



المونولوج الدرامي التاريخي في قصائد مختارة لنورمان دوبي

م.د. حسين كاظم جلاب العسكري  
الجامعة المستنصرية/ كلية الآداب



*Historical Dramatic Monologues in Selected Poems by Norman Dubie*

*Lect. Hussein K. Ch. Alaskari, PhD*  
*College of Arts \ Translation Dept*  
*Mustansiriya University*  
*Email: [husseinkch@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq](mailto:husseinkch@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq)*



### المستخلص

مما لا شك فيه ان ديوان نورمان دبي (١٩٤٢ - ) المُسمى (مقعد الرحمة) المنشور سنة ٢٠٠١ يُعد المجموعة الشعرية الأبرز التي كتبها شاعرٌ أمريكيٌّ في العقد الأول للألفية الثانية للميلاد. وقد ضمت المجموعة قرابة المئتي قصيدة وامتدت على ٤٠٠ صفحة. تشمل المجموعة قصائد يكون المتحدث فيها شخوص لا يمثلون الشاعر نفسه وهؤلاء بالغالب شخصيات تاريخية. يهدف البحث الى دراسة استخدام الشاعر للمونولوج الدرامي كما ورد على لسان الشخصيات التاريخية ويُلاحظ ان همّ الشاعر الأكبر هو استخدام الشخوص التاريخية وكيف انه ركز على الشخصيات التاريخية من دون الاهتمام لحقيقة السرد التاريخي. الكلمات المفتاحية: نورمان دبي، مقعد الرحمة، المونولوج الدرامي، السرد التاريخي.

### Abstract

*Norman Dubie's (1942- ) collection of poems Mercy Seat (2001) is the most outstanding collection written by an American poet in the early 2000's. The collection includes more than 200 poems in two parts and 400 pages. It includes poems from the previous seventeen volumes of poems. This paper sheds light on the poet's employment of the dramatic monologues spoken by historical persona in selected poems from the Mercy Seat. It is noted in the collection that Dubie uses notorious personages as speakers and subjects. However, the poet's main reason behind this use of historical figures is not the recounting of facts about these personae.*

**Keywords:** Norman Dubie, Mercy Seats, Dramatic monologue, historical narrative.



## Introduction

Historical narrative is the recreation, in an imaginative, dreamlike manner, of vignettes of famous historical figures (artists, writers, leaders and the like) in a setting in which the historical and imaginative are blurred. The events narrated (and of course the conversations) are totally brainchild of the poet's imagination. Albeit the stories are imaginative to a great part, writing such poems requires some kind of knowledge of history and "painterly veneration of the past"(wikisummaries.org; par.6)..

Norman Evans Dubie is the son of Norman and Doris, the former being a clergyman and the latter is registered nurse. He received formal education the University; Goddard College. He was trained Iowa's Writers' Workshop in which he became a lecturer. After that he got the position of an assistant professor of English at Ohio University. During the mid-1970s, he joined the Arizona State University as 'writer-in-residence' and became professor of English and director of the school's graduate writing program.

Politically speaking, Dubie describes himself as "having no politics and some religion, and he also claims that "... he decided to become a poet when he was eleven years old". Dubie's decision to become a poet is credited to a teacher "..., who read great literature aloud". And his fascination with history is attributed to his "...father's large library"(wikisummaries.org; par. 1-2).

