

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

ROBERT SOUTHEY'S KALEIDOSCOPE: *THE DOCTOR*, &C

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requirements of Anglia Ruskin University
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ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ROBERT SOUTHEY'S KALEIDOSCOPE: *THE DOCTOR, &c*

SABINA AKRAM

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This thesis investigates the last text published by Robert Southey, *The Doctor, &c* (1834-1847), and argues that while Southey may have moved to political conservatism as he grew older, his writing became even more radically experimental. Southey's text is a kaleidoscopic fusion and includes a range of topics that consists of the plot of Doctor Daniel Dove, autobiographical elements, Southey's religious and political views, historical retellings and musical compositions, which have all been embedded within a postmodern narrative. The reason for this research is that, while other influences on Southey focus predominately on his early works, life or politics, the concept that *The Doctor, &c* demonstrates early postmodern characteristics and self-reflective portraits has been neglected.

Five topics are identified within this thesis: identity, autobiography, postmodernism, religious politics and fairy tales, which combined establish the central argument that Southey's text contains a kaleidoscope of ideas all

combined together to create his most experimental composition. By examining the contextual background, *The Doctor, &c* is likened to Christopher Smart's *The Midwife, Or Old Woman's Magazine* (1751-1753) and recognises that the original tale of Doctor Daniel Dove first appeared within Smart's periodical.

Close readings of Southey's letters and the text itself draw out comparisons, which indicate Samuel Taylor Coleridge urged Southey to write *The Doctor, &c*. I argue that Coleridge was the primary link that connected Southey and Smart and, essentially, *The Doctor, &c* was formed on the basis of collapsed projects between Coleridge and Southey. Subsequently, this thesis demonstrates that the idea for the text occurred as early as 1807 and written throughout Southey's life until the first volume was finally published in 1834.

Key words: Robert Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, Experimental literature, Postmodern, Romantic autobiography, Fairy tales, Politics, Islam, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Midwife; Or Old Woman's Magazine*

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Abbreviations

Southey, *Letters* ‘The Collected Letters of Robert Southey’, ed. Ian Packer, Lynda Pratt and Tim Fulford. *Romantic Circles*, 2009.
https://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/southey_letters. (Digitising Southey’s personal correspondence is an on-going process for *The Romantic Circles Electronic Edition*. Southey’s letters are catalogued by number. Therefore, I will supply the logged number of each letter at the end of the citation and abbreviate it to: Southey, *Letters*, followed by the letter number)

Coleridge, *CL* Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

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Introduction: Locating Southey

Imagine a kaleidoscope. Inside there is a variety of colourful objects like beads, pebbles or small pieces of glass that freely move about and, as you look through the eyepiece and rotate the outside of the kaleidoscope, it creates fascinating visual images that change with each movement. It is not difficult to become mesmerised and amazed as you peer through to see ever-changing patterns of beautiful colours and shifting reflections. However, as you become absorbed by the colours that merge into an unrestrained optical swirl of distorted images that become nothing more than fragmented illusions, the mind is left enthralled within a chaotic spellbound of emotions which leaves it questioning the existence of such an ocular object and its purpose. This is what my mind felt like after reading *The Doctor, &c* (1834-1847). Robert Southey's fragmented narrative and entanglement of words are so beautiful that the reader admires the sentiment in which it was written, but left to wonder what exactly was meant. It is my intention in this study to demonstrate precisely what Southey meant and why.

This thesis examines the origins of the plot of Doctor Daniel Dove and acknowledges that the original tale was first written by Christopher Smart in his satirical periodical *The Midwife: Or, The Old Woman's Magazine* (1751-1753) – a fact that has been overlooked. It was first pointed out during Southey's lifetime by 'F.R. A – n' who wrote to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1840 and has since only been investigated by David Chandler in his article 'As Long-

Winded as Possible: Southey, Coleridge, And *The Doctor &c*' in 2009. When the source of *The Doctor, &c* was discussed in the first volume of *Notes and Queries* (1849), less than a decade after 'F.R. A – n' wrote to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, there was no acknowledgement of Smart's tale. Likewise, Maurice H Fitzgerald's edited version of *The Doctor, &c* (1930), Else Niebler's *The Doctor, &c* (1941) and Kenneth Curry's *Southey* (1975) also do not mention Smart's tale. In overlooking the original source, limitations are placed on how *The Doctor, &c* can be viewed. However, by exploring Smart's story, I analyse how both Smart and Southey have used the tale to conceal their identity so that they can write freely on issues that they consider significant.

During his life, Southey made no reference to knowing Smart's tale despite the protagonist's name, as well as several elements from the tale, first appearing in *The Midwife*. By expanding on Min Wild's observation that Samuel Taylor Coleridge had an 'acquaintance with the satirical prose writing of Christopher Smart',¹ I will argue that it is through Coleridge that Southey became familiar with the tale and eventually wrote *The Doctor, &c*. It is my contention that the text consists of two elements: the plot of Doctor Daniel Dove and the digressive thoughts of Southey, both of which have been interlinked at times and demonstrate postmodern characteristics. Furthermore, I argue that the text, in addition to highlighting early postmodern traits, also displays self-reflective autobiographical elements which are revealed through Southey's digressions and plot narrative. My argument in this thesis ultimately determines that *The Doctor, &c* is Southey's most experimental mode of literature which includes a

kaleidoscopic range of topics such as poetry, music, history, biography, autobiography, theology, religion and politics.

How did Southey come to hear of the story of Doctor Daniel Dove and to what extent did Coleridge play a role in this? Can the text be seen to have autobiographical elements within it? Is it a postmodern narrative? How are Southey's religious and political views manifested within the text? How has *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* evolved over time from when it first appeared in *The Doctor, &c*? These are all research questions that inform and drive this thesis and have been carefully and pragmatically structured to aid my argument.

Described by David Simpson as 'one of the most productive and charismatic of all the romantics in his time',² there has been a renewed interest in the man who was once labelled by Leigh Hunt in 1822 as being a 'coxcomb' who 'bores us to death'.³ Southey's paradoxical nature invites mixed reactions: he was a man that was either liked or loathed. Mark Storey in his 1997 biography *Robert Southey: A Life* wrote that for Southey 'to write was a matter of breathing' but no one 'has tried to look at Southey whole [...] the flame has been kept alight, but only just'.⁴ In recent years, there has been more critical awareness of Southey as well as an updated biography by William Arthur Speck that argues that he stood out 'amongst his contemporaries [...] as an entire man of letters, therefore, he again occupies a central place in the literary and political worlds of the early nineteenth-century'.⁵ However, this view is not a new one. Byron, who was no admirer of Southey, accepted that he was 'the only existing entire man of

letters'.⁶ In addition to his scholarly writings, as Speck acknowledges, Southey's 'voluminous private letters must be considered along with his other writings'.⁷ They were, according to William Makepeace Thackeray, 'worth piles of epics'.⁸ Writing letters was an important part of Southey's life and, through the research of Lynda Pratt and Tim Fulford, the majority of his letters from 1791 to 1821 have been reedited and expanded. They have been digitalised and are available on the website *Romantic Circles* (his letters from 1822-1839 are currently an on-going project and will be forthcoming). A five volume edition of his early works (1793-1810) was published in 2004 under the editorship of Lynda Pratt and, for the first time, presented carefully edited and annotated texts that included Southey's famous works such as *Thalaba the Destroyer*, *Madoc* and *The Curse of Kehama*. This was followed in 2013 by a four-volume edition of his later works (1811-1838). However, the most innovative form of research has come in the release of a series of edited critical essays in the book *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism* (2006) which examined his laureateship, poems, politics and life.

Even with an increasing interest in Southey's life and works within the last decade, the obstacles are still formidable. Unlike his fellow Lake School contemporaries, like William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, his thematically dispersed writings have not been studied by critics to the same extent. The reason for this is that many of his widely read books are not conventionally literary: he wrote biographies of John Wesley and Horatio Nelson, a history of Brazil and various volumes on political, religious and

ecclesiastical subjects. Consequently, Southey is a man who has many attributions including: editor, essayist, playwright, historian, moralist, critic, orientalist, biographer and polemicist. Yet, his work has attracted very little popularity and minimum critical attention compared to his contemporaries. Carol Bolton's *Writing the Empire: Robert Southey and Romantic Colonialism* (2007) and David Marcellus Craig's *Robert Southey and Romantic Apostasy: Political Argument in Britain, 1780-1840* (2007) were the first individually authored studies for thirty years to be devoted wholly to critical thought (rather than biographical content) since Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch's *Robert Southey* was published in 1977. Nevertheless, in all the research and studies that have been carried out on Southey by critics over time, there is still one text that has received little critical analysis: *The Doctor, &c.*

Mark Storey put forward an argument for the text to be seen as an 'exercise in digression' with the fragmented narrative demonstrating that 'Southey moves from one topic to another with blithe abandon, as happy in a digression as in anything more direct; in fact it could be argued that the whole work is a digression'.⁹ In contrast to Storey's view, Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch, though reflecting and remarking upon the fragmentary nature of the text, considered it to have no clear plot or direction and labelled it as being 'an eminently Victorian book [that] comprises a Gargantuan mass of anecdotes, ruminations, homilies, curious learning, topography, genre sketches, extravagant fancies, chit-chat, [and] plain nonsense'.¹⁰ Dismissing it as a novel, Bernhardt-Kabisch concluded that 'Southey might have made a good novelist [...] but he lacked the

psychological acumen and the moral sympathy required of a novelist'.¹¹ Southey did not think of himself as a novelist when writing *The Doctor, &c* and the text should not be seen solely as a novel. Bernhardt-Kabisch's approach to the text limits the boundaries of research that can be explored within it. This is evident by the fact that anything written on the text consists of a passing comment, a single critical essay or, in Speck's biography, a chapter. However, Speck's chapter focuses on the chronology of the years Southey published *The Doctor, &c* rather than a critical analysis of the text.

It is not my objective to revisit Southey in the manner which most critics do; instead my approach is different. With so little critical attention given to *The Doctor, &c*, it is the aim of this thesis to fill this existing gap; to refute the assertions made by Bernhardt-Kabisch that *The Doctor, &c* is 'plain nonsense'¹² and to substantiate Virgil Nemoianu's argument that it is 'Southey's *Prelude* or *Biographia*',¹³ with postmodern features. As suggested, *The Doctor, &c* is unlike a conventional text and should instead be considered an experimental composition that demonstrates Southey's skills as a writer in every form. Once the text is thought of in this manner, it begins to manifest itself through the critical components that become apparent and the many political, religious and social insinuations that are employed within. Where Southey confuses is also where he most satisfies, for he is an author who is not confined to literary convention. From the conflicted variety of his work emerges a different romantic writer in comparison to the the ones who have been made familiar by the received canon. In recent years, Southey as a romantic writer has been re-

discovered but this text seems to continuously be neglected. Why is this?

According to Lynda Pratt, Southey is the ‘most neglected member of the Lake School’ but this has begun to ‘change radically’ recently as ‘Southey has at last started to become a writer worth reading. Moreover, it is once more becoming possible to read him’.¹⁴ Likewise, Speck is ‘aware that Southey’s reputation had suffered by contrast with his fellow ‘Lake Poets’ [and] has been relatively neglected’.¹⁵ I agree that he has been neglected but why has this happened? Pratt states that ‘one of the consequences of Southey’s neglect has been the lack of availability of modern editions of his work. Unlike many of his contemporaries, there has been no editorial work on his poetry, prose or correspondence’.¹⁶ Consequently, scholars have attempted to revive Southey and tried to bring his work into the canon, so that he may be given the same recognised status as his contemporaries. Pratt is right in relating Southey’s neglect to the lack of available modern editions of his work. To develop Pratt’s point, *The Doctor, &c*’s has suffered neglect due to its printing history. Southey published *The Doctor, &c*, in seven volumes, over the course of thirteen years, with the last two volumes released posthumously. Today, it is read in one united seven-volume bound copy which was first published in 1848. Reading *The Doctor, &c* in its united bound copy is comparatively different than if the text was read in the original single bound volumes. For instance, the plot narrative can become lost within the united volume whereas it is far less likely in the separate single bound volumes published at the time. There are several reasons for this. Sourcing all seven original single bound volumes from the Senate House

Library, University of London, I found that there were several differences between the original publications and the combined bound volume. Within the single volumes, the story advances a step with each volume that was published.

The first volume was published in 1834 and is centred on who the Doctor was. The second volume was also published at the same time as the first volume but is focused on who Mrs Dove was. The third volume followed in 1835 and predominately questioned who wrote *The Doctor, &c.* Two years later, the fourth volume was released and detailed the Doctor and Deborah Dove's wedding day and the fifth volume in 1838 described Nobs' birth. Volumes six and seven appeared posthumously in 1847 – one year before the united bound volume was published by John Wood Warter, his son in law. While there was a clear advancement of the story in the single editions, as demonstrated within volumes one to five, in comparison there appears to be virtually no advance in the story of Doctor Daniel Dove in volumes six and seven.

According to Warter, within the 'Preface to the Second Part', 'had the lamented Southey continued the work, it was his intention, in this volume, to have advanced a step in the story'.¹⁷ The reason for this is due to the fact that volumes six and seven were published by Warter, and not Southey himself, so 'the only liberty taken with the original MS. is omission of, now and then a name, or even a paragraph [...] which might have given pain to the living'.¹⁸ This Preface was written on 25 November 1848 and was included in the united bound copy. Warter proceeds to state: 'The present portion of "The Doctor, &c"

is drawn up from the MS. materials alluded to, as nearly as possible in the order the Author had intended'.¹⁹ However, in contrast, this was not the same Preface that was included in the single bound seventh volume the previous year on 14 September 1847. In that Preface, Warter states 'The present Volume contains all that it is thought advisable to publish of the Papers and Fragments for THE DOCTOR, &C. Some of these Papers, as in the former Volume, were written out fair and ready for Publication – but the order, and the arrangement intended is altogether unknown'.²⁰ Therefore, the question remains, even though the order of the chapters is still the same in both the 1847 single bound copy and the united bound copy of 1848 that is used today, why did the preface of the single bound copy change from the arrangement being 'altogether unknown' to Warter's insistence that it was 'as nearly as possible in the order the Author had intended'?

