

Wystan Hugh Auden

Auden is acknowledged as the leading poet of his generation. He was born in York in 1907, studied at Oxford University with other literary personalities. He became their leading voice of the group, which was interested in socio-political problems.

He travelled a lot and married the daughter of a German novelist to get a British passport for her and let her escape from Nazi Germany.

He moved to the USA in 1939 and became a US citizen in 1946. In 1956 he became Professor of Poetry at Oxford University. He died in Austria in 1973.

Themes, forms, language and "Refugee Blues"

Auden is the most representative of the social poetry of the Thirties. Poetry should be topical, comprehensible and political. The poet has a public task in a context dominated by

nated by the rise of fascism in Europe.

In "Refugee Blues" we can notice the typical themes of the political poetry. In this case it is centred on the problem of Jewish refugees from Hitler's Germany. A man is supposed to be speaking to his wife about the way they are not considered human beings in Germany. They are "officially dead".

In his poem Auden used a large variety of forms and a language that mixes conversational usage with more poetic diction.