



## Touching God

Hopkins and Love

*Duc Dau*

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### An examination of love in relation to touch in Gerard Manley Hopkins' writings.

'Duc Dau has written an exciting and provocative book, [...] a worthy and timely addition to the world of Hopkins scholarship, bringing a fresh, innovative, and at times deliberately challenging approach to the too-often-overlooked area of love in the writing of Hopkins. [...] Far from denying the corporeal, this approach rightly draws attention to a frequently overlooked rich spiritual eroticism found nestling at the very heart of so much of Hopkins's writing.' — Hannah Dunleavy, 'Hopkins Quarterly'

'Touching God: Hopkins and Love' is the first book devoted to love in the writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins, illuminating our understanding of him as a romantic poet. Discussions of desire in Hopkins' poetry have focused on his unrequited attraction to men. In contrast, Duc Dau turns to Luce Irigaray and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theories of mutual touch to uncover the desire Hopkins cultivated and celebrated: his love for Christ. 'Touching God' demonstrates how descriptions of touching played a vital role in the poet's vision of spiritual eroticism. Forging a new way of reading desire and the body in Hopkins' writings, the work offers fresh interpretations of his poetry.

### Contents

Acknowledgements; Abbreviations; Introduction: Love and Touch; Chapter One: Confluence and Reflection; Chapter Two: Virgin Marriage and the Song of Songs; Chapter Three: Conception, Pregnancy, Birth; Chapter Four: Caressing, Conversing, Kissing; Chapter Five: Homecoming; Notes; Bibliography; Index

### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Duc Dau is an honorary research fellow in English and Cultural Studies at the University of Western Australia, where she also completed her doctorate on the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

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