In addition to this, Warter reveals that Edith, his wife and Southey's daughter, inherited all of Southey's material, including what remained of the unpublished text. It was her desire to publish it and Warter did so. He makes it clear that, although the content was written by Southey, it is the editor who is responsible for the headings of the chapters (with the exception of a few) as well as the footnotes, not Southey himself. In discovering this, the most fascinating aspect that arises is how differently the two separate volumes can be read in terms of plot.

While there is no denying that a reader can become lost within the narrative of the text in reading both volumes (this having been deliberately done so in terms of fragmentation), the plotline, contrary to critics' beliefs that one does not

exist, is far more conspicuous within the original five separate volumes regarding Doctor Daniel Dove published during Southey's lifetime. The reason for this, I believe, lies within the printing of the united bound volume. For example, Southey signposted the end of each volume by stating on the last page 'End of Vol' followed by the volume number. However, when published by Warter, there was no clear distinction when one volume ends and another begins which is vital in understanding the content. It has been published as though it is one complete text from beginning to end, without even a little asterisk after a volume to indicate the end, and it is this printed copy that remains today. This has, in my opinion, done the text a disservice as it disrupts the narrative but not in the way Southey had purposely intended in terms of fragmentation.

It is relatively simple to notice Southey's digressions reading the united copy. What is far more challenging is to extract the plotline from the text as it nears the end of the united bound copy (primarily volumes six and seven). According to the 'Preface to the Second Part' in the posthumously united bound volume, this was always Southey's intention: 'the Interchapters, no doubt, would have been enlarged, according to custom'²¹ as the volumes progressed. Interchapters, as it will be discussed in far more detail in my second chapter, are chiefly Southey's digressions. Therefore, given Warter's explanation, it can only be assumed that Southey had meant for the plot of Doctor Daniel Dove to eventually succumb to his digressions and fragmented thoughts. Although the text has two separate identities (the fragmentary self-reflection and the plot of Doctor Daniel Dove), it does, at times, merge into one.

When reading the original single bound copies, it is easier to recognise the context of each volume. For instance, volume one is focused on who the Doctor is and, alongside the plot, there are Southey's digressions. The second volume is centred on telling the reader who Mrs Dove is in amongst Southey's digressions. This could be as simple as each volume being shorter in length, easier for the mind to fathom before starting the next volume but above all else, it has been printed in book form. This is not the case with the united volume because the inside of the text resembles a newspaper, set out in two straight columns per page, and printed in a small font. It is plain to see why some people might find this difficult to read, be put off the text or simply question what kind of text it is. In the original separate volumes, at the beginning of each book, Southey includes a 'Prelude of Mottoes' which consist of quotes that indicate, or are in line with, the context of that particular volume. Therefore, it is straightforward to understand what each volume is about. Yet, in the united bound volume, Warter has amalgamated all seven volumes of the 'Prelude of Mottoes' at the beginning of the book. In doing so, the text becomes complicated as it takes away Southey's attempts in making the readers anticipate what is to come. He wanted to challenge his readers but Warter's united bound copy simply confuses them.

Southey had a structure in mind for *The Doctor, &c.* He had arranged them in a certain order and released each volume separately in a specific way by ending them at a certain point in the narrative. If this was not the case, Southey could have released the text in one complete volume during his lifetime, especially since, as my chapters will prove, it was certain that he had conceived the idea as

early as 1807, even though my edition states July 1813, and had written the majority of the text during his lifetime, before the first volume was published in 1834. The first volume of the text which the University of London holds has a note on the back page stating that particular copy was bought for '£2/10'. This copy had been retained from Blackwells and stamped November 1833. It was regular practice for publishers to give a publication date the following year for books published late in the year before. It was a device that spared the book the fate of being published 'last year' when it had only been published for a month of two. Whether scholars and readers have been discouraged from reading *The Doctor, &c* for the way it has been published remains undecided at this point. Printed as a periodical, could the sheer seven volume magnitude of the text simply have deterred readers? Could the united bound edition have contributed towards the way the text is perceived today? These questions will be considered alongside my research questions.

The Doctor, &c's lack of availability is not the only reason for its neglect. Southey's mental state of mind during the time of the text's publication is a key element. Reviewing *The Doctor, &c* in 1834, John Gibson Lockhart suspected it was written by Southey because even though he considered 'the author of this 'apish and fantastic' nondescript to be a man of genius [...] two thirds of his performance look as if they might have been penned in the vestibule of Bedlam'.²² It is an argument that has often been revisited over time with Bernhardt-Kabisch suggesting that the reason why the text is nonsense is for this precise cause. Yet, writing in 1836, Edgar Allen Poe believed that 'the wit and humour of the 'Doctor' have seldom been equalled'.²³ Although the text

received positive feedback, it was dismissed even during its own time with Lockhart's review stating it is distinguished by 'excellencies [sic] of a very high order and by defects, indicating such occasional contempt of sound judgement, and sense, and taste, as we can hardly suppose in a strong and richly cultivated mind, unless that mind should be in a certain measure under the influence of disease'.²⁴ Lockhart may be dismissive of the text and question whether it was written 'under the influence of disease' but both reviews agree upon the author's ability to produce excellent work. As my thesis will show, Southey started writing *The Doctor, &c* long before its publication date. Therefore, his mental state of mind should not be an issue especially since the first five volumes, although published when he was considered depressed and beginning to show signs of dementia, were written when he could still express coherent thoughts on paper.²⁵

As mentioned earlier, it is not the aim of this thesis to consider Southey in the manner most critics do. Instead, I argue that Southey was an experimental writer despite his political conservatism in later life. *The Doctor, &c* is, as stated, an unconventional text. For this reason, this thesis has been designed thematically rather than chronologically. The five themes: identity, autobiography, postmodernism, religious politics and fairy tales were selected to embrace the variety and diversity of Southey's ability, but the sufficient overlap between them all signifies an embracing unity.

The first chapter, 'His Old Curiosity Shop: identity, digressions and paratext', will focus on *The Doctor, &c*'s origins in relation to the role of authorship and identity. This plays a fundamental role in how the text is viewed. Although Southey published several anonymous works throughout his life, why did he decide to publish this text, which he considered to be his opus, without his name affixed to it? This chapter will also examine the origins of the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove. What is often overlooked is that this tale was not the creation of Southey, instead it was first seen in the periodical *Midwife; or, Old Woman's Magazine* in the mid-eighteenth century - a fact that has only been documented by David Chandler in 2009.²⁶ Southey does not acknowledge the original source of the tale in any of his writings throughout his life and, by charting the origins and comparing it to *The Midwife*, the question that will be considered is whether Southey had genuinely not heard of this tale before he decided to write about it or if he did 'steal' the tale without acknowledging it. The chapter will end by examining Southey's use of paratext and digressions within *The Doctor, &c* and introduce parallels between these literacy practices employed within the text and how they can be seen in his other works.

The second chapter, 'Southey, &c: an experiment for the masses', will consider to what extent Coleridge played a role in the conception of *The Doctor, &c* and argue that it has autobiographical elements which are primarily expressed through the fragmentary digressions of the text. By analysing the letters Southey sent during the years 1803 to 1815, I examine when the idea of *The Doctor, &c* was first conceived and how Coleridge impacted upon this. By identifying this, it can then be seen how Southey's text is similar to Wordsworth's *Prelude* and

Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*. From examining the literary self-portrayals of all three writers, I categorise what form an autobiography was taking during the romantic period and how it was perceived.

Following on from what shape autobiography manifests itself in the romantic period, chapter three, 'The Perception of the Mind: a postmodern narrative', will explore the text's links to postmodernism and show that it is a multitude of several genres that have been fused within a multivolume text. This will be illustrated through the theme of time as well as an exploration of how romanticism can be seen as an extension of modernism. Furthermore, I will establish that the text is characteristic of early postmodern thought, not just through literary devices but also through the music compositions that appear within the text.

The penultimate chapter, 'Paradoxical Identity: the religious and political struggle of Robert Southey', will observe Southey's relationship with religion and politics during his life and how this relates to and manifests within the text. I have intentionally dedicated a chapter to both his religious and political beliefs. The reason for this is, as Stephen Prickett has noted, that religion was at the crux of early nineteenth-century romantic writers²⁷ and the revival of religion shaped many aspects of nineteenth-century life.²⁸ What is now celebrated as romantic was once a vast discourse that was charged with the Catholic question, agitated by the anticlericalism of the French Revolution and occupied with the religions of the East. However, I have limited my research in the text to the following: Catholic Emancipation, the British Empire and Islam. Although Southey engages with several religious debates during the time, he is

mostly occupied with the three mentioned. To discuss anything other than the three stated in relation to *The Doctor, &c* would be outside the scope of my argument that Southey's controversial attitude towards religion and political beliefs relate to his paradoxical identity which appears commonly within the text.

The final chapter, 'The Story of the Three Bears: alternative explanations and the evolution of the tale', will examine and chart the evolution of a tale that is recognised today as being *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* but first appeared in *The Doctor, &c*. By studying the tale in its original manner, the chapter will argue that the tale was written as an anecdote with political, religious and scientific references embedded within the narrative. By first establishing that 'The Story of the Three Bears' is not a fairy tale, when compared to other literary devices commonly found within fairy tales, the tale is studied in greater detail with several close-readings of it. By offering three unconventional alternative explanations of the tale (in a political, religious and scientific manner), I exhibit what Southey initially intended for his tale: to be 'adapted to the meanest capacity;" that the lamb may wade in it, though the elephant may swim'.²⁹

The chapter will then explore how the tale has evolved over time. The biggest change in the tale that occurred was the transformation of the characters. In Southey's original version, there were three male bears and an old woman he called a 'vagrant' who eats the porridge, sits in the chairs and sleeps in the beds.

The old woman changed into a little girl and the three male bears became a family of bears (that included a father, mother and baby) in 1849. The little girl was not known as Goldilocks until 1904. Why is this? Why was it necessary to modify the characters? These questions will be answered by looking at the historical context of the time and why it was essential to change the characters during the Victorian era to better suit the society.

My research will establish the reasons why the text has been neglected in terms of scholarly interest and demonstrate that *The Doctor, &c* is merging political, religious and philosophical ideologies, which can be seen in both the plot narrative as well as the self-reflective autobiographical digressions that appear within the text. Subsequently, it is viewed to contain early postmodern traits in the fragmentation, plot and music compositions throughout the text. Ultimately, this was Southey's most experimental composition and one that he himself considered to represent his 'disciple and biographer to the very life, neither less playful, nor less pensive, nor more wise, nor more foolish than he is'.³⁰

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- ¹Min Wild, 'Christopher Smart, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Tradition of Learned Wit' in *Reading Christopher Smart in the Twenty-first Century* edited by Min Wild and Noel Chevalier et al (Maryland: Bucknell University Press, 2013), 28.
- ²David Simpson, 'Review', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 41, no. 4 (Summer 2008): 565.
- ³Leigh Hunt, *The Liberal*, 'Preface', v.1, no.1 (1822): ix.
- ⁴Mark Storey, *Robert Southey: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), xi. viii.
- ⁵William Arthur Speck, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), xvi.
- ⁶George Gordon Byron, *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron: With Notices of His Life*, ed. Thomas Moore (London: J. Murray, 1838), 322.
- ⁷Speck, *Entire Man of Letters*, xvi.
- ⁸William Makepeace Thackeray, *The Four Georges. The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1869), 126.
- ⁹Storey, *Robert Southey: A Life*, 331.
- ¹⁰Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch, *Robert Southey* (Boston: G.K Hall & Co, 1977), 171.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*
- ¹²*Ibid.*
- ¹³Virgil Nemoianu, 'Robert Southey's *The Doctor*: The Conservatism of Voracious Reading' in *British Romantics as Readers: Intertextualities, Maps of Misreading, Reinterpretations*, ed. Michael Grassenmeier et al (Heidelberg: C Winter, 1998), 230.
- ¹⁴Lynda Pratt, 'Introduction' in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, ed. Lynda Pratt (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), xix.
- ¹⁵Speck, *Entire Man of Letters*, xvii.
- ¹⁶Pratt, *Robert Southey*, xix.
- ¹⁷Robert Southey. *The Doctor, &c*, ed. John Wood Warter (London: Longmans, Greens & Co, 1848), 443
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*
- ²⁰Robert Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, ed. John Wood Warter, v.7 (London: Longmans, Greens & Co, 1847), iii.
- ²¹Robert Southey. *The Doctor, &c*, ed. John Wood Warter (London: Longmans, Greens & Co, 1848), 443.
- ²²John Gibson Lockhart, 'The Doctor', *Quarterly Review*, 2 (March & June 1834): 69.
- ²³Edgar Allen Poe, 'The Doctor', *Southern Literary Messenger*, 2 (December 1835): 506.
- ²⁴Lockhart, 'The Doctor', 69.
- ²⁵Speck, *Robert Southey, Entire Man of Letters*, 244.

²⁶ David Chandler. “‘As Long-Winded As Possible’: Southey, Coleridge, and The Doctor &c”, *The Review of English Studies*, 60, no. 246 (2009): 606.

²⁷ Stephen Prickett, ‘Airbrushing Religion: The Reconfiguration of the Victorian Image’, paper given at Anglia Ruskin University for *The Challenge of Religious Transformation in the Nineteenth Century* conference, 24 November, 2017, Cambridge.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Robert Southey. *The Doctor, &c*, ed. John Wood Warter (London: Longmans, Greens & Co, 1865), 327.

³⁰ This letter is currently held at Yale University in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. I have cited the source of this letter from: William Arthur Speck, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 22.

