ever newer life to the Nevertheless, the minute one has absorbed the beauty as well as the Church -- the mystical union of All in All with the actors and drama of sounds and has taken a careful look "deep down things", one audiences under His supervision. realizes that the glossy surface one has so admired is like a false smile,

However, much of this poetic as well as dogmatic profoundly elusive and treacherous, luring one into acceptance of Barańczak's simply disappears when Barańczak discards the pivotal verb of the rather misdirected interpretation of the dogmas (among others divine seset -- "to play". Granted, he still manages to convey some sense of grace that leads to man's distancing himself from God and preventing interaction going on either between God and man, or between Christ his spiritual growth, or salvation which can take place without man's and man or else between Christ and God, yet the three actors are never direct and active involvement).

given a chance to appear in the same game and on the same stage. Apart from these modifications (or mortifications?) of the dogma, Besides, for Barańczak Christ's splendor does not lie in dedicating to the reader should also be wary of Barańczak's rewriting Hopkins. For the Father the loveliness He creates in and with man, but in the instance -- right from the start he introduces changes into the radiance which Christ flashes off and which shines through the bodies relationship between the Creator and creation, not only resigning from and eyes of men so that God could notice their (holy?) light. Not only Christ as the instress and inescape of all creation, but also destroying does Barańczak's Christ emerge as definitely less dynamic the concept of selfhood-in-action.

(Hopkins's "playing" versus Barańczak's "glittering/shining") and Another semantic modification is Barańczak's depiction of man, somewhat egoistic, but worse still, he illuminates the ignorance of justicing, yet unjust and strangely passive. This deactivation mars Hopkins's intricate system of action-reaction interplays between

⁵ See A. Keździńska, *On the Wings of Faith*, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Press, Lublin 2001, pp.91-3.

creation and the Creator crucial for the poet's understanding of faith Kedzierska, Aleksandra, *On the Wings of Faith. A Study of the Man-God and the spiritual growth conditioned by selving -- taking God's fire and giving it back.*

To conclude: Barańczak's approach seems to resemble that of the just man from his translation, who, despite the grace he has obtained (talent and imagination), cannot divine the truth of the sonnet if only because instead of preserving it he prefers to create the one of his own. Thus he ends up playing against Hopkins rather than playing in one team with him and God.

Bibliography:

- Ballinger, Phillip, H., *The Poem as Sacrament: The Theological Aesthetic of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Peters Press Louvain, 2000.
- Barańczak, Stanisław, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: 33 wiersze*, Arka, Kraków 1993
- Barth, Paul, S.J., "The Sacramental Vision of Gerard Manley Hopkins" in *Seeing into the Life of Things : Essays on Literature and Religious Experience*, John L. Mahoney (ed.) Fordham University Press, New York 1998, pp. 211-25.
- Downes, David, Anthony, *The Ignatian Personality of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York 1990.
- Ellis, Virginia Ridley, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Language of Mystery*, University of Missouri press, Columbia and London 1991.
- Gardner, W.H., *Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889): A Study of Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition*, 2vols., Secker and Warburg, London 1948.
- Katolicyzm A-Z*, Z. Pawlak (ed.), Księgarnia Św. Wojciecha, Poznań 1982.
- Kelly, Bernard, "The Wreck of the Deutschland" in *Gerard Manley Hopkins's Poems. A Selection of Critical Essays*, M. Bottrall (ed.). Macmillan Press Ltd., Houndmills, Basingstoke 1975, pp. 117-125.
- Kenny, Anthony, *God and Two Poets. Arthur Hugh Clough and Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Sidgwick and Jackson, London 1988.
- McChesney, Donald, "The Meaning of Inscapē" in *Gerard Manley Hopkins's Poems. A Selection of Critical Essays*, M. Bottrall (ed.). Macmillan Press Ltd., Houndmills, Basingstoke 1975, pp.202-217.
- Mackenzie, Norman, H., *A Reader's Guide to Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Thames and Hudson Ltd., London 1981
- Martin, Robert, Bernard, *Gerard Manley Hopkins. A Very Private Life*, Harper Collins, London 1991.
- Milward, Peter, S.J., *A Commentary on the Sonnets of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Loyola Press, Chicago 1997.
- Phillips, Catherine, (ed.), *Gerard Manley Hopkins. A Critical Edition of the Major Works*, Oxford University press, Oxford 1986.