For many years, Dubie has practiced the Tibetan Buddhism to whose spiritual head (the Dalai Lama) *The Mercy Seat* is dedicated. the influence of Tibetan Buddhism on Dubie's work, a practice Dubie took up in the 1990s, particularly in the tenet of

Buddhism that emphasizes the “exchange” of oneself for another’s reality, which Tromp argues, is found all over Dubie’s poetry: “Dubie’s texts might be seen as more than dramatic monologues: they would then take on the aspect of spiritual exercises of identification, exchanges of self and other.”(qtd. in Gulotta, 15)

Dubie published up to seventeen volumes of poetry before *The Mercy Seat* which make up most of the poem in the collection in addition to about 100 pages of new poems. The choice of poems was not theme-based, instead, themes varied from historical narratives to modern elegy (as in "Elegy for My Brother"). The poems are written in first person but that does not mean that Dubie does not assume persona mostly historical figures. Baker (2014) calls it "... an encyclopedia of historical events and personages,..." (124)

Speakers in most part of the collection are personae (historical, literary and otherwise) other than Dubie. There are many voices especially those from the past. So, even though the voices speak in the poems are many and varied, David Kirby (2002) states that "... the voice that speaks on the first page of [*The Mercy Seats*] is the same on the reader hears on the last" (414). Also, it is noted in the collection that the personae speak to a silent attending listener in a historical context.

### **Historical Dramatic Monologue**

The term Dramatic Monologue has several synonyms and distinctive literary uses. It can be defined as "any speech of some duration addressed by a character to a second person". Whereas in a soliloquy the character directly "... addresses an audience or speaks thoughts aloud while alone or while the other actors remain silent, in the dramatic monologue there is an assumed one

listener. In fiction, an interior monologue is a type of monologue that exhibits the thoughts and feelings passing through a character's mind" (Merriam-Webster, 2010).

The difference between poems in which the poet is speaking to the reader and one in which the speaker (someone absolutely not the poet, yet created or borrowed by him) addresses a silent listener is called dramatic monologue. So the poems are called *dramatic* because they a theatrical quality; i.e., as if the poem is supposed to be read to an audience. On the other hand, a *monologue* means that these are the words of a single speaker with no dialogue coming from any other character(s).

Even though the readers are part of the audience, the poem typically suggests that the speaker is principally talking to a specific person(s). The presence of that interlocutor has spurred the speaker to utter his monologue. However, the awkwardness arises when readers find that the opinions stated by that character are not often the same as the views of the poet.

Abrahams (2008) illustrates that for a poem to be dramatic monologue one or more features should be provided:

(1) A single person, who is patently not the poet, utters the speech that makes up the whole of the poem, in a specific situation at a critical moment: .... (2) This person addresses and interacts with one or more other people; but we know of the auditors' presence, and what they say and do, only from clues in the discourse of the single speaker. (3) The main principle controlling the poet's choice and formulation of what the lyric speaker says is to reveal to the reader (85-86).

Thus many of the poems in which the poet himself speaks to a silent auditor cannot be qualified as dramatic monologue since the speaker is the poet himself. Abraham cites the poem of

Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" (1798) is a salient example of such condition (85).

It is not difficult to guess what urges poets to use the dramatic monologues. It gives the poets the space to write about themes, situations, and topics that is not taken from their own lives. The assumption goes that in poetry-writing, unlike the other genres of literature; the poem's speaker is almost always the poet himself and about her\his personal experience. Thus, dramatic monologues would surely give poets the same imaginative liberty to move outside the narrated poem in characters and situations. The other important purpose of writing in such form is to involve the reader in the poem, i.e. to make her\him feel being inside the poem.

One advantage that dramatic monologue has over theatrical drama is that the former give a chance more than the script of an actor for the poet talks with two minds upon a topic as a result of the ambiguities or deferred meanings that can be created through line breaks and even punctuation. In addition, it provides freedom to explore the emotions and fantasies of a speaker in a dramatic monologue than there is in a theatrical one, because there is no other voice to challenge the speaker's.