Chapter I: 'His Old Curiosity Shop': identity, digression and paratext

When the first two volumes of *The Doctor, &c* were published anonymously in 1834, *The Monthly Review* labelled it a 'species of eccentricity which we hardly know how to treat'.¹ Nearly two hundred years later, not much has changed. It is still considered difficult to be able to detect the motive of Robert Southey's 'eccentric work'.² Although it is generally agreed upon that 'a great many things are ridiculed, political, moral, and social' throughout, there appears to be 'no unity of purpose, no ultimate object whatever in view'.³ Yet, despite this, it attracted attention worldwide. The *Southern Literary Messenger*, with Edgar Allen Poe as editor, published an article in July 1836, stating that 'the *Doctor* has excited great attention in America as well as England'⁴ before declaring that 'the *Doctor* is the offspring of such intellect, is proved sufficiently by many passages of the book, where the writer appears to have been led off from his main design'.⁵

It was still the topic of discussion in 1878 when the *New York Times* defined it as being a series of 'miscellaneous articles in his [Southey] old curiosity-shop'.⁶ There is no doubt that the text can be read as a series of eccentric miscellanies of chapters that are comprised of 'gargantuan mass anecdotes, ruminations, homilies, curious learning, topography, genre sketches, extravagant fancies, chit-chat, plain nonsense, and innumerable synopses'.⁷ Southey himself

acknowledged the digressive nature in which he wrote *The Doctor, &c* in his preface:

What could more happily typify the combination of parts, each perfect in itself when separately considered, yet all connected into one harmonious whole; the story running through like the stem or back-bone, which the episodes and digressions fringe like so many featherlets, leading up to that catastrophe, the gem or eye-star, for which the whole was formed, and in which all terminate ⁸

Even though there appears to be a loose narrative regarding Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs within the text, over the course of the seven volumes that were published between the years 1834 to 1847 the plot had still not materialised. The reader, by the end of each volume, is left to question what exactly it is they are reading. However, one thing is certain: whatever the readers think they have read, they have done so as passengers travelling through the mind of Robert Southey. Although we know the author to be Southey today, when the first two volumes appeared in January 1834, ‘elaborate arrangements’ were made to keep his authorship a secret. Sales were ‘modest [but] the oddness and anonymity of the work proved as provocative as Southey hoped’.⁹ At the time of his death in 1843, with five volumes already published, Southey had left behind a large amount of manuscript material that he had written for *The Doctor, &c*. Two more volumes were published posthumously in 1847 by his son in law, John Wood Warter, which confirmed, although many had already guessed, that Southey was the author of the text. With the story of Doctor

Daniel Dove having been left with no ending, not even his son, Cuthbert, had an inkling of what it could be: ‘What the original story of The Doctor and his Horse was I am not able to say accurately’.¹⁰ Thus, as David Chandler has observed, it has become a ‘colossal fragment [and] remained mysterious and perplexing, endlessly digressing from a story never told’.¹¹ Whilst it may never be known what Southey had planned for the fate of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs, rest assured that the story of Doctor Daniel Dove does have a beginning. The only matter is: it does not belong to Southey.

The earlier reviews of *The Doctor, &c* suggested nothing of the fact that the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs was an old story. It was not until 1840 when a man calling himself ‘A – n’ wrote to the *Gentleman’s Magazine* stating that he had come to realise that this tale appears in *The Nonpareil; or, The Quintessence of Wit and Humour* (1757), adding that he assumes (correctly so) this was originally taken from the *Midwife, or Old Woman’s Magazine*. When the source of *The Doctor, &c* was discussed in *Notes and Queries* (1849–50), there was no mention of the discovery that ‘A – n’ had made less than a decade earlier. Even today, with the exception of David Chandler’s article ‘As Long-Winded as Possible: Southey, Coleridge, And *The Doctor &co*’ (2009), it is still largely overlooked by scholars. I intend to expand upon Chandler’s findings and raise the question of (despite the story of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs first appearing as early as January 1752) why Southey made no reference to the original tale during his lifetime.

My aim for this chapter is to focus primarily on the conception of *The Doctor, &c* - in regards to its anonymous publication – and the way this relates to the

role of authorship and identity. This will be achieved by considering the extent to which this experimental piece of prose can be compared to the satirical wit that can be found in the periodical *Midwife: or, Old Woman's Magazine* (1750-1753). In doing so, I wish to illustrate that *The Doctor, &c*, like the *Midwife*, can be viewed as a network of intellectual, social and political ideas that are emerging through the text's contents, structure and form. By exploring the periodical that the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove first appeared within, it not only provides an appropriate context for understanding the tale, but is essential in crediting – as well as documenting the history of - the original source in order to help gain a better understanding of Southey's work as a whole.

This chapter will end by setting out to establish the significance of *The Doctor, &c* in explaining, what can only be described as, Southey's near compulsive use of paratext and, by extension, his meticulous fondness for a narrative style which is digressive and fragmentary. In an attempt to identify Southey's use of this particular writing style, I will introduce aesthetic and stylistic parallels between his paratext and *Southey's Common-place Book* as well as exploring the links between his practices of 'common-placing'. I will then discuss the conjectural connotations of *The Doctor, &c*'s profusion in paratext material signifying, as Lynda Pratt has suggested, the text's 'playful hybridity' and its 'ability to be [an] novel and common-place book, everything and nothing'.¹²

1.1 The Identity Within

What is identity? Mark Currie offers two types of argument regarding this question. On the one hand, 'identity is relational, meaning that it is not to be

found inside a person but that it inheres in the relations between a person and others'.¹³ According to this argument, he believes that 'the explanation of a person's identity must designate the difference between that person and others' so that 'personal identity is not really contained in the body at all; it is structured by, or constituted by, difference'.¹⁴ On the other hand, Currie's second argument considers the possibility 'that identity is not within us because it exists only as narrative'.¹⁵ Explaining his reasoning, he states that we must tell our story in order to explain who we are. By selecting significant events which define us, and by organising them in a manner to the formal principles of narrative, we are expressing ourselves but are doing so 'as if we were talking about someone else'.¹⁶ Moreover, this technique can be used for purposes of self-representation. I would like to apply Currie's second argument to the narrative of *The Doctor, &c.*

Currie suggests that personal identity is non-existent within the human body as it acts only as a narrative to explain each individual story. This being the case, would this unravel the mysteries that surround Southey's text? For instance, readers find themselves struggling to find a structured plot within *The Doctor, &c.*, and this leaves us questioning the text as a whole: what exactly is this text about? Who is the protagonist? Is there even a protagonist? Is it justified to analyse a text that appears – on the surface at least – to make no sense in relation to plot or characters? To be sure, *The Doctor, &c.* has no definitive traditional structure, is full with idiosyncrasies and is as long winded as can be before a point is made or there is a development in the story. This has led to critics labelling it 'rambling nonsense'.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the plot itself is

interwoven with Southey's opinions and thoughts which force the reader to engage with deeper matters such as religion, politics and philosophy whilst also reading about Doctor Daniel Dove's life and all that surrounds him (as little in the text there may be of it). In my opinion, Southey is the narrator of his own story. Daniel Dove may well be considered the protagonist, yet it is the narrator of the text who dictates the story with his own views and constantly feeds the reader historical, political, social, religious and philosophical titbits, facts and anecdotes.

Southey is both the author of *The Doctor, &c* and the fictional narrator of his own book. It is through the digressions of the narrator that the reader has an insight into the opinions that are voiced within the text, and the outspoken opinions regarding religion and politics leave the reader with a sense of ambiguity as to who this unnamed author may be. Therefore, when the first volume of *The Doctor, &c* was published anonymously in 1834, the identity of the author intrigued readers and gained an interest in the text. What was his reasoning behind concealing the authorship of his book? It could be argued that there are, in fact, several reasons. According to Southey's son, Cuthbert, in his six-volume *Life and Correspondence of the Late Robert Southey* (1850), his father 'was fully satisfied' that the 'oddness and anonymity' of his work had 'proved as provocative as hoped'.¹⁸

This notion certainly seems to coincide with a letter written to Caroline Bowles, in which Southey outlines that he had 'little more at first than to play the fool in a way that might amuse the wise'¹⁹ when first writing *The Doctor, &c*. Therefore, the satisfaction that Southey expressed upon hearing the response he

had received for his ‘oddness and anonymity’ fully supports the argument that Southey’s key goal was merely to ‘play the fool’ to ‘amuse the wise’,²⁰ and to provoke a reaction from his audience so that the text garnered attention. However, in the same letter to Bowles, Southey continues to write that he soon

perceived that there was no way in which I could so conveniently dispose of my multifarious collections, nor so well could send into the world some wholesome but unpalatable truths, nor advance speculations upon dark subjects, without giving offense [sic] or exciting animadversion²¹

To read Southey’s intent for his text, it discredits two assumptions: firstly, that *The Doctor, &c* had ‘no ultimate object whatever in view’²² and, secondly, the fact he had chosen to publish his text anonymously was nothing more than a ploy to generate sales and provoke a reaction. In saying this, however, there is no denying that the latter does play a role as to why Southey may have chosen to publish the text anonymously. I am inclined to suggest that Southey’s intent for the anonymous publication of his text has more depth than can be imagined. For this reason, an intellectual understanding – as well as an abstract (existing in thought or as an idea) approach – must be applied towards the mind of a writer whose own intellect was highly regarded.

It was common practice for many writers during the eighteenth and nineteenth century to choose to publish their work anonymously or under a pseudonym. John Mullan, in his book *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*

(2007), argues that anonymity in English Literature ‘is most successful when it provokes the search for an author’,²³ and claims the ‘elaborateness of measures taken to preserve an incognito tells us nothing of any true desire to remain unknown’.²⁴ While it may be said of some that they simply sought attention for their unnamed texts, for others it was necessary to conceal their authorship.

When Charlotte Brontë enclosed her poems to Southey in the hope that he would give her advice and feedback, his discouraging reply instead reflected the opinions of what many thought about woman writers

Literature cannot be the business of a woman’s life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure she will have for it, even as an accomplishment and a recreation. To those duties you have not yet been called, and when you are you will be less eager for celebrity²⁵

Not disheartened by Southey’s remarks, Brontë (alongside her sisters Emily and Anne) did indeed make literature her business. However, she did so under the assumed identity of ‘Currer Bell’. Her decision to use a male identity, she later described was ‘being dictated by a sort of conscientious scruple at assuming Christian names positively masculine’ because they ‘had a vague impression that authoresses are liable to be looked on with prejudice’.²⁶ The ‘conscientious scruple’ inhibited the choice of unambiguously masculine pseudonyms. Names like ‘Currer’ were chosen because, although they would be assumed to be masculine, they were not in fact boys’ name. That is, the sisters refused names

that would definitively identify them as masculine, although Charlotte grants that most readers will assume them to be masculine.

In the case of Alexander Pope, when publishing his poem, *An Essay on Man* (1732-1734), he did so anonymously as he 'had made enemies in the vigorous and often scurrilous literary politics of his time'.²⁷ Thus, in order for his poem to receive an unprejudiced reception, its first publication was printed anonymously. Anonymity is used for several reasons. Therefore, for Mullan to suggest that speculating about authorship was included in the process of reading a text is a generalisation on his behalf as not all anonymity invites speculation. In Southey's case, both arguments apply. Southey's son, Cuthbert, recalls his father to be satisfied by the curiosity surrounding the anonymous publication. Yet, as Southey's letter to Caroline Bowles suggests, he could not send into the world 'wholesome but unpalatable truths' without giving 'offense [sic] or exciting animadversion',²⁸ or could he? By choosing to write *The Doctor, &c* from the viewpoint of an unnamed narrator, whose gender and age is unknown, as well as the text's anonymous publication, Southey was able to send into the world 'wholesome but unpalatable truths'.²⁹

When each volume of *The Doctor, &c* was published, Southey included a 'Prelude of Mottoes' at the beginning, and in this he would list quotations from other writers that he considered would capture the essence of what was to follow. The first quotation included in the 'Prelude of Mottoes' of the first volume reads 'Now they that like it may: the rest may chuse'.³⁰ The third quotation states 'If you are so bold to venture a blowing-up, look closely to it! For the plot lies deadly deep!'³¹ and another declares 'If the world like it not, so

much the worse for them'.³² The choice of the third quotation are words made plain from Southey's own mind that he simply does not care if readers do not like or understand *The Doctor, &c*, for it will hurt no one but themselves. By including Dr Eachard's quotation, Southey is encouraging his readers to look closely into it ('it' being the text) as the meaning will lie therein. For this reason, it is necessary for a close-reading of the text.

