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## 'Lovescape crucified': Gerard Manley Hopkins's red letter and 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'

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### ABSTRACT

This essay investigates whether Gerard Manley Hopkins's famous 'red letter' of 1871 might open the way to a new reading of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', and whether the Paris Commune thus offered up to Hopkins an analogical prototype of the 'Lovescape crucified' that he would elaborate more fully in his poetic meditation on the death by drowning of five Franciscan nuns four years later. It considers Hopkins's response to the revolutionary event of the Commune, his correspondence with Robert Bridges on this topic, and the extent to which 'The Wreck' both represses and resurrects Hopkins's unexpected moment of revolutionary enthusiasm.

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Peter Starr (following Henri Lefebvre) has argued that the Paris Commune of 1871 elicited a form of productive 'revolutionary confusion', which Starr finds to be at work in the writings of several late nineteenth-century French authors, notably Emile Zola.<sup>1</sup> For Starr, Lefebvre's association of 'confusion with festivity and the lived experience of revolutionary passion' allowed him to insist on 'the power of confused yet profound images' and to foreground 'confusion's link to a necessary futurity'.<sup>2</sup> Such confusion can throw all fixed, fast-frozen ideological interpellations into a suspension of the kind that could allow a self-professed 'violent Tory of the old school'—as John Ruskin undoubtedly was—to designate himself, in weighing the significance of the Commune, as 'a Communist of the old school—reddest also of the red'.<sup>3</sup> This article traces the itinerary of a similar confusion that turns towards complexity, almost certainly indebted to Ruskin's reflections on the Commune, in the writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins. As this confusion migrates from Hopkins's correspondence to his first major

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poetic work, 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', one can also observe the articulation of an unlikely solidarity, together with a moment of unexpected confession, which the poem both represses and resurrects.

In a remarkable letter to Robert Bridges, dated 2 August 1871, Hopkins begins by admitting that 'I must tell you I am always thinking of the Communist future'.<sup>4</sup> This admission has sometimes flummoxed Hopkins's critics. Gerald Roberts surely speaks for many in commenting that Hopkins's 'near espousal of Communism still seems astonishing for a priest-in-training'.<sup>5</sup> Hopkins was studying philosophy at St Mary's Hall in Stonyhurst at the time, and he would later transfer to study theology at St Beuno's College, Tremeirchion, in August 1874. The 'Communist future' that Hopkins invoke for Bridges was not necessarily a cause for celebration on his part, as the Commune seemed to him to confirm 'what Carlyle has long threatened and foretold', and he appears to have been disturbed by the thought that the 'too intelligent artisan is master of the situation'.<sup>6</sup> Intelligent artisans had formed a mainstay of the social-problem fiction of Charles Kingsley, Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot earlier during the century, and would continue to appear in the novels of Eliza Lynn Linton, George Gissing, Henry James, Thomas Hardy and others during the decades after the Commune.<sup>7</sup> Hopkins clearly shared the widespread sense that working-class militancy, as recently evidenced in the Commune, represented a threat to the security of 'high' culture, and that the Communards aspired to level downwards, rather than upwards.

More surprisingly, Hopkins also offered a sincere statement of his respect for the justness of the Communards' cause, which merits lengthy quotation, in a passage that sees hesitant didacticism brush up against a note of genuine confusion. Writing around two months after the defeat of the Commune, he explained that:

I am afraid some great revolution is not far off. Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist. Their ideal bating some things is nobler than that professed by any secular statesman I know of [...]. Besides it is just. – I do not mean the means of getting to it are. But it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comforts, delight, or hopes in the midst of plenty – which plenty they make. They profess that they do not care what they wreck and burn, the old civilisation and order must be destroyed. This is a dreadful look out but what has the old civilisation done for them? As it at present stands in England it is itself in great measure founded on wrecking. But they got none of the spoils, they came in for nothing but harm from it then and thereafter. England has grown hugely wealthy but this wealth has not reached the working classes; I expect it has made their condition worse.<sup>8</sup>

Hopkins recapitulates the terms of repudiation familiar from the ubiquitous denunciations in the mainstream press, yet his reflections are also animated

by an uneasy identification *with* the Communards, by which he finds himself both surprised and alarmed. Hopkins's confession of proscribed desire goes together with a solicitation of sympathy for that desire by way of an appeal to sturdier and more knowable abstractions ('dignity, knowledge, comforts, delight, or hopes'). Almost as soon as he censures the Communards for what he perceives as their desire to 'wreck and burn' the 'old civilisation', he turns candidly to acknowledge that this very civilisation 'is itself in great measure *founded on wrecking*' (my italics). This act of foundational 'wrecking' most likely refers to the destruction that Hopkins associated with the English Reformation, but the French context of the events that immediately precipitated the letter adds a note of ambiguity, suggesting a simultaneous and more contemporary concern with the social and economic indignities of the 'old civilisation', conceived in continental rather than purely English terms. The spectacle of urban poverty in Liverpool and Glasgow would later convince Hopkins of the 'hollowness of this century's civilisation', and it was, after all, the French proletariat, rather than the English, that had set out some few months earlier to 'wreck and burn [...] the old civilisation [...] itself in great measure founded on wrecking'.<sup>9</sup> In place of simple-minded and reactionary condemnation, Hopkins allows the Commune to provoke him into reckoning with the deep-seated injustices of the status quo, even if the terms of that reckoning are confused and shot through with considerable discomfort. The Commune, one might think, offered Hopkins a kind of analogical prototype of the 'Lovescape crucified' (l. 180) that he would elaborate far more fully four years later in his poetic meditation on the death by drowning of five Franciscan nuns.<sup>10</sup>

By the time he came to write 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' sometime after 7 December 1875, Hopkins's understanding of 'wrecking', and what it might mean to 'wreck', had grown to encompass—or, rather, had been encompassed by—a vision of God's mercy and projected adoration. In the penultimate stanza of the poem's first section, Hopkins implores God in the following manner: 'Be adored among men,/God, three-numberèd form;/Wring thy rebel, dogged in den,/Man's malice, with wrecking and storm' (ll. 65–68). In a poem ostensibly dedicated to 'the happy memory of five Franciscan nuns [...] drowned between midnight and morning of December 7', it is noteworthy that Hopkins turns briefly to thoughts of rebellion, even though the 'dogged' rebel is almost immediately generalised in abstract terms as 'Man's malice'. On the basis of the views set out in his 1871 letter to Bridges, the source of this 'malice' could just as well be attributed to 'the old civilisation and order [that] must be destroyed' as to the working-class rebels who would 'wreck' it. As the stanza proceeds, Hopkins continues: 'Father and fondler of heart thou has wrung;/Hast thy dark descending and most art merciful then' (ll. 71–72). The act of wringing

the rebel, Hopkins suggests, represents an expression of God's mercy even in its 'dark descending', and this commingling of opposites—mercy and punishment taken together—anticipates Hopkins's later identification of the wrecking of the S.S. *Deutschland* with 'lovely-felicitous Providence' (l. 245) in the poem's second part.