Dramatic monologue was perfected by the English poet Robert Browning<sup>1</sup>, whose mastery of the art made it associated with him specially in poems like "My Last Duchess," "The Bishop Orders His Tomb," "Andrea del Sarto," and many other poems. Hugh Walker has the famous saying that "Browning did not invent the dramatic monologue, but he made it specially his own, and no

---

<sup>1</sup> - for more discussion of dramatic monologue in Robert Browning's poetry, see this source: Britta Martens, *The Poetry of Robert Browning* (London: Palgrave, 2016).

one else has ever put such rich and varied material into it.” (qtd. in Sarkar) Browning usually leaves out the silent listener and it is left to the reader to decide who was there with the speaker. His characters indulged more in introspection, reminiscence and analysis of motives than action. In his introduction to Browning's book collected poems, Young (1929) opines that Browning is not the drama of the outer world of events but the inner world of the soul “where nothing is of importance unless it is transmuted into a form influencing mind and character.”(xii)

In the post-modern era of art in general and poetry in particular the autobiographical element is highly prized. There is no more the Mid-twentieth century short-lived New criticism idea of removing the (auto)biographical element from the poem and praising it only for its language and aesthetic value. Poets like T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound used historical personae as their alter-egos allowing them to speak the unspeakable. Dubie's distinguishing form is use of historical narrative, in which a persona either from literature or history speaks or is spoken to by an unidentified interlocutor. Dubie tends to write in voices not his own taking to historical personae and notorious people. This is the reason why Dubie uses the different character to speak behind the veneer of historical personas. St. John (1990) suggests that "Dubie's monologues can sometimes suggest a collaborative effort between the poet and the past "perceiver"; yet, even when the poems convey a serious and weighty historicity their speakers continue to wear their destinies calmly, usually with great grace and even humor" (13).

Dubie's identification with the personae his poems are represented forcefully that the reader nearly believes his personae in fact *were* him. St. John (1990) states that “cloth[ing] autobiographical urges and urgencies in the voices of history and



in the concept of the ‘other,’ Dubie still treats every voice and every speaker as if it were himself; he speaks with the urgency of that self and so makes each narrative monologue in some part autobiographical” (28).

Dramatic monologue is an ideal instrument for Dubie to vent his interest in history-telling, as it were, and also to escape his self and adopt a persona that speaks behind this persona. In an interview earlier Dubie declares that:

Because I’m reluctant to be myself in my poems and to speak about my life, because I don’t have the instinct to be autobiographical, I have to acquire another kind of authority. So I did discover early on that I could adopt a persona and then, somehow superimpose my life, my primary voice, against the endearment of this adopted persona, and arrive at a transcending voice that doesn’t really conform to the idea of what a persona is, as we knew it, say, in the work of Robert Browning. There is that confusion to it, and it always seemed a healthy productive confusion. I didn’t have the authority of an autobiographical voice. And so I did this deceitful thing with masks and, consequently, no one’s noticed so far that my mouth is moving and that I’m the [ventriloquist’s] dummy. (“Dark Spiralling Figures” 7)

The result is poetry written in the voices of other than the poet himself that crosses the boundaries to the reach unparalleled levels. Brown and de la Paz (2012) opine that “ [Dubie] broke the genre wide open by trying on a number of outfits, perspectives, and characters, and creating a rich body of work that cemented the importance—and limitless possibilities of—writing beyond oneself” (2).

### **Historical Narrative in Dubie's *Mercy Seats***

Dubie's use of historical personages as speakers and subjects renders his dramatic monologue more aligned to historical

narrative. St. John (1990) claims that "these speakers are the very voices of the historical junctures in the arts and sciences, in music and philosophy, that have changed the ways in which we think about ourselves as human beings". His use of the historical characters is not simply considerations of art and science; they are more basically mediation on thought itself and the nature of perception ..."(305)

In "The Czar's Last Christmas Letter: A Barn in the Urals," Dubie narrates the events in the voice of Czar Nicholas in the form of a poem addressed to the Czar's mother (Maria Feodorovna Romanova). It is written in the simple language and direct address of a son's letter to his mother who is the silent listener and the monologue is in the form of an epistolary poem. Resorting to the letter form in narrating his historic vignette by no means reduce the effect of dramatic monologue, and it is believed that many of Dubie's narrators "sound as if they are writing letters to intimate relations just after having been in the most revelatory, numinous experience of their lives".