Whilst most texts include a preface as a means to introduce its subject, scope or aims, Southey precedes his preface with an 'Ante-Preface' and a chapter entitled 'No Book Can Be Complete Without A Preface'. In the latter chapter, Southey explains

[t]o send a book like this into the world without a Preface would be as impossible as it is to appear in Court without a bag at the head and a sword at the tail; for as the perfection of dress must be shown at Court, so in this history should the perfection of histories be exhibited. The book must be *omni genere absolutum* (every kind of absolute); it must prove and exemplify the perfectibility of books; yea, with all imaginable respect for the 'Delicate Investigation'³³

His purpose here is simple: without including a preface to a text, or explaining one's intentions as an author, the Court (a government institution) has the authority to carry out an administration of justice as it sees fit. Moreover, he mocks freedom of speech by stating a book 'must prove and exemplify the perfectibility of books'³⁴ before mentioning the 'Delicate Investigation'. This

refers to the scandal of Caroline of Brunswick when, in 1806, a secret commission was set up to examine claims of her infidelity. However, despite it being a secret investigation, the news had proved impossible to conceal from the public. A book into the inquiry was later published under the name of: *The Genuine Book ; An Inquiry, or Delicate Investigation into The Conduct of Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales Before Lords Erskine, Spencer, Grenville, and Ellenborough, The Four Special Commissioners of Inquiry, Appointed by His Majesty in the year 1806*, although it is often simply known as ‘The Book’. The title of this book is significant for what Southey subsequently writes next:

and with all imaginable respect for the ‘Delicate Investigation,’ which I leave in undisputed possession of an appellation so exquisitely appropriate, I conceive that the title of THE Book, as a popular designation [...] should be transferred from the edifying report of the Inquiry, to the present unique, unrivalled, and unrivalable [sic] production; - a production the like whereof hath not been, is not, and will not be³⁵

Southey states that he upholds all ‘imaginable respect’ for the investigation, yet he regards the ownership (‘possession’) of naming and giving a title (‘appellation’) to be ‘exquisitely appropriate’ because it should be transferred from the ‘report of the Inquiry to the present unique, unrivalled, and unrivalable [sic] production’³⁶ – the ‘production’ being of course *The Doctor, &c.* The full title of the book (*The Genuine Book ; An Inquiry, or Delicate Investigation into The Conduct of Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales Before Lords*

Erskine, Spencer, Grenville, and Ellenborough, The Four Special Commissioners of Inquiry, Appointed by His Majesty in the year 1806) can be essentially equated to the following meaning: a genuine book depicting the inquiry into the conduct of a Royal; the book being commissioned by parliament (Lord Erskine, Spencer, Grenville and Ellenborough) and appointed by His Majesty. Therefore, when Southey implies this title be his own, only one thing can be deduced from this: Southey is able to write a book inquiring into the conduct of the higher powers (this could either mean government or religion) as it has been commissioned by parliament (he became Poet Laureate under Lord Liverpool, who selected him after Walter Scott refused) and appointed by His Majesty (King George III appointed him Poet Laureate). Arguably, Southey is stating that there are similarities between the two books. As mentioned before, the 'Delicate Investigation' was intended to be a 'secret' commission, yet it proved impossible to conceal from the public. Likewise, Southey is writing a book that is secret in its true meaning but is clear for all to view. In this respect, as the author's identity was unknown, the above close-reading would have seemed preposterous. It is only because the author's identity is known that it becomes easier to see the connection between the individual and the underlying connotations that appear within the text, given the author's background. However, while some had started to guess the authorship of the text (largely due to the opinionated digressions that appear within), others were convinced that 'the wit and humour of the *Doctor* have seldom been equalled. We cannot think Southey wrote it, but have no idea who did'.³⁷

Taking the digressions aside for the moment, I would like to concentrate on the narrative that appears within the text. It was mentioned that the story of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs first appeared in a monthly periodical that ran from 1750-1753. Interestingly, this periodical was also published anonymously and, it can be argued, for similar reasons to that of Southey's. The periodical was called *Midwife: or, Old Woman's Magazine*. Edited by Mrs Mary Midnight, it was considered to be an 'exuberant' magazine',³⁸ and structured as a series of essay miscellanies rather than the 'unifying and totalising format of a single essay periodical'³⁹ that is considered to be more usual. The contents were of a heterodox nature and not justifiably literary, and included: literary criticism, satire concerning the social injustices and cultural idiocies of the day as well as 'parodic derision of worthy competitors like the *Gentleman's Magazine*'.⁴⁰ Inevitably, this would have caused offence to certain readers. The following is a letter written by English poet Christopher Smart that appeared in the periodical in March 1751:

Madam

Mr. *Carnan* [the printer] has this Day communicated to me, your Intentions of inserting my occasional Prologue and Epilogue in the next Number of your Magazine; and as to my Threats of Prosecution (he says) you are by no means intimidated by them, but depend absolutely on my Politeness, which you may imagine, will restrain me from any offensive Act against a Person of your Age and Sex, however justiable soever [...] But if I cannot coax you into a compliance, I shall

not attempt to frighten you. I shall be proud at any other
Conjuncture to see any Thing of mine in your Work⁴¹

Mrs Midnight responded to Smart (printed within in the same issue) by telling him:

SIR

I received yours, which pleases me so well, I shall not only
print your Prologue and Epilogue, but *that* also. – I am glad to
see by the Date of your Letter, that what was said of a very
great Man is likewise applicable to you⁴²

This exchange between Smart and the editor of a popular periodical demonstrates the escalation of social and cultural pressures which began to intensify and complicate the lives of those who wished to live by their writing in the eighteenth century. The reason for this, Min Wild writes, is Smart must protect his reputation from accusations that he is ‘allowing his work to appear in low magazines, miscellanies and compilations’.⁴³ However, the most interesting aspect in all of this is that Christopher Smart and Mrs Mary Midnight were one and the same person: Smart wrote both letters. The first as himself and the second under his assumed identity of an imaginary old woman who edited the monthly periodical. By taking on the persona of Mary Midnight, Smart was able to hide his identity, enabling him to discuss matters freely under the guise of her character.

Chris Mounsey has suggested that Smart ‘avoided entering the political contest as a man battling with other men’ and instead ‘dressed his prose style in

feminine stereotypes [presenting] himself as a female in order to evade censorship'.⁴⁴ Debbie Welham agrees with Mounsey, 'Smart's approach in *Midwife* was a recognisable tactic for masking Tory, Anglican, anti-Hanover political commentary as - or among – gossip, and that Smart, via Mrs. Midnight, was thereby adopting familiar characteristics of contemporary women writers to evade censorship and punishment'.⁴⁵ While Charlotte Brontë, and her sisters, had to assume male identities in order to be taken seriously as a writer, Smart has done the reverse. He has taken on the character of a woman to express his opinions but within a manner that cannot be taken seriously for the simple fact that it is a female who is expressing this view.

Wild expresses a similar view to Mounsey when she states that the *Midwife* reveals 'how attention to the use of the persona in the eighteenth-century periodical has a particular value, in that it can broaden our understanding of print culture in the eighteenth-century, and most especially conflicts over the concept of authorship'.⁴⁶ In doing so, she questions why 'nearly every early eighteenth and mid eighteenth-century periodical writer or editor in England [chose] to write behind a mask, impersonating another – imaginary – human being? Why did they find it necessary to live on a page, in borrowed garments, the life of someone they were not?'⁴⁷

In some cases, creating a fictional identity was necessary for outspoken political comment and this certainly seems to be the case for Smart who, as a woman, was able to 'write the most outrageous *double entendres* about government policy and claim'.⁴⁸ The fact that she was a woman dismissed any notion that what was being written could be taken as fact, opinion or any matter of

significance. In many ways, *The Doctor, &c* echoes this sentiment. Whilst the premise of the text does not rest on the persona of a woman and her opinions (although it must be noted that the narrator is without personal pronoun and could very well be considered female), the identity of the narrator is still very much questioned. However, as the hidden identity of the author is also – arguably – the narrator of the text, this does complicate the matter slightly. For this reason, I shall refer to both narrator and author as Southey within this context. The first point I would like to raise is political. By comparing and contrasting the politics that are evident within both the *Midwife* and *The Doctor &c*, I will demonstrate why publishing his text anonymously provided Southey the opportunity to write about political issues freely.

Like *The Doctor, &c*, the *Midwife* has been viewed ‘partly in the tradition of learned humour exemplified by Rabelais, Fielding and Sterne’⁴⁹ and described as being ‘an exotic hotch-potch of nonsensical titbits, scholastic, topical, medical, philosophical, the whole flavour with a very pungent, earthly seasoning and stirred with unfailing flippancy and zest’.⁵⁰ Smart needed the persona of Mary Midnight to keep his name ‘free from association [...] and had to be careful that his political satire did not draw the attention of the Whig government and result in fines, imprisonment or closure of the magazine’.⁵¹ Facing a situation such as this, the task of the magazine was ‘to be as effective as [a] political and social satire’⁵² as it could be – and it did so under the guise of Mary Midnight. Subsequently, this ruse gave Smart an opportunity to create a character that was immediately recognisable. As Christopher Devlin has expressed, within these nonsensical titbits of flippancy, Smart is ‘pursuing an

exclusively political agenda'.⁵³ For example, there was a regular feature in the periodical entitled 'The Midwife's Politicks: Or, Gossip's Chronicle of the Affairs of Europe', which consisted of a concealed but cutting commentary on Britain's foreign policy. The critical opinion that appeared in this feature seemed to be lost within, what can be perceived to be, harmless chatter. However, the deeper political commentary that lays therein makes the editorial stance of *Midwife* clear to see.

Although published anonymously, given the strong stance the narrator holds concerning his outlook on politics and religion, it would not have been difficult upon its release to guess who the author of *The Doctor, &c* was. Many speculated that Southey had written the text, but it was not until after his death that Southey was named as the author by his son in law. By reading his letters, it is now known that during his life Southey discussed his progression in writing *The Doctor, &c* with one person: Grosvenor Charles Bedford. Southey even sent a few chapters to Bedford in 1815 in the hope it would 'delight'⁵⁴ him. Whilst the overall tone of the text is temperate and whimsical, Southey's opinions have not softened. With the central plot of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs vanishing into nothing more than a 'mere trickle of narrative that often disappears for whole chapters and flows nowhere in particular',⁵⁵ the digressive nature of the book gives an opportunity for Southey to express his sentiments and, when the occasion arises, criticise 'the whole race of Political Economists, our Malthusites, Benthamites, Utilitarians or Futilitarians'.⁵⁶ He considers them 'counsellors [...] to the Government of this Country [...] as the magicians were to Pharaoh',⁵⁷ as well as demonstrates his contempt for Whigs

and denounces Catholic Emancipation. Furthermore, he attacks the Reform Bill by calling it a 'mass of crudities',⁵⁸ insults the Cabinet for 'waxing insolent because they had raised the mob to back them' and 'declared that they would have the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill'.⁵⁹

Yet, interestingly, in Chapter Sixteen, Southey condemns the heartlessness of Peers who defeated a 'Bill which should have put an end to the inhuman practise of employing children to sweep chimneys'.⁶⁰ He is careful to leave sentences 'imperfect rather than that any irritation which the strength of my language might excite should lessen the salutary effects of self-condemnation' as he bears 'no ill-will towards Lord Lauderdale, either personally or politically' because his 'conduct on the Queen's trial [was] manly and honourable'.⁶¹ Southey has named this chapter the 'Use and Abuse of Stories in Reasoning, With a Word in Behalf of Chimney Sweepers and in Reproof of the Earl Lauderdale' and, as the title indicates, it focuses on the use of children as chimney sweepers. Southey, like his romantic counterparts, opposed the use of children as chimney sweeps. Leigh Hunt labelled the children as Britain's 'little black boys'⁶² and William Blake's 'The Chimney Sweeper', published in *The Songs of Innocence* (1789), 'examines the workings of a moral degradation that slavery produces in the soul [and] exploration of the psychology of one who struggles to liberate himself from complicity from his position'.⁶³ In contrast, the revised 'Chimney Sweeper', published in *The Songs of Experience* (1794), 'attacks a social and psychological system wherein churchgoers perpetuate repression in the name of charity and pity'.⁶⁴

Tim Fulford, in his article 'A Romantic technologist and Britain's Little Black Boys' (2002), has pointed out that 'climbing boys were a specifically English phenomenon'⁶⁵ who, although powerless with no voice, had support from doctors, reformers, philanthropists and poets. This conveyed the innermost fearful sentiments of a nation that were taking advantage of climbing boys. Extraordinarily, climbing boys were bought from the age of five by master-sweeps from institutions such as the workhouses and orphanages. In many cases, they were even bought from poor widows who could no longer afford to keep them. Once taken, the climbing boys were forced up chimneys 'till their bleeding sores hardened into calluses'.⁶⁶ Yet, this was the least of their worries. It was reported that the boys 'legs and pelvis became deformed' or 'often, ingrained soot led to cancer of the scrotum or mouth'.⁶⁷ In some cases, many boys fell to their death, suffocated or were burnt alive. As a result, 'the roasted flesh of infants [often] kept the home-fires burning'.⁶⁸ It would appear that in order to ensure that the wealthiest were at ease and comfortable, they depended on poor young children's labour.

Coleridge championed the work of Count Rumford who, as a scientist, had been conducting experiments to test the nature of heat and, in doing so, had invented 'The Rumford Fireplace' in 1796. This device was intended to dramatically increase 'the efficiency of the open hearth'⁶⁹ so that it would heat a room rather than the chimney. By this means, the soot left would be eliminated and this, in turn, would obviate the need for children chimney sweeps. Southey considered the work undertaken by climbing boys to be 'inhuman'⁷⁰ and used several platforms to express this view. In his satirical work - *Letters from England: by*

Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella (1807) – (which was also published anonymously) the protagonist describes ‘a spectacle which you will think better adapted to wild African Negros than to so refined a people as the English’.⁷¹ Explaining that ‘the soot of the earth-coal, which, though formerly used by only the lower classes, is now the fuel of the rich and poor alike’,⁷² he condemns the fact ‘no objects can be more deplorable than these poor children’.⁷³ Under Southey’s influence, the *Quarterly Review* ‘endorsed the exclusion of children as chimney sweeps’⁷⁴ and, in *The Doctor, &c*, Southey calls out the government – in particular the Earl of Lauderdale – for their failures to stop the use of children as chimney sweeps.

‘The Bill which should have put an end to the inhumane practice of employing children to sweep chimneys,’ Southey writes, ‘was thrown out on the third reading in the House of Lords (having passed the Commons without a dissentient voice) by a speech from Lord Lauderdale’.⁷⁵ What Southey is referring to here is set within a timeframe between the years 1817 to 1819, when Shrewsbury MP Henry Grey Bennet tried to pass a bill to abolish ‘the climbing boy system’.⁷⁶ Having successfully and powerfully argued his cause by reporting that ‘there had been five fatal accidents to climbing boys in the previous year’,⁷⁷ the Bill was passed by the Commons in 1818. However, the Lords found the evidence presented by the Commons inconclusive, causing the bill to be delayed on the grounds that they were awaiting a report from the Surveyor-General. The following year, Bennet tried again. This time, the Lords considered the idea of abolishing climbing boys to be impracticable with many MPs thinking the ‘case of abuse by master sweeps had been exaggerated’.⁷⁸

Even with these thoughts in mind, the Commons passed the Bill but, once again, when it reached the Lords there were problems.