In an incisive but undeveloped comment on the poem, Jack Lindsay once described 'The Wreck' as 'fundamentally [Hopkins's] poem of the Commune', on the grounds that Hopkins 'brings together the tale of dying (sacrificed) nuns and the theme of elemental fury, to achieve a synthesis of acceptance, the statement of a higher life emerging from the clash'.<sup>11</sup> Although Lindsay does not expand upon these succinct comments, they offer a remarkably suggestive means of re-reading the 'The Wreck of the *Deutschland*'. The poem ostensibly and directly addresses itself to the five nuns who perished in the titular shipwreck, and Martin Dubois is correct to observe that the poem 'is motivated as much by current events as by theological ideas'.<sup>12</sup> Yet there are also moments when the ostensible subject of the poem appears capable of multiplication through compulsive doubling—'O *Deutschland*, double a desperate name!' (l. 155), 'Now burn, new born to the world,/Double-naturèd name' (ll. 265–66)—as if Hopkins is struggling to keep in focus an unsettling event which wends its way towards a climactic conflagration, as did the Commune, with its similarly 'Double-naturèd name'.

The poem's thematic concern with martyrdom also calls to mind an entry that Hopkins made in his *Journal* on 29 May 1871, in which he records a journey to Preston on Whit Monday 'to see the procession'. In 1871, 29 May was the day after the moveable feast of Pentecost, which would have been marked in the liturgical calendar as a red-letter day. The date may seem purely incidental to the topic at hand were it not that a perceptive reader of the 'The Wreck' emphasises the Pentecostal imagery of the poem's opening. J. Hillis Miller argues that Hopkins '[remembers] the tongues of fire at Pentecost' in describing 'his own experience of grace as being struck and burned with God's lightning' in the poem's second and third stanzas, in which Hopkins recalls being 'laced with fire of stress' (l. 16) in the face of God's merciful wrath.<sup>13</sup> In his 1871 journal entry, meanwhile, Hopkins records that:

just as [the Whit Monday procession] was beginning we heard the news of the murder of hostages by the Commune at the entry of Government troops into Paris—64 in all, including the Archbishop, Mgr. Maret bishop of Sura, the Curé of the Madeleine, and Fr. Olivain with four other of our Fathers. It was at the same time the burning of the Tuileries and the other public buildings was carried out.<sup>14</sup>

Martyrdom would have been much on Hopkins's mind at Stonyhurst, not least since the College holds a significant part of the British Jesuit Province's collection of martyrs' relics, and his focus on the number five here anticipates the number of nuns who perish in 'The Wreck', as well as the poem's fixation, at various moments, on the five points of the crucifixion. Fr. Pierre Olivaint died on 26 May along with Frs. Ducoudray, Caubert, Clere and de Bengy, and Hopkins's familiarity with these events makes it all the more significant that, in his letter to Bridges dated several weeks later, he engages in an act of imaginative identification *with* the 'ideal' of the Commune, even if he could not quite bring himself to endorse the Communards' 'means'. Despite the knowledge of the killing of the hostages, Hopkins was still prepared to acknowledge the Communards' cause as a 'just' one, but stops well short of considering the properly political and strategic dilemmas that such a movement might face.

Hopkins's record of these events in his journal is bluntly matter-of-fact, but subsequent entries suggest a deeper, albeit oblique meditation. As one reads further in Hopkins's 1871 journal, his entry for July 8—after his receipt of a letter from Bridges in May but before his response in August—records an account of a thunderstorm in some detail. In the first part of 'The Wreck', meanwhile, Hopkins narrates an experience of spiritual crisis strongly associated with a particular place and time, identified by 'the walls, altar and hour and night' (l. 13) against a background of 'lightning and lashed rod' (l. 10) and 'glory in thunder' (l. 36), though no strong claim can be made about location or date. In his journal for July 1871, Hopkins describes the 'thunder ringing and echoing round like brass, so that there is in a manner earwitness to the *χάλκεον οὐρανόν* [brazen heaven]', while the accompanying lightning 'seemed to be first of all laid in a bright confusion and then uttered by a tongue of brightness'.<sup>15</sup> These fiery tongues of lightning came in 'a straight stroke, broad like a stroke with chalk and liquid, as if the blade of an oar just stripped open a ribbon scar in smooth water and it caught the light'.<sup>16</sup> Later in July, he becomes fascinated by 'the greatest stack of cloud [...] [he] ever can recall seeing', impressed by the 'instress of its size [which] came from [...] the remembrance of other clouds'.<sup>17</sup> Guided beyond the storm in the brazen heaven by a pillar of cloud, Hopkins faintly adumbrates the journey towards revelation narrated in the first part of 'The Wreck':

Not out of his bliss  
Springs the stress felt  
Nor first from heaven (and few know this)  
Swings the stroke dealt—  
Stroke and a stress that stars and storms deliver,  
That guilt is hushed by, hearts are flushed by and melt—  
But it rides time like riding a river (ll. 41–47).

The shared imagery of lightning strokes and the similes that call to mind a river voyage may, once again, be purely incidental; or these resonances may point the way to a possible temporal placing of the poem's autobiographical opening that would make it concurrent with Hopkins's ongoing meditation on the meaning of the Commune, as he would unfold it to Bridges in August 1871.

To begin to make sense of this complex pattern of identification and potential allusion, it is also instructive to refer to Hopkins's 'Meditation on Death', likely to have been composed in 1882 as part of a Jesuit mission to the industrial seaside town of Maryport. Written as a spiritual exercise in devotional writing, and serving as a set of notes for missionary 'instruction', Hopkins uses the meditation to reflect that:

You should know that *there is a special providence over death*. [...] And when we do not see the providence it may still be there and working in some secret way. Hope for it then and pray for it and yet fear and tremble, *work out your salvation in fear and trembling*. For I must end as I began. One of God's providences is by warnings—the deaths of others, sermons, dangers, sicknesses, a sudden thought: beware, beware of neglecting a warning.<sup>18</sup>

In 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', Hopkins affirms a related idea in seeing God 'thróned behind/Death with a sovereignty that heeds but hides, bodes but abides' (ll. 255–56). Such a view is familiar enough, in general terms, but when applied to the particular case of the Communards' killing of their hostages—as opposed to the more obvious reference-point of the drowned nuns—it helps to account for the way in which Hopkins oscillates, in his letter to Bridges, between the repudiation that his correspondent would have expected to read and a far more nuanced attempt to understand the Communards' motivations. For psychoanalysis, death is, as Slavoj Žižek puts it, 'the only letter that nobody can evade, that sooner or later reaches us, i.e. the only letter which has each of us as its infallible addressee'.<sup>19</sup> In putting his own letter into circulation, Hopkins was negotiating a traumatic encounter with the Real while simultaneously traversing an illicit desire for a form of Benjaminian divine violence that might 'wreck and burn' the 'old civilisation'. This imaginative effort did not lead Hopkins seriously to entertain, let alone to adopt, the revolutionary social programme of the Communards, but the event of the Commune, it seems, struck him with 'a sudden thought' about the inequity of class society, which he struggled to make comprehensible at the time, and which subtly insinuated itself, as is argued here, into his first major poem.