The poem is formed in unrhymed two-line stanzas. The poem is noted for Dubie's talent of internalizing Czar Nicholas' experience. It is laden with historical allusions and facts about those people in which Czar Nicholas II tells his mother what his life has been like during his time in imprisonment in the Ural Mountains. The Czar of the poem narrates vignettes about his servant, Illya, and his wife and daughters during the Christmas Holidays. In his review of the collection *Mercy Seats*, Ian Tromp (2001) believes that "By assuming the identity of the historical figure, the poem personifies the whole complex of his moment, embodying the past and thereby going far deeper than a simple recitation of events" (par. 2).

The monologue could be with another character who is present listening literally to the Czar's words, but Dubie's choice of the a letter form to his mother is to expand the intimacy on one hand and also to provide a confessional tone to the monologue such as the moment when he regrets the war with Japan. The letter gives the reader the side of the Czar's character who he is more concerned with personal relationships than international issues. Nicholas writes:

*Mother, if for no other reason I regret the war  
With Japan for, you must now be told,  
It took the servant, Illya, from us. It was  
confirmed .*

(18-20)<sup>2</sup>

The reference in the above lines is to the Russo-Japanese war (1904–1905) in which Russia lost many soldiers. However, the Czar regrets not the war *per se* but because he lost a servant. Nicholas would not have uttered such a statement in a direct speech and a letter addressed to a close relative is the only situation in which he says this.

Although, the letter totally imagined, the joys and ethos are not unlikely to be felt by the Czar. In fact the depiction of the narrations does not correspond to the historical truths is, for Dubie, irrelevant. The thing that matters that most is the human reality depicted in the poem:

*Alexandra conducts the French and singing lessons.  
Mother, we are again a physical couple.*

---

<sup>2</sup> - All references to poems from Mercy Seats collection are taken from: *The Mercy Seat: Collected & New Poems, 1967-2001*. Townsend: Copper Canyon Press, 2002.

*I brush out her hair for her at night.  
She thinks that we'll be rowing outside Geneva  
By the Spring. I hope she won't be disappointed.  
Yesterday morning while bread was frying  
In one corner, she in another washed all of her legs  
Right in front of the children. I think  
We all became sad at her beauty .*

(30-38)

The larger historical significance of events can be felt in the voice and the dense psychological landscape of perplexity, and fear is rendered. The reader knows that Nicholas is doomed, and he senses that the Czar knows it, too. And the ethos is intensified when the Czar imagines a lovely, impossible future. Kevin Clarke, in a review of the collection *Mercy Seats*, thinks that

Dubie's grimly engaging narrative tone renders outer machinations and inner crises through structural and pictorial agents, many of which operate in unison. He is a poet fascinated with highly charged epiphany moments that may be horrific, ecstatic, or both. His interior portrayals allure, often heightening the reader's role as voyeur by revealing perceptions and human behavior usually hidden from social discourse (181).

The last five couplets of the poem spell out Nicholas' fear of death. While, the first 50 lines sketch the events from the past such as Illya's story and the merry-making preparations for the Christmas. The Czar must have felt unburned by the responsibility of Czardom. He expresses this to his mother with a sense of joy: "Don't think me a coward, Mother, but it is comfortable / Now that I am no longer Czar. I can take pleasure / From just a cup of clear water. . . ." (23-25).

The change of tone takes place in the last five couplets as a foreboding sense of death prevails:

*I know they keep your letters from us. But*

*Mother*

*The day they finally put them in my hands*

*I'll know that possessing them I am condemned*

*And possibly even my wife, and my children.*

*We will drink mint tea this evening.*

*Will each of us be increased by death?*

*With fractions as the bottom integer gets bigger*

*Mother, it*

*Represents less. That's the feeling I have about*

*This letter. I am at your request, The Czar.*

*And I am Nicholas*

As Tromp (2001) states it "Dubie's Nicholas gives the reader a recognizable empathetic subject, a confused, despairing, doomed individual, at once within the matrix of historical fact and abstracted from it. In this way, again and again, Dubie takes his reader into the longing, joy, and loss of his subjects"(par. 3).