The Bill's most outspoken opponent was the Earl of Lauderdale, who told the House that 'he would resist the legislation to his last breath'.⁷⁹ This he did, and even supplied the Lords with an anecdote regarding a goose and two ducks as chimney sweepers that would highlight 'mankind were carried away by ideas of humanity, which prevented them from giving due consideration'⁸⁰ to the subject matters. In parts of Ireland, instead of employing climbing boys, it had been the practice to tie a rope round the neck of a goose and drag the bird up the chimney so the clattering of its wings would clean it. This practice invoked feelings in many people and, for the sake of protecting the goose, they seemed ready to give up all humanity to other animals. Lauderdale's anecdote references a particular incident when an Irishman was persuaded out of humanitarian concern for the goose to sweep his chimney using two ducks instead.

Southey, appalled by the Earl's flippant remarks, mocks and attacks the Lords by stating that the anecdote 'was no otherwise applicable than as it related to chimney-sweeping; but it was a joke, and that sufficed. The Lords laughed; his Lordship had the satisfaction of throwing out the Bill, and the home Negro trade has continued from that time, now seven years till this day, and still continues'.⁸¹ Southey's comments not only exhibit his distaste at the government's dismissive attitude towards climbing boys, but also give an insight into the time at which this chapter was written – seven years after the Bill was rejected. Therefore, it can be said with certainty that Southey wrote this chapter in 1826.

Although Southey was outspoken in his views, and no stranger to voicing his opinions, nine years prior to writing this chapter, he had already endured embarrassment over the unauthorised publication of his revolutionary poem *Wat Tyler* in 1817. Written while at Oxford University in 1794, the poem portrayed Southey's sympathy with the peasant, Wat Tyler, in his attempt to have the King's unpopular poll tax revoked. In a letter to his brother, Southey a tax gather commented upon the fact that he was 'writing a tragedy' on his 'uncle Wat Tyler who knocks a tax gather's brains then rose in rebellion'.⁸² William Arthur Speck has stated that the use of 'uncle' in the letter signifies the fact that Southey claimed that the rebel, Wat Tyler, who shared the same surname as Southey's aunt, was a 'remote relative'⁸³ of his. The poem alludes to the treason trials of 1794, which involved Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke and Southey's friend, John Thelwall. As Speck points out, if *Wat Tyler* had been published that year, Southey 'would have found himself in the dock alongside the accused'.⁸⁴ However, it was not published until twenty-three years later when Southey was Poet Laureate and had become increasingly conservative in his political views. In the weeks that the surprise publication came to light, Southey had written 'an especially trenchant article in the *Quarterly Review*',⁸⁵ which led Southey and his supporters to claim that the publication 'was a deliberate attack mounted by enemies designed to show him a renegade'.⁸⁶ However, Southey seems to have been less anxious to repudiate his younger self. In a letter to Coleridge, on 21 March 1817, he proclaims 'I have no reason to regret the apparition of my Uncle Wat, since the recollection of old times, it has brought back some of their feelings also'.⁸⁷ Three days later, in a letter to Joseph Cottle, he repeats this

same sentiment, 'I am glad to see, and you will be very glad to hear, that this business had called forth Coleridge, and with the recollection of old times, brought back something like old feelings'.⁸⁸ What these 'feelings' from 'old times'⁸⁹ are, Southey does not expand upon or clarify.

It has been established that Southey was adding to *The Doctor, &c* throughout his life, and a particular interchapter within the text – 'Interchapter VII - 'Obsolete Anticipations; Being a Leaf out of an old Almanac, Which, like Other Old Almanacs, Though Out of Date is Not Out of Use' – appears to allude to the *Wat Tyler* incident in his life. It is, by far, one of the most provoking interchapters written and, for this reason, it is what I would consider to be his defining moment within the text. It was only when this interchapter was published in 1834 that many people were convinced it was Southey who had written it. The interchapter discusses the reaction *The Doctor, &c* will provoke in its audience and begins by stating

When St Thomas Aquinas was asked in what manner a man might best become learned, he answered, "by reading one book" [...] A new book in its reputation is but as an acorn, the full growth of which can be known only by posterity. The Doctor will not make so great a sensation upon its first appearance as Mr. Southey's *Wat Tyler*, or the first two Cantos of *Don Juan*; still less will it be talked of so universally as the murder of Mr. Weire⁹⁰

When comparing the text, in terms of public attention, to the two examples Southey gives, it is interesting to note the references in respect of when the events occurred. The first two examples are literary and tie the digressive narrative within a short timeframe with the first appearance of Southey's *Wat Tyler* in 1817 and the first two Cantos of *Don Juan* in 1819. The third example, according to Fraser's *Magazine for Town Country*, has been misspelt 'we must here remark, that the respectable name last mentioned is not given correctly. It was *Weare*, not *Weire*'.⁹¹ The murder that Southey refers to is the 'Elstree Murder' of 1823 when, 'on the evening of Friday, October 24th, a murder unequalled for cold-blooded and deliberate atrocity, was committed in a lone and unfrequented lane about three miles and a quarter from the village of Elstree'.⁹² The victim, William Weare, was killed by John Thurtell because the latter was in debt due to his gambling addiction for the sum of £300. Therefore, in a few short paragraphs, the chronological timeline of events are positioned within seven years dating from *Wat Tyler*'s publication in 1817 and finishing with the Elstree Murder in 1823.

To compare *The Doctor, &c*'s first appearance to three events that are within such close proximity of each other suggests that, at the time of writing this interchapter, these events had occurred fairly recently. However, there is no doubt that Southey was writing retrospectively, whether this was closer to the publication date of the text or reflecting over these events more immediately, both points raise key issues concerning the 'function of memory and the way in which it is reconstructed in narrative and implicated in notions of self-identity'.⁹³ In daily social discourse, and conventional autobiographies,

narrative tends ‘to elide memory as a *process*’⁹⁴ whereby the ‘the content is presented as if it were uniformly and objectively available to the remembering subject’,⁹⁵ which concedes the narrating ‘I’ and the subject of the narration to be identical. There appears to be a complicated and shifting relationship between the ‘past and present selves in first-person fictional and autobiographical narratives’⁹⁶ that can be viewed within *The Doctor, &c.*

1.2 A Work in Digression

There is no doubt in Southey’s mind that *The Doctor, &c* will be ‘talked of’,⁹⁷ ‘however, it will be widely, largely, loudly and lengthily talked of: lauded and vituperated, vilified and extolled, heartily abused, and no less heartily admired’.⁹⁸ He goes on to state that several questions will be asked regarding the text: ‘Have you seen it? – Do you understand it? – Are you not disgusted with it? – Are you not provoked by it? – Are you not delighted with it? – Whose is it? – Whose can it be?’⁹⁹ All this talk will create such a ‘stir’, ‘buzz’ and bustle [...] at tea tables in the country’.¹⁰⁰ He is convinced that ‘Sir Walter Scott will deny that he [had] any hand in it’ and assured that ‘Mr. Coleridge will smile if he is asked the question’.¹⁰¹ ‘The Laureate’ though ‘will observe a careless silence; Mr. Wordsworth a dignified one’ but ‘The Opium-Eater, while he peruses it, will doubt whether there is a book in his hand, or whether he be not in a dream of intellectual delight’.¹⁰²

Although the extent to which the text can be considered to include early postmodernist characteristics will be looked at in greater detail in the third chapter of this thesis, I would like to note that the following passage is from

Interchapter VII in the unified seven bound text. However, in the single bound volumes, it is in fact the opening chapter of volume three in 1835 – one year after the previous two volumes were published. It can be read as a stream of consciousness in which Southey not only goes further in questioning who the author could be, but begins to openly mock his contemporaries. In doing so, he is gently amusing himself by adhering to his own perceived stereotype alongside his friends and enemies like Hazlitt

Is it Walter Scott's? – There is no Scotch in the book; and that hand is never to be mistaken in its masterly strokes. Is it Lord Byron's? – Lord Byron's! Why the Author fears God, honours the King, and loves his country and his kind. Is it by Little Moore? – If it were, we should have sentimental lewdness, Irish patriotism, which is something very like British treason, and a plentiful spicing of personal insults to the Prince Regent. Is it the Laureate? – He lies buried under his own historical quartos! There is neither his mannerisms, nor his moralism, nor his Methodism. Is it Wordsworth? – What, - an Elephant cutting capers on the slack wire! Is it Coleridge? The method indeed of the book might lead to such a suspicion – but then it is intelligible throughout. Mr. A -? – there is Latin in it. Mr. B? – there is Greek in it. Mr. C-? – it is written in good English. Mr Hazlitt? It contains no panegyric upon Bonaparte; no imitations of Charles Lamb; no plagiarisms from Mr. Coleridge's conversation; no abuse of that gentleman, Mr.

Southey and Mr. Wordsworth, - and no repetitions of himself.

Certainly, therefore, it is *not* Mr. Hazlitt's. Is it Charles Lamb?

Baa! Baa! good Sheep, have you any wool?

Yes, marry, that I have, three bags full.

Good Sheep I write here, in emendation of the nursery song;

because nobody ought to call this Lamb a *black* one¹⁰³

As mentioned, it can be read in one of two ways. Firstly, as a sequence considered to be similar to stream of consciousness. It is almost as if Southey is writing down every thought and opinion as it passes through his mind, without lifting his pen off the page. Yet, the use of hyphens implies that there could be several voices in the passage, interjecting with their opinions. Edgar Allen Poe, editor of the Virginia based periodical *Southern Literary Messenger*, labelled it to be 'the work of one author'¹⁰⁴ or possibly 'two, three, four, five – as far even as nine or ten. These writers are sometimes thought to have composed 'The Doctor' conjointly'.¹⁰⁵ The grounds for Poe's suggestion can be seen in the above passage wherein the disjointed narrative reads as if two authors are engaged in dialogue with one naming an individual and the other replying by justifying – or discrediting – why it can or cannot be this person. In fact, Southey himself in this passage suggests the possibility of multiple authorship.

Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country, in the December 1837 edition, reviewed *The Doctor, &c* within an article entitled 'Chapter the Third – Disclosing Who The Doctor Is'. Although they believed it to be 'vain attempts to mystify us. Figuring to himself that the Doctor will make a great noise',¹⁰⁶

the article put the text on trial. After calling in the witnesses and swearing them ‘by all means’ to tell ‘the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth’¹⁰⁷ the magazine then proceeded to print excerpts from the text to which they gave headings and labelled, in chronological order, from the first witness all the way until ‘witness the thirty-fourth’.¹⁰⁸ Upon the result of their findings, they concluded it must be a person who dislikes both Francis Jeffrey for he is ‘slated in many a quarter’,¹⁰⁹ and Byron as he is often hit directly or treated like an enemy. Yet, the same author does not write ‘a line of Scott, or Coleridge, or Crabbe, or Bowles, or Wilson, or Rogers, or Campbell, or Millman’¹¹⁰ in addition to the fact that Wordsworth is hardly mentioned. If Wordsworth is mentioned he is ‘sparingly quoted, and never far from a connexion with Southey’.¹¹¹ Moreover, who else ‘would quote the odes, ballads, minor, poems, *Thalaba*, *Kehama*, *Roderick*, *Wat Tyler*, *Histories*, *Omniana*, &c of Southey, his private correspondence, and his domestic conversation – who but Southey himself, in such a book like this?’¹¹²

Written in a similar fashion to *Midwife*, the text reads as a miscellany of essays that showcase the content of Southey’s mind as his life progressed. The lack of consistency in his views is a prominent feature within the text, and the shift between attitudes is almost as if Southey is playing a game with his readers. Whilst strongly alluding to the possibility that he is the man behind *The Doctor*, &c, he is careful in not fully stating this fact. To some extent, it could be argued that he is almost teasing the audience and the reaction his text is likely to receive. In fact, he prophesies the text’s own fate by openly mocking literary newspapers, critics and reviewers. In the opening sentence of Chapter Six, he

begins by stating '[h]appily for Daniel, he lived before the age of Magazines, Reviews, Cyclopædias, Elegant Extracts and Literary Newspapers, so he gathered the fruit of knowledge for himself, instead of receiving it from the dirty fingers of a retail vender'.¹¹³ The assertion here is clear: media influence impacts society because they have forgotten to think for themselves. However, ironically, Southey's text is a self-proclaimed magnum opus in which bears the history of knowledge and 'ought to be written in a book'¹¹⁴ for society to read. As an anonymous publication, this yet again demonstrates the mystery that Southey is creating surrounding the text by attacking the media. Thus, enabling Southey to take aim at his enemies under an unknown identity.