Bridges met Hopkins's letter with a long silence, which was a gesture of disavowal on his part, but also, paradoxically, of prolongation. In his much-discussed 'Seminar on "The Purloined Letter"', Jacques Lacan makes clear that he is dealing with 'a *letter* which has been *detoured*, one whose



trajectory has been *prolonged* [...], or, to resort to the language of the post office, a letter *en souffrance* (awaiting delivery or unclaimed).<sup>20</sup> The meaning of a letter *en souffrance*, Lacan writes, 'is that a letter always arrives at its destination', while 'the sender [...] receives from the receiver his own message in an inverted form'.<sup>21</sup> In Žižek's Lacanian parlance, Hopkins's red letter was, one might say, the sort of letter that 'reach[es] its destination precisely insofar as its addressee refuses to receive it'.<sup>22</sup> Bridges's silence would merely have confirmed what Hopkins must already have known about the inadmissibility of the desired interpellation expressed in the letter, which was so clearly in excess of its immediate epistolary context. At the same time, Hopkins received from Bridges 'his own message in its true form', bound up with a recognition that 'the letter that the subject put into circulation "arrives at its destination", which was from the very beginning the sender himself: the letter arrives at its destination when the subject is finally forced to assume the true consequences of his activity'.<sup>23</sup> In the particular context at hand, the Commune must have presented Hopkins with an insoluble double bind, insofar as he identified with the perceived justness of the Communards' cause at the same time as his knowledge of the Communards' killing of their hostages (fellow priests) would have obliged him to confront a diametrically opposed identification with the 'old civilisation and order [that] must be destroyed'. Hopkins's fleeting desire *for* 'the Communist future' was thus also, paradoxically, a desire for self-effacement or self-sacrifice, two terms which can help bring together the proto-modernist and Catholic sides of his poetic, while also forging a clear link to his later fascination with the story of five drowned nuns.

When Hopkins eventually found the courage to write again to Bridges, nearly three years later on 22 January 1874, he was unsure about how to interpret Bridges's lack of response, writing that he 'supposed then and do not know what else to suppose now that you were disgusted with the *red* opinions [the letter] expressed, being a conservative', before adding, a little ruefully, that 'I think, my dear Bridges, to be so much offended about that red letter was excessive'.<sup>24</sup> To renew the correspondence, Hopkins seized on the occasion of having read Andrew Lang's 'appreciative review' in the *Academy* of Bridges's 1873 volume, *Poems*, and it is notable that, in his letter of January 1874, Hopkins finds it necessary to straddle the poetic and the political, downplaying the communist self-identification of his earlier letter ('I have little reason to be red') in order to save the friendship, while steering the correspondence steadily towards the more familiar and ostensibly safer territory of their shared interest in poetry.<sup>25</sup> Hopkins does not comment on the volume itself, simply noting that Lang's review includes '[s]hort extracts from six poems' which 'gave [him] an occasion to write again'.<sup>26</sup> He then darts back to recall the earlier letter, chiding Bridges for

his ‘excessive’ response in being ‘so much offended about that red letter’.<sup>27</sup> If it seems strange that Hopkins chides Bridges’s silence, or *lack* of response, as an instance of excess, one need only recall the Lacanian proposition about the true addressee of such a letter in order to acknowledge that Hopkins is here drawing back from his own earlier identification with the revolutionary excess of the Commune. Even in 1871, Hopkins felt unable fully to endorse the Communards’ ‘means’, casting himself in the role of those moderate partisans of a more equitable social order who, as Žižek writes, ‘want a revolution deprived of the excess in which democracy and terror coincide, a revolution respecting social rules, subordinated to preexisting norms, a revolution in which violence is deprived of the “divine” dimension’, in the Benjaminian sense, thereby falling short of an ‘authentic revolutionary logic’.<sup>28</sup> Even so, one imagines it must have been shocking enough for Bridges.

Hopkins’s connection of the 1871 exchange of letters to Bridges’s *Poems* appears as a non-sequitur, unless, of course, he had found in some of the poems an implicit continuation of their earlier correspondence. It would be credulous to suggest that one can look to Bridges’s 1873 *Poems* for evidence of a letter that he never sent (and perhaps never wrote), but it is noteworthy that the period of Bridges’s unresponsive silence happens to coincide with the period in which he brought his first volume of poems to press, and one can detect, in some of the poems included in that volume, a submerged pattern of response—or what Hopkins might have interpreted as a response—to the ‘red letter’. This supposition requires a broad, figurative conception of the notion of correspondence, and it is not clear whether Hopkins had read Bridges’s volume in its entirety at this point.<sup>29</sup> Had he done so, he might have been struck by the short love poem in three stanzas, ‘Oh how have I offended?’, in which the speaker plaintively questions why the desired interlocutor is ‘To-day so angry, so kind yesterday’, and implores some kind of speech to clear the air: ‘Yet only speak I pray./Not of the fault to tell, but how it may/Be best amended!’.<sup>30</sup> Any reading Hopkins might have ventured of Bridges’s poems would have been heavily over-determined by the obstacle they had hit upon in their correspondence, which took the form of a sharp (though, as far as is known, unspoken) disagreement about the significance and meaning of the Commune.

Most striking, in this regard, is the third of three rondeaus, titled ‘For too much love’, which concerns itself with the intimate complicities of excess. Lang suggested, not without justification, that ‘the merit of a rondeau is a slight thing at best’.<sup>31</sup> Here is the ‘slight thing’, ‘For too much love’, in full:

For too much love ’tis soothly said.  
There is no cure will stand in stead:  
Deadly the baits that first decoy;  
And where we look to find our joy.  
Is all our pain and sorrow bred.



Hopkins had entered into a tacit endorsement of this insurgent universality in putting his red letter into circulation, which appears to have left Bridges unable to answer him directly—no doubt because such a position is ultimately unanswerable. Yet in ‘For too much love’ one finds Bridges’s adumbration of a jaundiced, sceptical riposte. Without explicit reference to the Commune, Bridges’s speaker, anticipating Yeats, rebukes an imagined collective of insurgent ‘heroes’ for their excess of love. Hopkins, had he encountered the poem, would have come across an imagined lovescape destroyed as a result of ‘too much love’.

