

## TRADITIONAL THEMES IN TED HUGHES POETRY

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### *ABSTRACT*

*In this work main features of Ted Hughes's creative activities, traditional approaches to poetic themes and depiction is discussed. In the example of the poem "Thrushes" we can observe peculiarities of traditional English poetry, wide-spread themes and their expression in individual manner.*

***Key words:** Ted Hughes poetry, the poem "Thrushes", traditional thematic depiction, individual style of expression.*

**Introduction.** Edward James Hughes was born on 17 August 1930 in Mytholmroyd, West Yorkshire. He was the third and youngest child of Edith Farrar Hughes and William Henry Hughes, a carpenter denotes that when Hughes was seven, the family moved to a mining town in South Yorkshire.

Hughes began writing poetry in his mid-teens after his family moved to Mexborough. His first influence was Rudyard Kipling, and he enjoyed writing adventure stories. As Hughes's reading widened, he discovered the poetry of W.B.Yeats and T.S.Eliot. He was encouraged in his poetic aspirations by his schoolteachers and by his sister Olwyn. Hughes was a successful student, and he won

an Exhibition to study English at Pembroke College, Cambridge. He finally took up his place at Cambridge in October 1951. Hughes abandoned the study of English and changed to Archaeology and Anthropology. It was a significant change because the religions and methodologies of other cultures were to have an important influence on his poetry.

Ted Hughes' poetic style is unique and he's influenced by Hopkins, Dylan Thomas and Sylvia Plath. His typical tendency is to make use of powerful vocabulary and put phrases collectively in an uncommon mixture. Consequently, the readers are obliged to make a psychological effort to get the interpretations of the phrase mixtures. But it doesn't imply that Hughes is incapable of utilizing easy vocabulary or of placing phrases collectively in easy mixtures. He has also written such poems through which the vocabulary is totally easy too. He was known for his animal poetry like *The Thought Fox*, *Thrushes*, *Hawk in the Rain*, *The Horses*, and many more, and is known as an animal poet who places animal's superior to human beings.

**Main part.** Different critics have approached Hughes' poems from completely different angles. Some critics like Thomas Nye, has tried to seek out the explanations of Hughes's use of an excessive amount of obsession with animals and found that apparently. This makes Ted Hughes' poetry distinctive among the many others. Talking about some themes in Ted Hughes poetry, we've got; themes of nature, family and relationships, love and romance, mortality and religion are some most typical themes. In the poem *Thrushes*, the poet compares *Thrushes* with human beings and tries to depict that *Thrushes* are far better than human beings.

The poem has been written in 3 stanzas with 8 lines in each stanza. The title of the poem is *Thrushes*, and *Thrush* is a kind of small bird. "*Thrushes*" is a short poem composed of four stanzas of four lines each. The poem is written in free verse, with no set rhyme or meter, but it is still highly structured. Each stanza is a complete thought that builds on the one before it.

At its core, “Thrushes” is a meditation on the beauty and brutality of nature. Hughes was fascinated by the natural world, but he didn't shy away from its darker aspects. In "Thrushes," he captures the duality of nature by showing how something as beautiful as a bird can also be a harbinger of death.

The poem begins with the speaker observing the thrushes in their winter habitat.

*Terrifying are the attend sleek thrushes on the lawn, More coiled steel than living- a poised Dark deadly eye, those delicate legs Triggered to stirrings beyond sense - with a start, a bounce, a stab*

The birds are described as “full-grown”, which suggests that they are powerful and self-assured. The use of the word “cocky” also implies a sort of swagger or confidence on the part of the birds. This initial description of the thrushes sets up the contrast between their outward appearance and their true nature.

As the poem progresses, the speaker's tone becomes more ominous. The thrushes are described as “death-bringers”, which is a stark contrast to their initial portrayal as confident and powerful birds. The image of the thrushes as “dark prophets” suggests that they have a sort of supernatural power, as if they can see into the future and predict death and destruction.

The final stanza of the poem is the most disturbing:

*Though he bends to be blend in the prayer, how loud and above what Furious spaces of fire do the distracting devils Orgy and hosanna, under what wilderness Of black silent waters weep.*

The speaker imagines the thrushes “spattering their head-chopping cries”, which is a violent and unsettling image. The use of the word “spattering” suggests a chaotic and messy violence, while “head-chopping” conjures up images of beheadings and other gruesome acts of violence. This final image of the thrushes is a reminder that even the most beautiful things in nature can be deadly.

“Thrushes” is a beautiful and haunting poem that captures the beauty and brutality of the natural world. Hughes’ ability to convey the duality of nature is a

testament to his skill as a poet. Whether you interpret the poem as a commentary on the human condition, a meditation on the fleeting nature of life, or a warning about complacency, there is no denying the power of “Thrushes” to move and inspire readers.

**Conclusion.** Ted Hughes, as a modernist poet, his themes are complicated to cover because they refer to nature, and the characters inside his poems are mostly animals. Literary works, especially poetry, are rich fields of study, and poets can use them to boost readers' critical thinking and helping them to use Language more effectively. Ted Hughes has written some interesting poems that readers can use to improve their critical thinking. The poems have interesting themes like inspiration, loneliness, survival, and dictatorship that readers can relate to it. Throughout analyzing the summary and themes of Ted Hughes’s poems, readers can grasp and use their critical thinking while reading a poem, and they can engage it with their daily life activities.

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