Similarly, as an anonymous publication, the *Midwife* was able to attack - or retaliate against - any individual(s) that Smart had an agenda with. For example, when William Kenrick, on 14 November 1750, published a pamphlet exposing the authorship of the magazine by drawing attention to the fact the *Midwife* was published at the same as *The Student* (another periodical that featured the work of Smart), Smart used the December 1750, issue of the *Midwife* to promise to write an *Old Woman's Dunciad* against Kenrick. This feud lasted for a few issues but eventually stopped (although critics argue that this 'feud' was in fact a prearranged publicity stunt). In this regard, there appears to be a similar structural style that develops in *The Doctor, &c* where Southey attacks one individual on a regular basis, igniting and fueling a feud that is years old. This individual is Francis Jeffrey, whose name appears more frequently than any other throughout the text. Jeffrey was 'one of the Romantic period's most influential reviewers'¹¹⁵ and editor of *The Edinburgh Review*. Southey despised

him because he ‘again, and again, made [him] the epitome of everything that was wrong about a new, revolutionary ‘school’.¹¹⁶ It was predominantly the review of Southey’s epic *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) that ‘marked the opening salvo in a campaign between the editor of *The Edinburgh Review* and what he came in 1807 to call the ‘Lake Poets’.¹¹⁷ This ‘sect of poets’¹¹⁸ consisted of Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge who, ‘from a splenetic and idle discontent with the existing institutions of society’,¹¹⁹ had settled within the English countryside. The critical reception of *Thalaba* was not what Southey had hoped for. While the *British Critic* was dismissive of the epic poem, subsequent ‘reviews had not been quite so damning, though they were at best lukewarm in their praise’.¹²⁰ In a letter to his uncle, Thomas Southey, on 7 December 1805, Southey recollects how ‘poor *Thalaba* got abused in every review except the *Critical*’.¹²¹

Yet, it was the anonymous review of Francis Jeffrey for *The Edinburgh Review* that would lead to a far more catastrophic attack on *Thalaba*. Dismissing the plot entirely, Jeffrey also criticised the way Southey had written the romance, explaining that ‘When he had filled his common-place book, he began to write; and his poem is little else than his common-place book versified’.¹²² Southey’s ‘faults’, Jeffrey writes, ‘are always aggressive, and often created, by his partiality for the peculiar manners of that new school of poetry of which he is a faithful disciple, and to the glory of which he had sacrificed greater talents and acquisitions, than can be boasted of by any of his associates’.¹²³ Southey’s link to this ‘new school of poetry’ was ‘his real sin in the eyes of the Scottish reviewer’.¹²⁴ Jeffrey went further in citing Wordsworth ‘as one of its chief

champions and apostles'¹²⁵ and held the authors of this school responsible for constituting the 'most formidable conspiracy that has been formed against sound judgement in matters poetical'.¹²⁶

Of all the reviews, it was this one that made Southey livid and outraged. In a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford on 21 December 1802, he asks him whether he had 'seen the Scotch review of Thalaba' before writing '[o]f which what is good is not about Thalaba and what is about Thalaba is not good. The Critic says there is no invention in Thalaba. Now Grosvenor I will tell you what I think of the Critic – to speak mildly of him, as one always should in these cases, he is a damned lying Scotch son of a bitch'.¹²⁷ Furthermore, Southey also objected to Jeffrey's idea of a 'new school'. In a letter to John May on 31 January 1803, Southey complained that '[w]ith regard to that part of the Review which related to Wordsworth, it is obviously no relation whatever to Thalaba, nor can there be a stronger proof of want of discernment or want of candour than in grouping together three men so different in style as Wordsworth, Coleridge and myself in one head'.¹²⁸ Three years later, Jeffrey attacked Southey once more for his poem *Madoc* (1805), writing that it revealed 'the affectation of infantine innocence and simplicity [and] of a certain perverse singularity in learning, taste, opinions' which were typical of Southey and of 'his associates'.¹²⁹

Inventing the notion of the 'Lake School' in a review of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 1817 publication of *Biographia Literaria*, Jeffrey's hostile review focused on – what he considered to be – the 'group's vulgarity; in particular, the new subject matter, of their poetry, their prosaic language, the elevated role they

gave to the imagination, their views of the role and task of the poet, their revolutionary ideas on poetic style, such as their emphasis on simplicity, and the discrepancy between form and content in their work'.¹³⁰ In a particularly damning review of *The Excursion* (1814), Jeffrey begins by announcing 'this will never do'¹³¹ before ridiculing Wordsworth's poem as a 'natural drawl of Lakers',¹³² which is a result of his 'long habits of seclusion and an excessive ambition of originality [...] among his lakes and his mountains'.¹³³ Upon hearing Jeffrey's criticism, Southey urged Coleridge to 'write with him a joint retort to the review'.¹³⁴ Southey's vehement hatred and frustration toward Jeffrey can be seen in a letter to James Hogg on 24 December 1814:

But you little know me if you imagine that any thoughts of fear or favour would make me abstain from speaking publicly of Jeffrey as I think and as he deserves. I despise his condemnation and I defy his malice. He crush *The Excursion!!!* [...] For myself popularity is not the mark I shoot at; if it were I should not write such poems as *Roderick*; and Jeffrey can no more stand in my way to fame, than Tom Thumb could stand in my way in the streets [...] I will serve him up to the public like a Turkey's gizzard, sliced, scored, peppered, salted kiann'd, grilled & bedevilled. I will bring him to justice; he shall be executed in prose, & gibbeted in verse, & the Lord have mercy on his Soul!¹³⁵

Southey's attempt to 'bring him to justice' can be viewed through his execution of Jeffrey in *The Doctor*, &c. Attacking Jeffrey in the Preface of the book, his

comparison between Jeffrey and goose quills, whilst seemingly peculiar at first, emerges to be a beautiful analogy juxtaposed amongst a condemnation of insults.

He claims that ‘all consumers’ who write with an ‘ink and quill’¹³⁶ should consider their choice of feather carefully as this is a representation of themselves as well as their work. Southey confesses that it is above his ambition to catch ‘a quill from a Seraph’, though ‘one from a Peacock’s tail’¹³⁷ is within his reach. Therefore, he would like it ‘known unto all people, nations and languages that with a Peacock’s quill this Preface hath been penned – literally – truly, and *bona-fidely* speaking’.¹³⁸ Likening himself to a peacock (an admired creature which symbolises nobility, integrity and beauty), it is by no means a surprise that Southey would think himself, or his writing, to be just as eloquent. Demonstrating his point, Southey goes on

the light may fall upon this excellent Poet’s wand as I wave it
[...] Every feather of its fringe is now lit up by the sun; the
hues of green and gold and amethyst are all brought forth; and
that predominant lustre which can only be likened to some
rich metallic oxyd; and that spot of deepest purple, the pupil of
an eye for whose glorious hue neither metals nor flowers nor
precious stones afford a resemblance¹³⁹

He goes on to ask ‘what can be more emblematic of the work which I am beginning than the splendid instrument wherewith the Preface is traced?’¹⁴⁰ The ‘splendid instrument’ that Southey is referring to is the peacock’s quill, so if

Southey considers his writing to symbolise a peacock, what does he make of his contemporaries? To begin, Southey uses an example of a 'lover' who would 'borrow a feather from the turtle dove'¹⁴¹ before outlining an array of individuals like 'the lawyer' who 'would have a large assortment of kite, hawk, buzzard and vulture' and 'his clients [who] may use pigeon or gull' as well as the 'challenger' who 'must indite with one from the wing of a game cock'.¹⁴² He argues that some critics should use 'owl' feathers whilst 'others Butchers Bird' and 'he who takes advantage of a privileged situation to offer the wrong and shrink from the atonement will find a white feather. Your dealers in public and private scandal, whether Jacobins or Anti-Jacobins, the pimps and the panders of a profligate press, should use none but duck feathers'.¹⁴³ In terms of poets, Southey believes they should write with a quill according to their varieties and, although he lists several poets, he blanks out their surnames. For instance: 'Mr. -----, the Tom Tit. Mr. -----, the Sky-lark and Mr. -----, the Eagle'.¹⁴⁴ Yet, within this list of poets one name is clear: 'Lord -----, the Black Swan',¹⁴⁵ who is clearly Lord Byron.

However it is in his parting paragraph that Southey delivers his final blow, and concludes by urging 'the editor of the Edinburgh Review, whether he dictates in morals or in taste, or displays his peculiar in talent in political prophecy, he must continue to use goose quills. Stick to the goose, Mr. Jeffrey; while you live, stick to the Goose!'¹⁴⁶ After comparing himself to a peacock's quill at the beginning of the preface, Southey concludes by equating Jeffrey's quill to a goose's. Since goose quills were 'cheap', 'often made bad pens'¹⁴⁷ and it was even possible to 'get them free from the plucking',¹⁴⁸ Southey's message is

clear: Jeffrey's writing will never be as eloquent or as equal to his. Furthermore, as a goose is considered a silly fellow, Southey is equating Jeffrey to one.

Whilst this may be the first attack on Jeffrey within the book, it is by no means the last. Southey remarks that Jeffrey's 'talent in political prophecy' is 'peculiar'.¹⁴⁹ The feud between the pair, as William Arthur Speck has noted, is not solely polemical but political too¹⁵⁰ and dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The Edinburgh Review was first re-established in 1802 by Jeffrey and his colleagues 'as a Whig organ opposed to what it regarded as a Tory ministry, and the 'Lake Poets' eventually were to be identified with the government'.¹⁵¹ The following year, Southey agreed to contribute to a new journal that was about to launch: the *Annual Review*. The proposed prospectus for this periodical announced that it was to be conservative even though its editor, Arthur Aikin, was a 'Unitarian and a prominent chemist who had been associated with Joseph Priestley'.¹⁵² Before the end of 1802, Southey had already written his first review for the journal, which he had entitled: *Periodical Accounts relative to the Baptist Missionary Society for propagating the gospel among the heathen*. Extraordinarily, in November 1807, Southey was approached by *The Edinburgh Review* because he had been found to be a 'suitable contributor'¹⁵³ to the publication with Walter Scott writing 'to him that he had raised the possibility with Jeffrey, who, despite his dismissive reviews of *Thalaba* and *Madoc*, raised no objection to it'.¹⁵⁴ However, Southey did object. Just one month prior to this in October 1807, Jeffrey had reviewed Wordsworth's *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807) for *The Edinburgh Review* and had challenged 'the bitterest enemy of

Wordsworth to produce anything parallel to this from any collection of English poetry, or even the specimens of his friend Mr. Southey'.¹⁵⁵ In addition to this, Jeffrey also observed that Wordsworth was 'known to belong to a certain brotherhood of poets who have haunted for some years about the Lakes of Cumberland; and is generally looked upon, we believe, as the purest model of the excellences and peculiarities of the school, which they have been labouring to establish'.¹⁵⁶ Writing later to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn on 14 January 1808, Southey explained that Jeffrey's 'impertinence with which he alludes to my residence at the Lakes after having been my guest there, fully entitles him to any discipline which I may be disposed to bestow'.¹⁵⁷

Even though Southey turned down the offer, it did have its appeal. *The Edinburgh Review* 'paid ten guineas a sheet to contributors',¹⁵⁸ which was far more than the £7 he was being paid by the *Annual Review* at a time when he was 'desperately short of money'.¹⁵⁹ However, in the end, Southey resisted the temptation of a greater income. In a polite response to Scott on 8 December 1807, Southey assured him Jeffrey's disparaging reviews were of little moment to him but he was a man of principles, '[t]o Jeffrey as an individual I shall ever be ready to show every kind of individual courtesy; but of Judge Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review* I must ever think and speak as a bad politician, a worse moralist, and a critic, in matters of taste, equally incompetent and unjust'.¹⁶⁰ The reason for this was Jeffrey had supported Catholic Emancipation and encouraged peace with France. In Michael Tomko's view, Jeffrey 'viewed Catholic Emancipation as the next stop on Britain's progressive historical path towards liberty'.¹⁶¹ By contrast, Southey advocated 'No Popery' and was

passionate in his support of war against France. In his letter to William Taylor, dated July 1807, Southey laments that

the measure of Lord Grenville was a foolish one, which would have satisfied the Catholicks [sic] - & would have introduced a Popish Chaplain with every regiment and every ship in the service. I would rather have had the ministry turned out, than they should have succeeded but that is not the question now at issue between the King & the Constitution, in which of course I go with the Constitution. But when ever such a measure is likely to be carried then I shall cry no popery as loud as I can¹⁶²

Southey's next attack on Jeffrey comes in the chapter 'The Happiness of Having a Catholic Taste'. Southey begins by stating that 'A fastidious taste is like a squeamish appetite; the one has its origin in some disease of mind, as the other has in some ailment of the stomach. Your true lover of literature is never fastidious'¹⁶³ before attacking Jeffrey further:

Young Daniel was free [...] been bred up not in any denomination ending in *ist* or *inian*, or *erian* or *arian*, but as a dutiful and contented son of the Church of England [...] Mr. Wordsworth, in that poem which Mr. Jeffrey has said won't do – (Mr. Jeffrey is always lucky in his predictions whether as a politician or a critic, - bear witness, Wellington! bear

witness, Wordsworth and Southey! bear witness, Elia and
Lord Byron!) – Mr Wordsworth, in that poem which

The high and tender Muses shall accept

With gracious smile deliberately pleased,

And listening Time reward with scared praise :

Mr. Wordsworth, in that noble poem, observes,

Oh many are the Poets that are sown

By nature¹⁶⁴

Southey seems to be commending a catholic taste and denying such a taste to Jeffrey. His hatred for Jeffrey is apparent throughout, so much so that his preface is, in a way, dedicated to him. This text is expressing Southey's inner thoughts and he has written them down, attacking those who have done him wrong in his life. Whilst he stands strong with Wordsworth and Coleridge in this text and defends them, as the next chapter will detail, this has not always been the case. In a way, as his final reflective swansong, Southey, arguably, is making amends or simply reflecting at particular moments in his life.

1.3 Common-placing

In 1812, Southey confessed 'I have a dangerous love of detail, and a desire of accuracy, which is more expensive (both in material and time) than I ought to afford'.¹⁶⁵ Southey's reading was vast and he had such passion for facts. His thirst for knowledge was ever expanding, not only transcending the scope of

familiar European boundaries but also embracing exotic Asian and native American cultures. His library, so precious to him, comprised of 14,000 volumes. Thomas de Quincey, in his assortment of essays, *Recollections of the Lakes and Lake Poets: Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey* (1863), compared Southey's library to that of Wordsworth

A circumstance which as much as anything, expounded to the very eye the characteristic distinctions between Wordsworth and Southey, and would not suffer a stranger to forget it for a moment, was the insignificant place and consideration allowed to the small book collection of the former, contrasted with the splendid library of the latter. The two or three hundred volumes of Wordsworth occupied a little, homely bookcase, fixed into one of two shallow recesses formed on each side of the fireplace by the projection of the chimney in the little sitting-room upstairs [...] On the other hand, Southey's collection occupied a separate room, the largest, and every way the most agreeable, in the house; and in this room styled, and not ostentatiously (for it really merited that name), the Library¹⁶⁶

He also recounted that, although 'Wordsworth lived in the open air', Southey lived 'in his library, which Coleridge used to call his wife'.¹⁶⁷ Southey's self-confessed 'dangerous level of detail' appears many times in common-placing his works over the course of his lifetime. When *Literary Panorama* reviewed *Curse of Kehama* (1810), it considered the poem's attached notes to

‘demonstrate the industry, the perseverance and the extensive research’ needed to be ‘a learned author’.¹⁶⁸ *The Quarterly Review* supported this view: ‘the notes contain a profusion of eastern learning, and the massive blocks which Mr. Southey has selected as specimens of Bramanical poetry and mythology, gives us at once an idea of the immense quarries in which the author must have laboured’.¹⁶⁹ Southey’s notes were an important aspect to his work as they enriched his text to become a wealth of details and curiosities on a range of subjects (all varying from civil, religious, literary, history, topography, socio-political and miscellaneous anecdotes).