Marx, paradoxically, turned accusations of Communard excess on their head by rebuking the Communards for excessive ‘indulgence’ and ‘magnanimity’ towards their enemies (an accusation that would later be repeated by Lenin).<sup>36</sup> In lodging this complaint, Marx was not simply pointing to the strategic errors made by the Communards in the thick of a fierce struggle; he was also, as Jacques Rancière comments, denouncing ‘the illusion of any idea of non-power, the mirage of an anti-authoritarianism that actually supports other forms of authority’.<sup>37</sup> This also meant that Marx necessarily questioned the Parisian ‘vanguard on its right to be *the* expression of the working class, on its place in the division of labour, on the relationship between its *ouvriérisme* and this place’.<sup>38</sup> From this confrontation, Rancière draws the lesson that ‘perhaps [...] there is never either a pure discourse of proletarian power or a pure discourse of non-power’, adding that part of the ‘strength of Marx’s thinking [...] lies no doubt in the effort to hold together these contradictions’.<sup>39</sup>

This effort at holding together contradictions in the absence of a pure discourse recalls—albeit from a drastically different standpoint—the double bind at work in Hopkins’s response to the Commune, as set out above. In his pamphlet, *The Civil War in France* (1871), Marx provisionally resolves the contradictions discussed by Rancière with recourse to a rhetorical strategy of *celebration* which is strikingly homologous to the way in which Hopkins celebrates the wreck of the S.S. *Deutschland*, a ‘Lovescape crucified’. As Hopkins’s poem progresses, he turns to identify the five nuns as a ‘cipher of suffering Christ’ (l. 170) and elevates one of the nuns as ‘martyr-máster’ (l. 167) because of her resolution in calling to Christ as the ship sank (as had been reported in contemporary newspapers). The nun’s actions lead Hopkins to pose a counter-intuitive rhetorical question: ‘is the shipwreck then a hárvest, does témpest carry the gráin for thee?’ (l. 248). According to Jeffrey B. Loomis, this provocative question signals Hopkins’s sacramental interpretation of the nuns’ deaths in the shipwreck as, simultaneously, ‘a new Christic incarnation, *and* the Eucharistic grain of a new Christic Passion, *and* Christ’s baptism of the lost’.<sup>40</sup> In purely structural terms, absent the Christian content, the manner in which Hopkins turns catastrophe into a moment of redemptive triumph echoes Marx’s conclusion to

*The Civil War in France*, where Marx comments that ‘Working men’s Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class.’<sup>41</sup> William Morris, another of the Commune’s forthright defenders in Britain, recalled Marx’s formulation in his 1887 *Commonweal* article ‘Why We Celebrate the Commune of Paris’, where he wrote that ‘we honour [the Commune] as the foundation-stone of the new world that is to be’.<sup>42</sup> He struck a similar note in an 1889 letter to the Chairman of a Commune celebration meeting, which he was unable to attend owing to illness: ‘we once more celebrate their defeat as the herald of the victory which is to be, and as preparation for it’.<sup>43</sup>

In different ways, Marx, Morris and Hopkins each interpret the actuality of disaster, or catastrophe, according to a logic of recovery and potential reactivation. As Kristin Ross observes with reference to Morris’s paradoxical celebration of the Commune’s defeat, ‘there is [...] an astute decision being taken here to celebrate—rather than, say, to commemorate or memorialize—an event so laid open and vulnerable to not only the dull lies of bourgeois history but also to the “wisdom” of the sympathetic, but after-the-fact, observer/theorist’.<sup>44</sup> *Celebrating* the Commune, even in its failure, is not simply a matter of discursive good sense on the part of Morris and Marx. Rather, it allows them to construct a materialist, future-oriented means of apprehending the contingencies of revolutionary struggle without succumbing to the bitterness and despondency of defeat. This is also where they part company with Hopkins. Franco Marucci draws a contrast between Morris’s and Hopkins’s varieties of medievalism on precisely this point, identifying Hopkins’s comparably utopian ‘longing for a Catholic Britain that was then non-existent but which he saw as imminent’ with the projected ‘foundation of a neo-medieval *civitas Dei*’.<sup>45</sup> According to Marucci, Hopkins, unlike Morris,

proves to be a true man of the Middle Ages [and, one might add, a true Ruskinian] in his seeing improvements and corrections of the social order not in an *advance* towards a hypothetical *future* model, but in a *return* to a *past* model that is, in many respects, viewed as being already perfect and unimprovable, but from which the world has been inexorably drawing away.<sup>46</sup>

Marucci’s discussion of Hopkins’s politics does not specify what such a ‘hypothetical *future* model’ might be, though his mention of Morris makes it clear enough, and it is notable that Marucci breezily suggests that ‘Even Hopkins’s “communist” sympathies’, on display in his 1871 letter, ‘easily fit into this Christian Utopia and these medieval propensities’, based on a vision of desired ‘Universal Christian Empire’.<sup>47</sup> It is worth clarifying, in this context, that Marx saw nothing ‘hypothetical’ in the Commune; on the contrary, he argued that the ‘great social measure of the Commune

was its own working existence' because this proved that 'plain working men' were able to perform the function of political representation and social administration 'modestly, conscientiously, and efficiently'.<sup>48</sup> Marx also rejected claims that the Commune, which he regarded as a 'completely new historical [creation]', could be likened to 'a reproduction of the medieval communes'.<sup>49</sup> Marx's appropriation and secularisation of the Christian vocabulary of martyrdom would also inform a whole swathe of later socialist commemorations of the Commune (including Morris's *Pilgrims of Hope*), but, for present purposes, the homology with Hopkins's theological mediation of this poetic of redemptive celebration invites closer scrutiny.

In focusing attention on 'the táll nún' (l. 151), Hopkins elaborates her significance with reference to the proximity of the *Deutschland's* wreckage (on 7 December) to another red-letter day, namely the Catholic Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (on 8 December): 'For so conceived, so to conceive thee is done;/But here was heart-throe, birth of a brain,/Wórd, that héard and képt thee and uttered thee óutríght' (ll. 238–40). In her editorial gloss for these lines, Catherine Phillips suggests that the nun has 'made Christ's presence felt again in the world' by 'recognizing his presence, and calling his name out so that others could hear it', thus bringing his felt presence to birth 'as Mary did the Incarnated Christ'.<sup>50</sup> Marx adopts a comparably *maieutic* metaphor in his approach to the Commune, arguing that the Communards 'have no ideals to realize, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant'.<sup>51</sup> In his letter to Bridges, Hopkins professed his sympathy with the Communards' 'ideal', whereas Marx denies that they have any such ideals, instead focusing his attention on the political character of the Commune's immediate, material aims. Nevertheless, according to the logic of the shared metaphor of pregnancy—a metaphor that Marx utilises in *The Civil War in France* (and often elsewhere as well)—the Communards acted as midwives to history and possessed the capability to bring to birth the latent potentiality that exists within the present society.