Whereas in the Czar's poem both the speaker and the listener are identified, in "Elizabeth's War with the Christmas Bear," both are anonymous. The lack of a clearly identified interlocutor makes the poem more aligned to a soliloquy, an internal monologue or contemplative poem. The narrative is more about important historical context and less about the personal ethos. The narration is shifting from an outsider speaker who tells what he observes to Queen Elizabeth herself. The importance here is shifted towards the pure historical narrative rather than the psychological investigation. Both the Elizabethan Era's bear baiting and Queen Elizabeth II's own decline in stature (by being

described as "balding" and having an "eggshell face") are the center of the drama. St. John (1990) believes that:

Dubie's use of renowned personages as speakers and subjects. For Dubie, they hold no special attraction simply because of that renown; instead, he sees them as crucial historical exemplars of new and radical ways of thinking and perceiving from throughout our past (18).

The passivity of the powerful queen is ironic and in sharp contrast to the might of the brutalized bear. The bear is large that he takes "away the sun." It's so large that it casts a shadow over the Queen. We see the powerful if "balding" queen entertained by a baited bear, its nostrils "blown full with pepper" and attacked by ravenous "Irish wolf dogs." In an astounding scene, the bear, brutalized by the dogs and by volleys "of arrows and poles," rises, "grin[s] into her battered eggshell face," and sprays blood "all over Elizabeth and her Privy Council." Dubie's use of the phrase "white lap," is to allude to Elizabeth's virginity. The speaker narrated how there is a contrast between redness of the bloody dog and the Queen pure clothing.

The speaker then focuses on Elizabeth's vengeful reaction to the incident showing her weak human side. The narrative is not historical and there is not a single source that attests for this. However, painting her as powerful comes in sharp contrast to the early lines where she is described as declining monarch. The Queen orders to kill more bears and dogs, yet, she chooses at the bear's skeleton to be at her bedside, "cleared with lye," and burns a candle inside its skull.

In the final lines of the poem the narrative shifts to the Queen's point of view fully and her last frequent dream shows the poet as both surprising and connective. She speaks to the bear, telling it that she can see its beginning (a snow cave) and its end. The bear

was defeated, despite casting a great shade over the Queen. She defeated this threat to her life and her power. She's defeated it and remade it in a new way: *"Now, you'll stand by my bed in your long white bones; alone, you / Will frighten away at night all visions of bear, and all day/ You will be in this cold room—your constant grin,"*(42-44)

The bear is placed next to her bed in its "long white bones, alone" as a totem to scar away all nightmares of declining queen. At the end of the poem Elizabeth II compares the bear to herself. The bear is white as an indication of his purity just like the pure, virgin queen: *"You'll stand in the long, white prodigy of your bones, and you are,/ Every inch of you, a terrible vision, not bear, but virgin!"*(45-46)

The speaker in "February: the boy Brueghel" is somehow different and more sympathetic. The monologue is uttered by a highly sympathetic third party speaker. The poem is among the well-known early poems of Dubie. It is a recreation of a dramatic vignette in the life of a famous artist (the Dutch painter Pieter Bruegel ). In this poem, Dubie employs the recurrent tactics, the recreation of dramatic stories in the life of renowned historical figures narrated through dramatic monologue. The speaker of the monologue is in touch with reality and not an outside onlooker. The setting of the poem is the painter rural winter home. The speaker sheds light on the conditions in which the boy lived:

*The birches stand in their beggar's row:*

*Each poor tree*

*Has had its wrists nealy*

*Torn from the clear sleeves of bone.... (1-4)*

The words 'beggar' and 'poor' reflect a very difficult economic situation. The boy is about to witness a life-changing experience. The young Brueghel watches from a window as a fox carries a bleeding rabbit across the snow:

*wo colors! Red and white!*

*A barber's bowl!*

*Two colors like the peppers*

*In the windows*

*Of the town below the hill. Smoke comes*

*From the chimneys. Everything is still... (25-29)*

The movement of the fox is contrasted to the quiet landscape. In this poem the landscape is silent: "everything still," however, the thrilling action scene suggests a creative mind at its point of inspiration. The speaker notices that every aspect is properly colored to reenact the poem's central dilemma (the blood and soap of a "barber's bowl" to "Two colors like the peppers / In the windows / Of the town below the hill.") (41-42).

The narrator is captivated by the movement of the fox, chasing and 'overcom[ing]' a white rabbit. The visual juxtaposition of the red and white color attracts the speaker's attention. The color white does not symbolize purity but scarcity of resources instead. On the contrary, the red stands for profusion of resources. The vivid colors for painter-boy are drama to be seen and learned from, just like the beggar's anguish. The cruelty of the scene — becomes an inevitable occurrence just the artist's impulse for painterly creativity: "Just two colors! / A sunrise. The snow."(45)

It is noted that in both poems (The Brueghel and Elizabeth poems) there is an example of Dubie's tendency towards drama, as evinced by narrative scenes in which the character goes through a critical moment of his\her understanding. As critic



David Young puts it: "We know that Dubie is lying, though we are never sure how much, and instead of resenting the lying we like it, relearning the lesson about what poetry really is" (qtd. in Sarkar).

The next poem "The Negress: Her Monologue of Dark Crepe with Edges of Light" is another example of a letter-monologue or if you will, a historical letter written in an imagined historical context. But unlike the Czar poem, the speaker here focuses on the "I" experience not the "we". The speaker here is an ex-slave who ran away from her mistress. Chloe (which is her name) recounts her journey out of slavery with many funny and frightening incidents.

The speaker seeks freedom but only finds herself working for a library and residing "With the janitor and his wife and all of the books are mine To use." (7) The scope of her freedom in the new-found home is limited and she has to "scour, sweep, and dust. For most part the speaker seems to be still subservient to her former mistress and she bids the latter "don't think[s] of [her] a runaway" (10).

Like in the Czar poem the historical details occupy the centermost of the poem, more like the fictional narration in the epistle. The story is a total invention of Dubie's mind, but the historical backdrop retains the historical accuracy. As Baker (2014) opines:

It is impossible to tell sometimes whether his vignettes are historically actual or products of his invention; either way, Dubie tirelessly pursues dramatic scenes where image becomes action, where emotions run raw, and where epiphanies—those sudden shocks of revelation or understanding—are commonplace" (127).

In “Elsinore in Late Ancient Autumn” Dubai's speaker of the dramatic monologue is a minor character in Hamlet. The speech is uttered by "Yorick" the jester whose skull is found by the gravediggers in the renowned scene. The speaker *moves between his present dead state and his memories of time spent while alive in the castle*. It is not possible, of course, to understand the poem without having a preconception about the play. *In Dubie's work, we are given Yorick's voice, made clear in the opening lines:*

*I hear a dead march. A thin wrist is mincing roses*

*In the diagonal lights of the castle's arbor.*

*It is the nun at her stone bench.*

*We need new quantities*

*Of perfume for our palpable dead!*

*The landlord is no longer at war. Someone whispers*

*To me, "Yorick? Yorick?" (1-7)*

The absent listener makes the poem more like a soliloquy or an internal monologue. The absence of the listener makes the poem a *contemplative monologue, as the case with much of Dubie's work. There dramatic element, however, lurks in the references and allusions to Hamlet and characters. From the title, there is a reference to Elsinore, the royal castle in Denmark. Kristin Gulotta (2016) suggests that:*

In “Elsinore in Late Ancient Autumn,” we might consider the drama as coming from our background knowledge of the original work and how that interacts with the information provided by Dubie's version in this new point of view, creating tension between what we once understood as “truth” and what we now know (17).

