



ROBERT BROWNING AS A WRITER OF DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

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Abstract

The dramatic monologue is a miniature drama a single comprehensive speech of a character historical or imaginary uttered at a critical moment in the life of the speaker absorbing into its substance the surroundings scenery and silent audience or listeners and all the relevant facts calculated to throw a flash of light upon the whole life and the real character of the person concerned The Dramatic monologue is a kind of dramatic lyric but it is only under special circumstances that a dramatic lyric can become a genuine dramatic monologue. The dramatic lyric in a simple form is the spontaneous utterance of feeling and sentiments, not of the poets certainly, but of character created by him. Robert Browning one of the greatest poet of his literary period very early in his life browning had become conscious of his dramatic genius. It was on the publication if his Paracelsus a dramatic poem, that he found and realized that dramatic monologue was the form best suited to his genius.



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Introduction:- Very early in his life Browning had become conscious of his dramatic genius He wrote some plays, which failed to keep the stage But he undoubtedly possessed in the highest degrees some of the elements of the dramatic genius though he did not possess them all. He was profoundly interested in character and either cared little for action or subordinated it to pure psychological interest. His characters do not express themselves in action but are always pre-occupied with introspection and analysing themselves.

His Work: Robert browning is considered to be the perfected of the dramatic monologue, which had its heyday in the Victorian period. A famous example is Browning's "My Last Duchess." Notice how the Dukes character is revealed by what he says:

"My Last Duchess"

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now Fra Pando lfs hands
"Worked busily a day, and there she stands
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said

“Fra Pandolf” by design, for never read
strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance
But to myself they turned (since none puts
by the curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst.
How such a glance came there, so not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus, sir ‘t was not
Her husbands presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the duchess check ; perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say ‘Her mantle laps
Over my lady’ wrist too much.’ Or ‘paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat’ such stuff
Was courtesy she thought and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy, She had
A heart-how shall I say? – too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate’er
She looked on, and her looks went every where
Sir, ‘twas all one! My favour at her breast
The dropping of the daylight in the west
the bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech
Or blush, at least she thanked men,- good! But thanked
Somehow – I know not how-as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years old name
With anybody’s gift. Who’d stoop the blame.
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech- (which I have not)- to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say “just this
“Or there exceed the mark” – and if she let

Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse
-E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop; Oh sir, she smiled no doubt
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together there she stands
As if alive, will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then I repeat,
The count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed
Though his fair daughter's self as I avowed
At starting, is my object, Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir Notice Neptune though
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Other of Browning's brief dramatic Monologues include "soliloquy of the Spanish cloister" "the laboratory and "Porphyria's lover." Several important longer dramatic Monologues, which appeared in the poet's collection 'Men and women' are Fra Lippo Lippi "Bishop Blougram's Apology" and "Andrea del sarto" His crowning achievement in the style are the dramatic monologue's he wrote For his acknowledged master work The Ring and the Book, published in four installments in 1868 – 1869.

Characteristics of his monologues

The rapid survey of Browning's monologues reveals his skill in the use of this form, as well as the distinctive feature of his art and technique, He uses this form for the study of character of particular mental states and of moral crisis in the soul of characters concerned. In these monologues the poet depicts an amazingly wide variety of characters, taken from all walks of life.

His monologues provide us with a peep into the inner working of the mind and soul of these characters.

Though the monologues are dramatic yet they have a subjective note in as much as they reveal his philosophy of life, his views on God and the immortality of the soul.

Conclusion :-

Thus Brownings dramatic monologues has been always admired by people. He is considered to be the perfecter of the dramatic monologue. Other victorian poets to produce one or more dramatic monologues. None however produced as many or as striking dramatic monologues as Robert browning. In this way Robert Browning as the writer of Dramatic monologue

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