In maintaining the Commune's working existence for those few months between March and May 1871, from spring to early summer, the Communards made the abstract prospect of social revolution a concrete and tangible one, existing *within* the known world, before the Commune was subsequently drowned in blood. In purely structural terms, this logic of *maieusis* resembles Hopkins's interpretation of the shipwreck as a manifestation of God's immanent presence in the world, and the evidence of his red letter suggests that, however fleetingly, he saw in the Commune something like a comparable instantiation of enacted Christianity. (Eliza Lynn Linton's 1872 novel *The True History of Joshua Davidson, Christian and Communist* rewrites the history of the Commune in just these terms). Hopkins's Catholic sacramentalism, as it appears in 'The Wreck', revolves around what Isobel

Armstrong characterises as a Eucharistic ‘model of the possible immanence of spiritual meaning and signification’ trained on the particular catastrophe of the shipwreck.<sup>52</sup> If one were to extend this logic of immanence beyond the specific example of the shipwreck, it offers a potentially productive means of extrapolating Hopkins’s extant response to the Commune in 1871, which many of Hopkins’s critics have met with a prolongation of Bridges’s uncomfortable silence.

Hopkins’s red letter appears all the more unusual when one considers that the Commune provoked quite different responses from better-ensconced British Jesuits, most notably in the pages of the *Month*, the very periodical to which Hopkins unsuccessfully submitted ‘The Wreck’ in June 1876. Hopkins described the journal’s editor, Henry James Coleridge, as his ‘oldest friend in the Society’, and Martin Dubois has begun to redress the critical ‘neglect of [the *Month*’s] importance for Hopkins’ in his careful reconstruction of Coleridge’s editorial policy during his tenure as editor between 1865 and 1881.<sup>53</sup> Where contributors responded to contemporary events, the journal’s political conservatism is plainly in view. In the immediate aftermath of the Commune, an unsigned article on the Legitimist Comte du Chambord lamented the recent history of ‘the first of the Catholic nations’, and complained that the ‘evils which have issued in the last miseries of France are so deep-rooted’ that even ‘the wholesale executions which have swept away by hundreds those partisans of the Commune who did not perish in open combat’ had left the evils untouched.<sup>54</sup> These sentiments were in keeping with the general hostility that the Roman Church directed towards revolutionary socialism during this period, which would later crystallise in Pope Leo XIII’s anti-communist encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), though Rev. Francis Goldie also reported the rather striking comment of Leo’s predecessor, Pius IX, that ‘those pernicious maxims they call Liberal Catholicity’ were apparently ‘an evil more terrible than the Revolution, than the very Commune’.<sup>55</sup>

Discussion of the Commune continued to animate the journal’s pages well after 1871. Goldie’s ‘Chapters in Contemporary History’ devoted extensive attention to recent French history, and dwelt at length on the Commune. Echoing Hopkins’s anxious letter to Bridges, though lacking any comparable note of sympathetic identification, the author comments that:

It is no matter of boasting that a few thousands of Parisian workmen, guided by a few dozen conspirators against society, could in a few hours knock this whole system to pieces with as light hearts as if it were a fabric of pasteboard [...].<sup>56</sup>

When Hopkins explicitly addressed the question of working-class disaffection in the much later poem ‘Tom’s Garland: Upon the Unemployed’, he offered a crib to Bridges (dated 10 February 1888) which offers striking



parallels with Goldie's remarks upon the Commune. Hopkins writes that the eponymous daylabourer of 'Tom's Garland' 'surveys his lot, low but free from care; then by a sudden strong act [...] tosses it away as a light matter', adding that the 'witnessing of which lightheartedness makes me indignant with the fools of Radical Levellers', before he turns—in a movement of thought that resembles the 1871 red letter—and remembers that such indignation 'is all very well for those who are in, however low in, the Commonwealth and share in any way the Common weal; but [...] the curse of our times is that many do not share it, that they are outcasts from it and have neither security nor splendour'.<sup>57</sup> This 'state of affairs', Hopkins suggests, produces various 'pests of society', among which he incongruously lumps 'Socialists' together with 'Loafers, Tramps, Cornerboys' and 'Roughs'.<sup>58</sup> Here, once again, are the revolutionary wreckers of the 1871 letter, albeit in a rather more lumpen guise; in 'Tom's Garland', by contrast, Hopkins has Tom Navy lustily announce that 'Commonweal/Little Í reck ho!' (ll. 8–9). Unlike the socialists and Communards of Hopkins's correspondence, Tom is an apparently apolitical figure, an unskilled labourer who is little concerned with matters of state after the fashion of the 'too intelligent artisan' whose mastery Hopkins had feared in 1871. Yet one can also hear in the semantic slippage between recking and wrecking a note of wishful thinking on Hopkins's part, as if he is trying to reassure himself—at the height of the socialist agitation of the 1880s—that his faithful Tom entertains no thoughts of knocking the system to pieces, and that the navy's lightheartedness need not necessarily set him on the road to social revolution.

More complicatedly, the poem also extends a different kind of imaginative sympathy to the eponymous daylabourer 'garlanded with squat and surly steel' (l. 1), since this crown of thorns (appropriately re-imagined for the industrial era) identifies him as another 'cipher of suffering Christ' ('The Wreck', l. 170), bringing 'Tom's Garland' into a certain kind of thematic proximity to 'The Wreck'.<sup>59</sup> The conservative impetus of the dominant somatic metaphor in the later poem has been widely discussed. Hopkins imagines the commonwealth as a body with a 'lordly head' and 'mighty foot' (ll. 10–13), whose healthful stability relies upon each member knowing (and keeping) its place. Yet Tom's precarious status as a daylabourer makes the possibility that he might move from being low in the commonweal to being an outcast from it almost as ready a prospect as the slippage between recking and wrecking. Tom, after all, may be content enough to holler forth his patriotic doggerel—'What! Country is honour enough in all us' (l. 10)—when he is in work, but the poem's evocation of Tom's placid contentment in his labour jars oddly against the titular concern with the unemployed. Even placid Tom may be less heartily and lightheartedly content when he is out of work; he may instead turn into a 'Manwolf, worse', or become animated by the 'Rage' (ll. 19–20) whose justness