Likewise, it seems there must be a silent interlocutor, the poem gives us the feeling that Yorick is speaking to someone. However, the listener is a vague one, so the role of the listener seems uncertain too. The uncertainty extends from the listener to the speaker himself because he is unsure of to whom he should address his thoughts.

## Conclusion

For most part in the collection of poems *Mercy Seats* Dubie resorted to the recreation of dramatic narration in the life of a famous artist, writer, or historical figures. The representations of other people's life are something that Dubie mastered so much so that it seems that these vignettes are taken from the journals of the character. His poems could be taken stories about the road for self-discovery of the character about whom he has chosen to speak. The fascination of his poems is derived partly from these discoveries; their intensity and accuracy, and sometimes strangeness.

The frame in which Dubie presented his stories is the historical narrative and dramatic monologue. Sometimes both. Speakers of the monologue are people other than the poet. The impulse in Dubie's narratives is at all times compositional, in artistic and aesthetic terms, and it is also theatrical in that he often invokes a dramatic staging for his poems. And over and over, in delivery and syntax, we find the cinematic textures of the poems coloring and disturbing the expected order of perception.

The distinction is not only between the speaker and the poet, but also between the listener and the reader of the poem. This very thin line separates the dramatic monologue from internal soliloquy and/or internal monologue. However, in the case of Dubie's poem we have always felt that the listener is there. Dubie has added a lot to the genre of dramatic monologue by trying to diversify the viewpoints and more in depth analysis of and sympathy with the historical personage.

## References

"authors: Norman Dubie" <<https://wikisummaries.org/norman-dubie-authors/>> (retrieved in 3 March 2022)

Abrahms, H.M. *Glossary of Literary Terms*, 9th ed. Stamford, Cengage Learning, 2008.

Baker, David. *Show Me Your Environment: Essays on Poetry, Poets, and Poems*. Univeristy of Michigan Press, 2014.

Brown, Stacey Lynn and Oliver de la Paz. *A Face to Meet the Faces: An Anthology of Contemporary Persona Poetry*. The University of Akron Press, 2012.

Clarke, Kevin. "The Vigil of Astonishment (on The Mercy Seat: Collected and New Poems, 1967-2001 by Norman Dubie)" *The Georgia Reviews*. Spring (2004). 179-182.

" Dramatic Monologue " Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2010.

Dubie , Norman. "Dark Spiralling Figures: An Interview By Julie Fay And David WojahnWojahn," *The American Poetry Review*. Vol. 7, No. 4 (July/August 1978), pp. 7-11.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Mercy Seat: Collected & New Poems, 1967-2001* . Townsend: Copper Canyon Press, 2002.

Kirby, David, "Songs of myself: the poems of Norman Dubie and Larry Levis" *The Southern Review*(Vol. 38, Issue 2),Louisiana State University, 2002.

Sarkar, Somnath, "Robert Browning and the Dramatic Monologue" (retrieved in 23 Feb. 2022):<<https://www.eng-literature.com/2022/01/robert-browning-dramatic-monologue.html>>

St. John, David "A Generous Salvation: The poetry of Norman Dubie" in *Writers and Their Craft: Short Stories & Essays on the Narrative*. Edits. Nicholas Delbanco & Laurence Goldstein. (Detroit: Wayne UP, 1990).

Tromp, Ian. Review of *The Mercy Seat, Collected and New Poems 1967-2001*, by Norman Dubie. *Boston Review*. 1 Feb 2001. (retrived in 21 Feb. 2022) <<https://bostonreview.net/articles/ian-tromp-review-mercy-seat/>>

Young, David. "Introduction" to *the Complete Works of Robert Browning* 1889.

About the author:

**Hussein K. Alaskari**, an instructor in the college of Arts at Mustansiriyah University. He holds a PhD degree in English literature (modern poetry). His main interests of research are modern and postmodern American and British poetry.