Southey’s Common-place Book was published posthumously between the years 1849-1851. Like the last two volumes of *The Doctor, &c*, it was edited by his son in law John Wood Warter. However, like the first five volumes of the text, the profligate notes that are *Southey’s Common-place Book* are the result of Warter’s own selection of Southey’s notes from his common-place books and notes. Therefore, this cannot claim the same textual authority that can be attributed to Southey’s prose or poetry published during his lifetime. Diego Saglia observes that the amalgamated nature of *Southey’s Common-place Book* is due to Warter’s editorial interventions and acknowledges the difficulties in dealing with it from a scholarly or editorial viewpoint

When dealing with Robert Southey’s *Common-place Book*, one should bear in mind that this was [...] edited by John Warter Wood, a clergyman and gentleman scholar [...] Warter intervened in the re-ordering of Robert Southey’s voluminous materials and notes for his literary projects, but there is no

way of ascertaining the extent and repercussions of such an intervention¹⁷⁰

The representational practice of transcription is crucial to the ideal concept and the use of the common-place book. The earliest practices of common-place books were the '*florilegia*', meaning flower collections, or '*flores philosophorum*' which were a collection of quotations from classical authors entitled flowers. Ann Moss has observed that towards the end of the seventeenth-century, this definition of the common-place book had become redundant for several reasons: the growing print book industry, the structures set by the introduction of copyright law, the consequential hostility against plagiarism and, finally, the changing notion of authorship.¹⁷¹ Instead 'true authors' demanded 'deep reading' whilst the common-place books 'copiers' and readers declined.¹⁷² In the early-Romantic period, common-place books were typically reference resources that included 'countless [copied] *sententiae* by sacred and secular authors, apophthegmata, similitudes, adages, *exempla*, emblems, hieroglyphs, and fables'.¹⁷³ In the Romantic period, commonplace books, especially those by male authors, were considered to be more scholarly and Southey's common-place books mark a transition from the principles of the Renaissance towards a shift in creative and personalising Romantic-period miscellanies. These are not considered '*florilegia*' to be used as learning tools or memory aids but rather seeds that are supposed to generate thought.

Southey was a vigorous and dynamic transcriber and very often appropriated his sources and responded to them. For example, in the fourth series of *Southey's Common-place Book*, entitled 'Miscellaneous Anecdotes and Gleanings', he

transcribes an extract from Isaac Watts' observations about elephants from the *Oriental Fragments* (1834) into the third person, 'Watts thought their spirits might perpetually transmigrate/ Sometimes he thought it hard to ascribe sensation to them: sometimes could hardly avoid thinking them reasonable'.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, Southey's commentary sometimes takes the form of queries. The following example is evident when he states his uncertainty about J. Hunter's comments regarding the size of animals in *Philosophical Transactions* (1686-92): 'Query? To the number of those on which they prey? – or does that mean that creatures of prey are few in proportion as they are large?'¹⁷⁵ However, despite this, Southey's voice is always subjugated by his various authoritative sources. Unlike Byron, whose voice dictates his notes, promoting their innovation and authenticity, in Southey's notes, his knowledge appears mostly through a wide scholarly circle of historians, philosophers, orientalist scholars which span from the classical period until his current age.

Southey's paratextual authorial and editorial voice is elusive. In doing this, he is able to control his readers' perception of his socio-political and religious ideologies. In his notes to *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), Southey employs several citations and editorial techniques in order to be either associated with, or dissociated from, both evangelicals and Jones' school. Furthermore, there is an absence of quotation marks in numerous passages which gives the impression of Southey appropriating and sanctioning both groups. Many authorial 'I's could well be easily misconstrued as Southey's own authorial or editorial 'I' as discussed earlier in regards to narration. His common-place books and paratext are proof that he transformed a large amount of their content into scholarly

apparatus which surrounded his works, which was primarily done in the form of footnotes, endnotes and appendices. Southey must have spent a considerable amount of time copying, re-copying and commenting on selected quotations. This process gives critics a clear idea of the patience and determination, in addition to the tedious scholarly labour involved, that Southey had to strengthen the authority of his publications through miscellaneous scholarship that would equal the encyclopaedic periodicals of the day.

1.4 Digressions and Paratexts

The fragmentary nature of *Southey's Common-place Book*, in both a structural and thematic sense, reveals Southey's strong inclination towards a fragmentary and discursive style which is similar, if not identical, to *The Doctor, &c.* Writing for the *Quarterly Review* in 1834, John Gibson Lockhart immediately suspected 'the Poet Laureate himself' of writing *The Doctor, &c* because of the vast amount of scholarship and ideology in the text

Be this author who he may, the names which conjecture has banded about in connexion with his work imply, all and each of them, a strong impression of the ability and erudition which it evinces. At first, suspicion lighted almost universally, we believe, on the Poet Laureate himself; and certainly the moral, political, and literary doctrines of the book are such, in the main, as might have countenanced such a notion¹⁷⁶

The same review also ridiculed *The Doctor, &c*'s vague generic conventions, eccentric structure and subject matter by borrowing Ben Jonson's famous

characterisation from his play *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599). It describes it as being an “‘apish and fantastic” nondescript [...] two thirds of [which] look as if they might have been penned in the vestibule of Bedlam’, whose ‘author’s thin partition that divides great wit from folly would seem to be a moveable one’.¹⁷⁷ The text’s extraordinary heterogeneity and incongruity of material was underlined in a review by the *New York Times* in 1879, which defined it as an ‘old curiosity shop’

He has collected many oddities which are valuable only because quaint and antiquated. Still it does one no harm to dip into his pages and read, for example a list of the names of devils collected by some forgotten witch-hunter of the seventeenth-century; or to verify the singular calculation [...] that, on an average, the man of 80 has committed 2,510, 288,000 sins followed though it be by an irreverent assault upon Calvinism; [...] If these miscellaneous articles in his old curiosity-shop pall upon us at times, we are soon recompensed, for Southey is not long in producing wares of more intrinsic value. He loved old English literature with the rather indiscriminating ardor [sic] common at the time¹⁷⁸

Although the overall tone is sarcastic, the term ‘his old curiosity-shop’ is a befitting and appropriate summary of what can be found within the text. However, this is not the first time that this term has been associated with Southey. In his *Imaginary Conversations* (1824), Walter Savage Landor envisions a conversation between Southey and Richard Porson in which they are

discussing English poets such as Milton, Shakespeare and Dryden. When the imaginary Porson is reflecting on Chaucer, he tells Southey ‘Among the English poets, both on this side and the other side of Milton, I place him next to Shakespeare; but the word *next*, must have nothing to do with the word *near*’.

¹⁷⁹ Southey replies

These authors deal in strong distillations for foggy minds that want excitement. In few places is there is a great depth of sentiment, but everywhere vast exaggeration and insane display. I find the over-crammed curiosity-shop, with its incommodious appendages, some grotesquely rich, all disorderly and disconnected. Rather would I find, as you would, the well-proportioned hall, with its pillars of right dimensions at right distances¹⁸⁰

Arguably, the *New York Times* is referencing to Landor’s *Imaginary Conversation* in their review of *The Doctor, &c.* The same curiosity shop that Landor seemed fit for Southey to disregard is the same curiosity shop that is filled with disorder and disconnection in *The Doctor, &c.*

Mark Storey labelled *The Doctor, &c* an ‘entertaining *jeu d’esprit*’.¹⁸¹ Elaborating on the intertextuality with *Tristram Shandy* within the text, Storey described it as ‘an exercise in digression’, underlining Southey’s fascination with fragmented narratives, ‘Southey moves from one topic to another with blithe abandon, as happy in a digression as in anything more direct; in fact it could be argued that the whole work is a digression’.¹⁸² This is certainly my

view of the text and one of the arguments of this thesis. According to Laurence Sterne in his mock declaration in Volume One of *Tristram Shandy*, the connections between the narrative and the digressions become unambiguously unclear

For in this long digression which I was accidentally led into
[...] there is a master-stroke of digressive skill, the merit of
which has all along, I fear, been over-looked by my reader [...]
Digressions [...] are the sunshine; - they are the life; the soul
of reading! Take them out of this books, for instance, - you
might as well take the book along with them¹⁸³

If the digressions in *The Doctor, &c* were taken out of the book, then there would be no book. To some extent, the digressions in the text are given continuity by being loosely attached to Doctor Daniel Dove's personal narrative. It is this narrative, as infrequently as it appears within the text, which links the digressions and in doing so, reverses the relationship of the paratext and the main text. By converting his experimental research practice into the main text, Southey's main text then takes on aspects of a literary narrative which can be identified as being postmodern.

The first volume's pre-textual space encompasses a parody celebration of the paratext. Its long epigraph, 'Postscript', 'Prelude of Mottoes' and twenty pages of content not only provide the title of each separate section, but include their brief synopsis and affixed epigraphs, which are again repeated in the main text. Throughout the text, Southey regularly uses paratext in his narrative through the

various ‘Prefaces’, ‘Ante-Prefaces’, ‘Initial Chapters’ and ‘Inter-chapters’. Interestingly, there is only a very small number of footnotes, which are mostly short vocabulary explanations, translations or source-references. Much like Byron’s *Don Juan* (1824), which only has twenty-one footnotes in the total 15,808 lines, the constant inter-textual digressions prevent the need for footnotes.

The introductory note to the first chapter of Volume One begins with the assertion: ‘NO BOOK CAN BE COMPLETE WITHOUT A PREFACE’ (it is printed in block capitals). Interestingly, the first chapter appears after the first seven chapters in reverse order, which draws attention to the text’s materiality in a characteristically Shandean manner. Ironically, however, Southey’s declaration is true. Recalling Southey’s oeuvre, almost none of his prose works, or even lyric collections, begin without a preface, an advertisement or argument. The note then continues in a semi-parody but also in a semi-formal vindication of the preface as a textual component

Who was the inventor of Prefaces? I shall be obliged to the immoral Mr Urban, (immortal, because like the King in law he never dies) if he propound this question for me in his magazine, that great lumber-room wherein small ware of all kinds has been laid up higgledy-piggledy by half-penny-worths or farthing-worths at a time for fourscore years, till, like broken glass, tags, or rubbish, it has acquired value by mere accumulation. To send a book like this into the world without a preface, would be impossible as it is to appear at

court without a bag at the head and a sword at the tail; for as the perfection of dress must be shown at court, so in this history should the perfection of histories be exhibited¹⁸⁴

Southey reveals the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Edward Cave (whose pen name was 'Sylvanus Urban') and dismisses his magazine's content as random and pointless collections that 'acquired value by mere accumulation'. However, he completely exults in his own collections of information and ingeniously offsets this with contemporary criticisms, much like Francis Jeffrey's.

In the same way, the subsequent 'Ante-Preface' amusingly condemns the comments about prefacing by Charles Blount, who was a Whig activist and propagandist of the late seventeenth-century. His seditious works include *Anima Mundi* (1678), which is an essay on pagan doctrines and emphasises the nature of the human soul and its destiny in the afterlife. In essence, it argues in favour of the immortality of the soul on moral and psychological grounds, which alarmed the Church and state of England

'Prefaces', said Charles Blount, Gent, who committed suicide because the law would not allow him to marry his brother's widow – a law, be it remarked in passing, which is not sanctioned by reason, and which, instead of being in conformity with Scripture, is in direct opposition to it, being in fact the mere device of a corrupt and greedy church – 'prefaces' said this flippant, ill-opinioned, and unhappy man,

‘ever were, and still are but of two sorts, let other modes and fashions vary as they please. Let the profane long peruke succeed the godly cropped hair, the cravat, the ruff; presbytery, popery; popery presbytery again, yet still the author keeps to his old and wonted method of prefacing; when at the beginning of his book he enters, either with a halter around his neck, submitting himself to his reader’s mercy whether he shall be hanged, or no; or else in a huffing manner he appears with the halter in his hand, and threatens to hang his reader, if he gives him not his good word. This, with the excitement of some friends to his undertaking, and some few apologies for want of time, books, and the like, are the constant and usual shams of all scribblers as well ancient as modern.’ This was not true then, nor is it now; but when he proceeds to say, ‘For my part I enter the lists upon another score,’ so say I with him; and my preface shall say the rest¹⁸⁵

The ‘Ante-Preface’ sensationalises the contemptuous gossip that surrounded Blount’s suicide over the prohibition of his marriage to his wife’s sister. It is written in a semi-earnest manner and directly criticises Blount albeit in a somewhat playful way. Arguably, this is an indirect indication towards Southey’s conservatism as it is then directly followed by its refutation through a quasi-Whig condemnation of ‘the greedy and corrupt church’, and his indecisive theorisation on introductory stylistics. Without a purpose to the Ante-Preface as well as the opening to the ensuing narrative, within this peculiar style and

thematic mixture, leaves this 'Ante-Preface' to be a paradigm of *The Doctor, &c*'s all-encompassing disjointedness as well as defining its incoherencies.