Hopkins had felt in 1871. This possibility is partly pre-empted by the poem's Christological opening, which posits a more radical placing of Tom's 'low lot' (l. 5). The very image of the garland, even if it refers (as here) to iron nails hammered into the soles of boots, inevitably redirects the gaze from Tom's tramping yet mighty feet to his head, suggesting that he, too, might occupy the place of sovereignty, and that his place in the commonwealth might thus be less rigidly fixed than the poem (and Hopkins's gloss on the poem) appears to imply: the last may be first, or the lowest highest.<sup>60</sup> Jacques Rancière would recognise Tom's undenizened place, such as it is, as a place of no place. He is 'no-one, nowhere' (l. 16), since he plays the 'part of those who have no part, of this nothing that is all'.<sup>61</sup> On this reading of 'Tom's Garland', then, Tom both embodies and destabilises the poem's Hobbesian metaphor of the state-as-body, while Hopkins the settled 'Tory democrat' (the phrase is Geoffrey Hill's) remains deeply unsettled by his fleeting communist self-identification of 1871; in contrast to the authoritative pronouncement of Hopkins's crib, Hill finds the poem to be 'rigid with "intellectual insecurity", or insecure intellectualism, in every line'.<sup>62</sup> Tom's ease of heart and mind is, in this sense, a mirror-image of Hopkins's considerable unease. Hill also suggests that Hopkins was a poet who '[knew] democracy to be alienated from its proper majesty by the egalitarian and the mean'—a view for which much evidence could certainly be marshalled, but which also silently passes over Hopkins's evident attraction to a more egalitarian version of democracy, as he had expressed it in the red letter.<sup>63</sup> In 'Tom's Garland', Hopkins again faces the spectre of 'political conflict [which] designates the tension between the structured social body in which each part has its place, and the "part of no part" which unsettles this order on account of the empty principle of universality'.<sup>64</sup> And if this, in turn, calls to mind the comparable identification between Christ and the martyred nuns of 'The Wreck', then one need not see the pattern of influence, from the earlier poem to the latter, as a one-way street: 'Tom's Garland', in short, can open the way to a reading of the thematics of martyrdom at work in 'The Wreck' in light of the poet's later and more explicit exploration of class politics in what John Sutherland describes as Hopkins's 'single poem on public affairs'.<sup>65</sup> Hopkins composed 'Tom's Garland' in December 1887, but the poem reprised a theme that had frequently preoccupied his correspondence for the previous two decades, and which would have been a regular feature of his refectory reading. In 1875, during the months immediately preceding Hopkins's composition of 'The Wreck', Charles Stanton Devas opened his series of articles titled 'Labour and Capital' by stating that 'We live in a time and in a country in which a great industrial warfare is going on, which is commonly called the struggle between labour and capital', and set out to answer 'whether Catholics as such should take any part in this struggle'.<sup>66</sup> Had Hopkins closely

followed the *Month* in this period, he would also have encountered several further discussions of the Commune, sometimes in close proximity to reflections on the distant and recent history of Catholic martyrdom. In the May issue, for instance, Goldie frets that '[t]he horrors of the French Revolution have been re-enacted in Paris, and there is too much reason to fear that the rule of the Commune may be again inaugurated in a country in which the good are so divided and the bad are so united'.<sup>67</sup> Calling to mind a recently renewed interest in 'the hidden life of Catholicity in England under the Penal Laws', Goldie is particularly troubled by the prospect of a resurgent Commune because of the threat it would pose to the 'spread and maintenance of that precious heritage, which our martyrs and confessors have, at such a cost to themselves, handed down to us'.<sup>68</sup> In the December issue, meanwhile, W. S. Lilly's article titled 'The Catholic Working Men's Union in France' characterises 'the working classes' as the 'stronghold of the Revolution', and, quoting Carlyle's comments on the spread of democracy in his *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, warns that 'the Commune has given us a foretaste of the Red Republican Millennium'.<sup>69</sup> Elsewhere in the same issue, published in the month of the S.S. *Deutschland's* wreckage, Hopkins would have found himself even more starkly reminded of his 1871 Whit Monday experience. H. Bedford's otherwise innocuous travel diary, 'At Home and Abroad', records his visit to the 'sacristy of the Cathedral' in Paris which displayed 'many rich reliquaries' of martyred Parisian archbishops, including the 'soutane of Mgr. Dubois [probably a misprint for Darboy], pierced, not with a dagger stroke or single shot, but torn and mangled by seven bullets and stained with his own blood and the dirt of the foul wall against which the Communists placed him as their target, and with the earth on which he breathed out his righteous soul'.<sup>70</sup> When Hopkins's mother suggested that he might seek publication for 'The Wreck' in a secular journal, he replied defensively on 26 June 1876 that 'You forget that we have a magazine of our own, the *Month*', suggesting his evident esteem for the journal's contents.<sup>71</sup> Martin Dubois has persuasively argued that 'a stronger association than has usually been made [can] be drawn between Hopkins's major ode and the journal', pointing to the 'prominence given to recusant history within the pages of the *Month*', and noting that the journal's contents were often discussed by students at St Beuno's.<sup>72</sup> Insofar as the journal also took up and repeatedly explored the subject which had struck Hopkins so forcefully in 1871, his perusals of the *Month* would have afforded him ample scope to revisit and reassess his identification with the communist recusants of 1871, suggesting yet another route by which 'The Wreck' 'can be seen creatively engaging the journal's concerns'.<sup>73</sup>

Strange as this posited connection between the Commune and 'The Wreck' may at first appear, it is argued here that the thoughts which Hopkins struggled to articulate—and then subsequently repressed—in his

1871 letter to Bridges found an occluded outlet in his later poetry, and that Hopkins approached the Commune with reference to the same interpretative framework of 'lovely-felicitous Providence' (l. 245) with which he sought to comprehend the drowning of the Franciscan nuns in 'The Wreck of the Deutschland': one red-letter day (invoked at the end of stanza 30) recalls his experience of another (invoked in stanza 31's closing rhetorical question, if one allows the grain to carry an allusion to the Pentecostal celebration of the wheat harvest). In facing up to a social order 'founded on wrecking', Hopkins found solace in a theological commitment which identified the act of wrecking with the unfathomability of divine providence organised around the cyclical pattern of crucifixion and resurrection, death and rebirth. Hopkins's qualified rejection of the temporal authority of the 'old civilisation and order' which had put down the Commune also contrasts sharply with the note of affirmation and acceptance in the face of punishment with which he opens 'The Wreck': 'I did say yes/O at lightning and lashed rod;/Thou heardst me truer than tongue confess/Thy terror, O Christ, O God' (ll. 9–12). For J. Hillis Miller, these lines evoke 'the tongues of fire at Pentecost [which] brought the gift of tongues to the apostles, and were themselves the breathing in both of grace and of the power to speak'.<sup>74</sup> The poem's later injunction to 'Breathe, body of lovely Death' (l. 196) continues the Pentecostal imagery, and signals a different kind of allusion to the Commune's last days—at least as Hopkins would have experienced them on Whit Monday in 1871—since the feast of Pentecost is celebrated with a vigil mass that includes a reading from the Book of Ezekiel (37:1–14): 'Dry bones, I am going to make the breath enter you, and you will live'. This allusive aspect of Hopkins's injunction, in recalling the recent conflagration of 1871, links the nuns' deaths to the deaths of the five Jesuit fathers killed by the Communards, and, more radically, to the martyrdom of the Communards themselves. Hopkins's evocation of the crucifixion, here, also follows the enunciation of a rhetorical question which brings promise of divine love: 'Is it love in her of the being as her lover had been?' (l. 195). Hopkins, one might think, responds to Bridges's ruminations about an unruly love that becomes excessive, and destructive in its excess, with a redemptive vision of a 'Lovescape crucified', heralding a situation in which 'these thy daughters' might 'breathe in his all-fire glances' (ll. 181, 184).

