TED HUGHES AND CHRISTIANITY

This book provides a radical reassessment of Ted Hughes's relationship with the Christian faith, revealing his critically-endorsed paganism as profoundly and productively engaged with all the essentials of Christian thought. Hughes’s intense criticism of the Reformation, his interest in restoring the Virgin Mary to her pre-Christian status as divine mother-goddess, his attempts to marry evolutionary science to scripture with a biological interpretation of the fall, his endorsement of the cross as the central symbol of the human condition, and the role of Christ in his account of Sylvia Plath are among the many topics explored. Along the way, Troupes establishes strong thematic and intertextual links between Hughes and the American Transcendentalist tradition – a tradition that offers moments of vital illumination of Hughes's religious themes, while encouraging a more generous trans-Atlantic appreciation of Hughes's literary affiliations.

DAVID TROUPES completed his PhD at the University of Sheffield in 2018. His writing on Ted Hughes has appeared in Religion and Literature, The Ted Hughes Society Journal, and PN Review, as well as in critical anthologies from Cambridge University Press and Palgrave Macmillan. He has also published two full collections of poetry, and a selection of his recent work appeared in Carcanet's New Poetries VI.
TED HUGHES AND CHRISTIANITY

DAVID TROUPES
For Neil Roberts
How things are between man and his idea of the Divinity determines everything in his life, the quality and connectedness of every feeling and thought, and the meaning of every action.

Ted Hughes, “The Great Theme: Notes on Shakespeare”
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Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the universe for putting Jonathan Ellis and Neil Roberts in my path years before I thought about undertaking the doctoral research from which this book grew, and for arranging them as my eventual supervisors. I couldn't have asked for sharper or more supportive readers of my work. I am also grateful to have been so warmly welcomed and encouraged by the community of Ted Hughes scholars, especially Neil, Terry Gifford, and Mark Wormald. I trust that even my more argumentative moments here will be taken in the spirit of collaboration that defines Hughes scholarship. Other valuable assistance along the way has been received from James Crossley, Katie Edwards, Scott Eldridge II, Steve Ely, Peter Fydler, Michael Malay, Paul Merchant, Martin Palmer, Adam Piette, Mark Tattum-Smith, and Meredith Warren: I thank you all.

I am grateful to the White Rose College of Arts and Humanities for offering me the studentship that allowed me to undertake the research for this book. I am also grateful to Emory University for the award of a Rose Library Short-Term Fellowship, which enabled me to spend three weeks conducting research in their extensive Hughes archive, and for the helpfulness and warmth of their staff. I would also like to thank the staff at the British Library’s Manuscripts Reading Room, and Lead Curator Helen Melody, for some timely signposting.

This book draws upon several articles and anthology chapters I have published elsewhere, listed in the bibliography, whose editors I kindly acknowledge: Michael Schmidt at PN Review and Romana Huk at Religion and Literature, among names already thanked here.

My last and greatest thanks go to my wife Anne-Marie, and all of my family, for their love and encouragement.
Abbreviations

For convenience, the following abbreviations are used for in-text references to Ted Hughes’s publications:

A  Alcestis
CP  Collected Poems
CPC  Collected Poems for Children
DB  Difficulties of a Bridegroom
G  Gaudete
IM  The Iron Man
LTH  Selected Letters of Ted Hughes
Pe&C  Poet and Critic: The Letters of Ted Hughes and Keith Sagar
PM  Poetry in the Making
SGCB  Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being
TO  Tales from Ovid
WIT  What Is the Truth?
WP  Winter Pollen

And the following abbreviations are used for Sylvia Plath’s publications:

CPSP  Collected Poems
JSP  The Unabridged Journals of Sylvia Plath
JPBD  Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams
LSP1  The Letters of Sylvia Plath Volume 1: 1940–1956

All other references are footnoted, with a full bibliography at the end of the book. Regarding archival material, “Emory” refers to the Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library at the University of Emory, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, and “BL” refers to the Western Manuscripts collection.
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Abbreviations

at the British Library, London, UK. All biblical quotations follow the 
*Authorized King James Version* (Oxford University Press, 1997) and repro-
duce all formatting, including italicization for translators’ interpolations. 
As Carol Hughes confirmed to me by letter, this was the translation 
Hughes usually read.