In August 1871, Hopkins had fretted that the Communards 'do not care what they wreck and burn, the old civilisation must be destroyed'. In his very last extant poem, 'To R. B.' (1889)—another poem that relates, quite explicitly on this occasion, to his correspondence with Bridges—Hopkins appropriates a different kind of fire to himself, identifying it with poetic inspiration and 'The fine delight that fathers thought; the strong/Spur, live and lancing like the blowpipe flame' (ll. 1–2). He continues: 'Sweet fire the sire of muse,

my soul needs this;/I want the one rapture of an inspiration' (ll. 9–10). Even more tellingly, the last line of the poem's first draft alludes to the various impasses they had reached in their correspondence, as Hopkins delivers a firm injunction to Bridges, 'Rebuke no more, but read my explanation' (the crib for 'Tom's Garland', the red letter, etc.), while the final draft strikes a more conciliatory note in its reference to 'our explanation' (l. 14) and suggests a willingness to yield on Hopkins's part. Even so, one senses that the old embers still smouldered. At the conclusion of 'The Wreck', meanwhile, the destructive fire that Hopkins had pictured in connection with the Commune's last days reappears in a transfigured form: Hopkins implores the 'heaven-flung, heart-fleshed, maiden-furled/Miracle-in-Mary-of-flame' (ll. 267–68) to burn ever, and he closes with an invocation of 'Our héarts' charity's héarth's fire' (l. 280). These flames, both homely and miraculous, continue to affirm Hopkins's 1871 statement that 'the old civilisation must be destroyed', though the fire no longer allegorises a justification of class struggle, but instead points to what Meredith Martin characterises as the poem's allegorisation of 'the violence that God visits upon his subjects, especially his son', reaching towards a conclusion that reconnects the 'religious and the national' by way of a 'metaphysical transformation of the English language and the religious conversion of England'.<sup>75</sup> As Martin Dubois points out, Hopkins is primarily concerned, in the poem's closing stanzas, to celebrate an 'act of martyrdom' that presages 'the communion of saints', rather than the communisation of society.<sup>76</sup> The collective pronouns of the poem's last stanza, Dubois adds, 'ensure that the weight of "The Wreck" at its close is communal, not individual', but the community Hopkins projects is a religious rather than a revolutionary one (which is not to say that religion cannot be revolutionary).<sup>77</sup> Retreating from his earlier apprehension of the Benjaminian divine violence of revolution, Hopkins offers instead a different kind of redemptive promise, once summarised by Louis Althusser (as an exemplar of the mechanisms of ideological interpellation) in the following manner: 'if you observe the "law of love" you will be saved [...] and will become part of the Glorious Body of Christ! Etc ...'.<sup>78</sup>

The particular and unusual incarnational theology that underpins Hopkins's desired conversion of England is no more or less compelling, on its own terms, than that of any faith community.<sup>79</sup> Yet Hopkins's decision to enter the Jesuit Novitiate in 1868 was based, at least in part, on what Jack Lindsay refers to as his 'rejection of existing social values', and his response to the event of the Commune was one moment in his articulation, or working through, of that rejection, providing 'a point of social relation for the lonely gesture of renunciation'.<sup>80</sup> The question that presents itself to those whose primary interest revolves around Hopkins's poetic, and which I have tried to open here, concerns the extent to which Hopkins's encounter

with the Commune, brief and private though it was, proved to be merely coincidental to the development of that poetic, or whether it played a fuller and more determining role. In the reading of ‘The Wreck’ that has been offered here, the Commune looms larger in the poem than most of Hopkins’s critics have supposed. When Hopkins put his 1871 letter into circulation, he engaged in act of imaginative self-identification that he could never properly disavow, but which would continue to occupy a special place in his unconscious—that place which is, as Althusser puts it, ‘the absolute place where [each human being’s] particular discourse seeks its own place, seeks, misses, and in missing, finds its own place, its own anchor to its place, in the imposition, imposture, complicity and denegation of its own imaginary fascinations’.<sup>81</sup> This article has sought to restore the Commune to its place in the development of Hopkins’s poetic and, in doing so, to offer up a view of Hopkins as one of the *fin de siècle*’s foremost *Communards manqués*.

## Notes

1. Peter Starr, *Commemorating Trauma: The Paris Commune and its Cultural Aftermath* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), pp. 6, 18–19.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *The Works of John Ruskin*, eds, E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols (London: George Allen, 1903–1912), vol. 35, p. 13; vol. 27, p. 116.
4. *The Collected Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, eds, R.K.R. Thornton, Catherine Phillips et al., 8 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), vol. 1, p. 209.
5. Gerald Roberts, ‘Hopkins and the Condition of England’, *The Hopkins Quarterly* 14.1/4 (April 1987–January 1988), 113–26 (116). Roberts assumes Ruskin’s 1 July letter in *Fors Clavigera* to be the most likely inspiration for Hopkins’s red letter.
6. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, pp. 209–10.
7. The fraternity of fictional protagonists would include Alton Locke (a tailor), John Barton (a weaver), Felix Holt (a watchmaker), Joshua Davidson (a carpenter), Arthur Golding (a printer), Hyacinth Robinson (a bookbinder) and Jude Fawley (a stonemason).
8. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, p. 210.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 505.
10. *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. Norman H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 125. Further references to this edition will appear, in parentheses, in the body of the text by line number only.
11. Jack Lindsay, ‘The Commune of Paris and English Literature’, *Marxist Quarterly* 1.3 (July 1954), 169–80 (174).
12. Martin Dubois, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Poetry of Religious Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 113.
13. J. Hillis Miller, *The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth-Century Writers*, new edn (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), p. 318.

14. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, pp. 512–13. Lesley Higgins, the volume's editor, records that Hopkins would also have heard a reading at supper on 22 November 1871 of Armand Ponlevoy's *Acts of the Captivity and Death of the Fathers Pierre Olivaint, Leon Ducoudray, Jean Caubert, Alexis Clerc, and Anatole de Bengy* (1871). See *ibid.*, p. 512 n.1108 and Alfred Thomas, *Hopkins the Jesuit: The Years of Training* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 240. For discussion of the poem's more immediately apparent politics of martyrdom with reference to the surrounding context of religious persecution of Catholics in Germany, and the poem's 'specific martyrological conventions', see Dubois, pp. 112–22 (112).
15. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 514.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 5, pp. 539–40.
19. Slavoj Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out*, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), p. 25.
20. Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete English Edition*, trans. Bruce Fink in collaboration with Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), p. 21.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
22. Slavoj Žižek, *In Defence of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008), p. 81.
23. Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom!*, p. 16.
24. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, p. 228.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. Žižek, *In Defence of Lost Causes*, p. 163.
29. In a letter to Hopkins's grandmother, dated 28 July 1913, Bridges writes that 'When Gerard saw my first book of poems,—it was in my house in London—he took it up with some curiosity. You can imagine his quiet deliberate examination of it.' Bridges's reminiscence confirms Hopkins's perusal of the volume, though is not necessarily reliable as regards the date of Hopkins's 'first' sight of the book. See *The Selected Letters of Robert Bridges*, ed. Donald E. Stanford, 2 vols (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984), vol. 2, p. 628.
30. Robert Bridges, *Poems* (London: Basil Montagu Pickering, 1873), p. 65.
31. Andrew Lang, 'Poems by Robert Bridges', *The Academy* 89 (17 January 1874), 53–54 (53).
32. Bridges, *Poems*, p. 23.
33. W. B. Yeats, *Collected Poems*, ed. Augustine Martin (London: Vintage, 1992), p. 178.
34. Massimiliano Tomba, *Insurgent Universality: An Alternative Legacy of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 83.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Karl Marx, 'The Civil War in France', in David Fernbach, ed., *The First International and After: Political Writings, Volume 3* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), p. 203.
37. Jacques Rancière, *The Intellectual and his People: Staging the People, Volume 2*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2012), p. 112.
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*

40. Jeffrey B. Loomis, *Dayspring in Darkness: Sacrament in Hopkins* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988), p. 75.
41. Marx, p. 233.
42. William Morris, *Political Writings: Contributions to 'Justice' and 'Commonweal' 1883–1890*, ed. Nicholas Salmon (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1994), p. 234.
43. *The Collected Letters of William Morris*, ed. Norman Kelvin, 4 vols in 5 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984–1996), vol. 3, p. 45.
44. Kristin Ross, *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune* (London: Verso, 2015), p. 96.
45. Franco Marucci, 'Hopkins's Political Ideas', *The Hopkins Quarterly* 14.1/4 (April 1987–January 1988), 127–43 (135).
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*, p. 137. In stark contrast to the political anti-imperialism of Morris, Marucci also comments that Hopkins hoped that 'inside this Empire Britain might attain and keep the role of leading member and beacon of civilization' (*ibid.*).
48. Marx, pp. 217, 213.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
50. Gerard Manley Hopkins, *The Major Works*, ed. Catherine Phillips, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 341.
51. Marx, p. 213.
52. Isobel Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 405.
53. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, p. 252; Martin Dubois, 'The Month as Hopkins Knew It', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 43.3 (Fall 2010), 296–308 (297, 299).
54. 'Henri de France', *The Month* 15.85–86 (July–August 1871), 120–135 (121).
55. Rev. F. Goldie, 'Chapters of Contemporary History: IV. The Prisoner of the Vatican', *The Month and Catholic Review* 21.121 (July 1874), 304–317 (309).
56. 'Chapters of Contemporary History: I. How the Third French Republic was Made', *The Month and Catholic Review* 20.116 (February 1874), 193–213 (213). The subsequent instalment, published in March, provides a short (and partial) history of the Commune's emergence, condemning the Commune as an example of 'rebellion or seditious disaffection to authority'. See 'Chapters of Contemporary History: II. Difficulties of the Government of National Defence', *The Month and Catholic Review* 21.119 (May 1874), 43–58 (58).
57. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 2, p. 919.
58. *Ibid.*
59. John Sutherland suggests that the 'reference to thorns in the poem reinforces an association with Christ's crown of thorns and crown of glory'. John Sutherland, "'Tom's Garland": Hopkins' Political Poem', *Victorian Poetry* 10.2 (Summer 1972), 111–121 (116n).
60. Matthew 20 offers a parable about unemployment that precedes Christ's prediction of his betrayal and martyrdom. Hopkins echoes Matthew 20:16 in stanza 8 of 'The Wreck': 'Hither then, last or first,/To hero of Calvary, Christ's feet' (ll. 62–63).
61. Jacques Rancière, *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 9.



62. Geoffrey Hill, 'Alienated Majesty: Gerard M. Hopkins', in *Collected Critical Writings*, ed. Kenneth Haynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 530.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 531. One can agree with Hill that '[d]emocratic does not mean egalitarian' (p. 530), but communism surely does, and it is *that* ideal with which Hopkins identified in 1871.
64. Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 188.
65. Sutherland, p. 111.
66. C. S. Devas, 'Labour and Capital', *The Month and Catholic Review* 25.136 (October 1875), 156–174 (156).
67. Rev. F. Goldie, 'A Page from the History of the Reign of Terror', *The Month and Catholic Review* 24.131 (May 1875), 90–98 (90).
68. *Ibid.*
69. W. S. Lilly, 'The Catholic Workingmen's Union in France', *The Month and Catholic Review* 25.138 (December 1875), 448–470 (451).
70. H. Bedford, 'At Home and Abroad: II. On the Road', *The Month and Catholic Review* 25.138 (December 1875), 435–447 (446).
71. Hopkins, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, p. 252.
72. Dubois, 'The Month as Hopkins Knew It', pp. 300–1.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
74. Hillis Miller, p. 318.
75. Meredith Martin, *The Rise and Fall of Meter: Poetry and English National Culture, 1860–1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 66–67.
76. Dubois, *Gerard Manley Hopkins*, p. 63.
77. *Ibid.*
78. Žižek, *In Defence of Lost Causes*, p. 162; Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 51.
79. For discussion of Hopkins's incarnational aesthetic, see Maria R. Lichtmann, 'The Incarnational Aesthetic of Gerard Manley Hopkins', *Religion & Literature* 23.1 (Spring 1991), 37–50.
80. Lindsay, pp. 173–74.
81. Althusser, 'Freud and Lacan', in *Essays on Ideology*, pp. 164–65.

## Disclosure statement

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