The 'Ante-Preface' is followed by the 'Preface' in an unexpectedly conventional manner. Although I have spoken about the 'Preface' in terms of Southey's attack on Jeffrey, I would like to particularly focus on the 'Preface' in regards to it being a significant example to interpret, not only in relation to Southey's paratext, but within his general poetic premise. Most of the 'Preface' is an excessively long detailed account, which could either be considered to be a mock-heroic celebration of Southey's quill or self-righteous celebration of Southey's quill (as argued earlier in the chapter). Southey humbly denies the seraph's quill as it is above his ambition, instead opting for the 'peacock's tail'¹⁸⁶ as it is within his reach and in complete pride of his own abilities. *The Doctor, &c*'s satirical nature allows Southey to leave behind his previous solemn prefaces where he would endeavour to justify himself as a precise and innovative collector. Instead, Southey is free to delight in a self-mocking style in an authorial pride he had always aspired to. Indulging in an imaginary self-portrayal of himself, whereby he is a powerful writer, he moves his sword-like quill across the page creating works of criticism. It could be argued that this sword-like quill reflects a Southey who finds it difficult to admit his nostalgia for his long abandoned political radicalism or even an assertion that there may still be a radical within.

Storey notes that the quill pen was the tool of Southey's trade as a writer, so it is logical that this not only becomes the 'focal point' at the start of his text but that

it is also idolised.¹⁸⁷ The quill is not just a symbolisation of his literary career, it is also a representation of his works' structural aesthetics as Southey points out

versatile it is as the wildest wit; flexible as the most monkeylike talent; and shouldst thou call it tender, I will whisper in thine ear – that it is only too soft. Yet, softness may be suitable for of my numerous readers one half will probably be soft by sex, and of the other half a very considerable proportion soft by nature¹⁸⁸

The quill 'from a peacock's tail', which is 'soft' and 'versatile as the wildest wit' as well as being 'flexible as the most monkeylike talent', is characteristic of Southey's own text's versatile fragmented narrative. He asserts his fragmented narrative style before unequivocally establishing the literary significance of his digressions by combining the metaphor of his quill and Coleridge's organic poetic theory

And what can be more emblematical of the work I am beginning than the splendid instrument wherewith the preface is traced? What could be more happily typify the combination of parts, each perfect in itself when separately considered, yet all connected into one harmonious whole; the story running through like the stem or backbone, which the episodes and digressions fringe like so many featherlets, leading up to that catastrophe, the gem or eye-star, for which the whole was formed, and in which all terminate¹⁸⁹

His ‘episodes’ and ‘digressions’ are coupled with the quill’s ‘featherlets’ which hang from the story and run ‘through like the stem or backbone’. This is similar to the digressions in this particular narrative as it relates to the doctor’s personal story. Perhaps more significant, however, is that they are presented to the reader as indispensable parts of the whole story as the ‘terminal’ – the definitive purpose of the narrative.

Coleridge’s organic theory is the subject of the largest motto included in the second volume of *The Doctor, &c* within the ‘Prelude of Mottoes’ which, incidentally, is an appropriation of John Whitaker’s Preface to the *History of Manchester* (1771-75).¹⁹⁰ Thus, this becomes a theoretical framework for interpreting and justifying the text’s digressive narrative structure

The reader must not expect in this work merely the private uninteresting history of a single person. He may expect whatever curious particulars can with any propriety be connected with it. Nor must the general disquisitions and the incidental narratives of the present work be ever considered as actually digressionary in their natures, and as merely useful in their notices. They are all united with the rest, and form proper parts of the whole. They have some of them a necessary connection with the history of the doctor; they have many of them an intimate relation, they have all of them a natural affinity to it. And the author has endeavoured by a judicious distribution of them through the work, to prevent that disgusting uniformity, and to take off that uninteresting

personality, which must necessarily result from the merely
barren and private annals of an obscure individual¹⁹¹

It is crucial to note that the textual device (as well as space) that Southey refers to as being ‘digressions’ also suggests the paratextual digressions. The references mentioned to digressions and the organic theory occur in paratextual spaces: the ‘Prelude of Mottoes’ and the ‘Preface’. What is more, throughout the preface, the quill, whose purpose serves as a symbol of an unconventional approach to a narrative structure, is constantly being interconnected to the preface itself. Thereby, this identifies the preface or the paratext as an essential dimension of the narrative’s structure and interpretation

be it known unto all people, nations and languages, that with a
peacock’s quill this preface hath been penned – literally –
truly, and bona-fidely speaking [...] that such a pen has verily
and indeed been used upon this occasion I affirm [...] But
thou, oh gentle reader, who in this exercise of thy sound
judgment and natural benignity wilt praise this preface, thou
mayst with perfect propriety bestow the richest epithets upon
the pen wherewith its immortal words were first clothed in
material form [...] And what can be more emblematical of the
work I am beginning than the splendid instrument wherewith
the preface is traced?¹⁹²

Though this passage from the text is significant, it has been widely neglected.
The authorial digressions, as well as the paratext themselves by implication, are

clearly related to the romantic narrative and poetics. Subsequently, they are identified as ‘parts of one harmonious whole’ rather than mere supplementary and irrelevant, or even intrusive frames. As Thomas McFarland has noted, the paratext becomes a vital aspect of the discourse due to the inherent tension that occurs between part and whole of the text, which ‘lay at the base of the Romantic theory of hermeneutics’.¹⁹³

In comparison to the text’s structure, Southey’s repetitive prefatory claims to narrative unity appear insincere. It could be argued that Southey wishes to mock Coleridge’s organic theory as an empty theoretical framework and instead celebrates the Shandean chaotic form and proliferation. This is true to a certain extent but Southey also had an earnest authorial interest in narrative consistency. In my opinion, he invited his readers to take his claims to paratext and main text unity at face value. Besides the positioning of Doctor Dove’s unifying narrative within the text, Southey’s sensitivity to narrative coherence is demonstrated by the fact that he was very conscious of his notes’ potential disturbance of the reading process. Thus, he initially tried to avoid it. Southey did not adhere to any absolute specific rules on the exclusive choice of footnotes or endnotes (depending on various genres), but his common practice was to use footnotes for prose and endnotes for poetry. This choice is indicative of his judgment that the straightforward factual footnote causes less interruption to a text than that to a sublime romantic poetic text. Southey’s preference for endnotes in poetic texts is explained in a letter to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn in 1800, and illustrates his thoughts on his preferred choice of annotating for *Thalaba*’s first edition, ‘my notes will be too numerous & too entertaining to

print at the bottom of the page for [MS torn] would be letting the mutton grow cold while they eat the currant jelly'.¹⁹⁴ Against Southey's wishes, and to his dismay, the notes to *Thalaba* were printed at the bottom of the page as footnotes.

Proclaiming his sensitivity to the notes' interruption of the main text, and his claims to narrative unity, both Southey's footnotes and endnotes often extend to extreme lengths; in doing so, it upsets the conventional power-dynamic that is often seen between the main text and its paratext or, in other words, defies the main text's assumed authority. Therefore, the voluminous endnotes to his epic narrative verses rival the length of the actual verses and establish a parallel discursive narrative, which complements but also clashes with the main poetic narrative. Likewise, the footnotes to many of Southey's prose works, such as *Life of Wesley* (1820), regularly disturb the main text and threaten to consume it entirely. As mentioned previously, the preface finishes with Southey choosing birds for the quills of contemporary professionals, authors and critics. This gives Southey a chance to expose two of his avowed enemies: Lord Byron and Francis Jeffrey. It is a significant testament to Southey's amusing sarcastic humour, which reveals itself almost wholly in his paratext. A fact made even more important when taking into consideration that Southey was not usually known for his humour, instead it was always assumed that Byron had a monopoly on it.

As this chapter has demonstrated, common-placing is illuminating in regards to literary use of paratext. Fragments, or paratexts, though commonly considered as a peculiarity and eccentricity appeared to be a standard, indispensable part of

Romantic-period literary discourse. Southey's use of it frames his works and it is used as a means to attack, occasionally in a mocking way, his enemies and others. He frequently used it to showcase scholarly mind. It is often difficult to determine whether he is using the authorial 'I' or an editorial 'I', but this only strengthens his text and demonstrates his ingenious way of controlling his reader's perception. Likewise, Southey's control on his audience is tightened by concealing his identity as the author of *The Doctor, &c.* Christopher Smart assumed the identity of a female to hide his own so that he could freely write about political issues and social conditions to 'evade censorship and punishment'.¹⁹⁵ Did Southey do the same? As it has been established, there is no evidence to suggest that Southey had ever read the *Midwife*, whether in his personal correspondence, prose, poems or otherwise; however, the fact that both texts mirror the other in structure cannot be ignored. The following chapter will examine the origins of the tale in greater detail, and explore the possibilities of how Southey came to hear of this tale.

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- ¹ Ralph Griffiths and George Edward Griffiths, 'The Doctor', *The Monthly Review*, 1, no. 3 (March 1834): 353-369.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Edgar Allen Poe, 'The Doctor', *Southern Literary Messenger*, 2 (December 1835): 506.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ *New York Times*, December 8 1878, <http://spiderbites.nytimes.com/>.
- ⁷ Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch, *Robert Southey* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co, 1977), 171.
- ⁸ Robert Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, ed. John Wood Warter (London: Longmans, Greens & Co, 1865), 10.
- ⁹ David Chandler, "'As Long-Winded As Possible': Southey, Coleridge, and The Doctor &c". *The Review of English Studies*, 60, no. 246 (2009): 606.
- ¹⁰ Cuthbert Charles Southey. *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1855), 226.
- ¹¹ Chandler, 'As Long-Winded As Possible,' 607.
- ¹² Lynda Pratt, 'Introduction' in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, ed. Lynda Pratt (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), xvii-xxix.
- ¹³ Mark Currie, *Postmodern Narrative Theory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 25.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Bernhardt-Kabisch, *Robert Southey*, 171.
- ¹⁸ C. C. Southey, *Life*, 337-8.
- ¹⁹ Southey, *The Doctor, & c*, v. Several excerpts from this particular letter from Southey to Caroline Bowles are published in the Preface of *The Doctor, & c*, posthumously by its editor John Wood Warter,
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Griffiths, 'The Doctor', 353.
- ²³ John Mullan, *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 30.
- ²⁴ Ibid, 60.
- ²⁵ Robert Southey, 'Letter from Robert Southey to Charlotte Brontë, 12 March 1837', held in the British Library. Accessed September 15 2016.

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- ²⁶ Charlotte Brontë, 'Charlotte Brontë, Biographical Notice of Ellis and Acton Bell' (1850) in *The Brontës: Interviews and Recollections*, ed. Harold Orel (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997), 135.
- ²⁷ Tracy Chevalier, *Encyclopaedia of the Essay* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997), 269.
- ²⁸ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, v.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Withers, cited by Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, ii.
- ³¹ Dr Eachard, cited by Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, ii.
- ³² Cowper, cited by Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, ii.
- ³³ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 8.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Poe, 'The Doctor', 507.
- ³⁸ Min Wild, *Christopher Smart and Satire: 'Mary Midnight' and the Midwife* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Christopher Smart, 'A Letter from Mr. Smart to Mrs. Midnight in London', *The Midwife, Or, Old Woman's Magazine*, 2 (March, 1751), 269-271.
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- ¹⁹⁰ See Whitaker's original preface. Comparing this to Southey's 'Prelude of Mottoes' provides a comical look at his exceptional skill for textual bricolage. This is fundamental to his composition of both common-place books and literary paratext.
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Chapter II: Southey, &c: an experiment for the masses

Whilst the notion that *The Doctor, &c* is a representation of Southey's life may not be a new one, it is a claim that is hardly investigated further today. In 1941, Else Niebler made this assertion first by suggesting that the text is 'like a diary'¹ of Southey's mind in which a 'certain inner unity'² binds his opinions and thoughts to it. Virgil Nemoianu has since enhanced this argument by stating that the text is 'Southey's *Prelude* or *Biographia*'.³ Most recently, however, it is David Chandler who considers *The Doctor, &c* to be indirectly presenting 'at least as full a portrait of its author'⁴ as ever can be, even though Southey was 'temperamentally averse to writing about himself in the direct autobiographical manner employed on occasion by Wordsworth and Coleridge'.⁵ Chandler maintains that 'the book's digressive humour appears to be a Southeyan variation on the Coleridgean model',⁶ and credits the connection between *The Prelude* and *The Doctor, &c* to be in the form of Samuel Taylor Coleridge

When Wordsworth wrote *The Prelude* he effectively imagined Coleridge reading over his shoulder; the poem is dedicated to Coleridge, and in many ways a tribute to him. In writing *The Doctor, &c*, it is likely that Southey, too, would have imagined Coleridge reading over his shoulder, and had the book been dedicated, it is extremely likely that Coleridge would have been the dedicatee⁷

If both *The Prelude* and *The Doctor, &c* demonstrate aspects of the 'myriad-minded Coleridge'⁸ then to what extent did Coleridge's influence contribute

towards Southey's magnum opus, if at all? My aim in this chapter is to primarily focus on two key factors: firstly, how *The Doctor, &c* was conceived and secondly, to what extent it is autobiographical. I will be carefully and pragmatically analysing key letters sent by Southey, from the years 1803 to 1815, in order to identify when the text was first perceived within his mind, and to what extent Coleridge helped towards this. However, as the text was written over Southey's lifetime, there is also evidence to suggest that it demonstrates autobiographical elements of his life through the digressive manner in which it is written and expresses his opinions and beliefs. Therefore, the latter part of this chapter will examine to what extent *The Doctor, &c* can be considered a literary self-portrait. By considering what the term 'autobiography' meant (in regards to genre) within the early part of the nineteenth century, I wish to compare and contrast Southey's text to that of his contemporaries' work. By drawing on links between Southey's autobiographical text and William Wordsworth's *Prelude* (1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1818), the key question that will be asked is: what concept of the novel had these Romantic writers envisaged for their texts? In doing so, I seek to identify that all three texts are similar in their genre of writing. To begin, however, the chronological timeline of the narrative of Doctor Daniel Dove must be considered as well as its origins in the *Midwife*. Doing so will give a better understanding of how Southey came to hear of the tale.

2.1 The Midwife and The Doctor

In the beginning of the first chapter it was briefly mentioned that the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove appeared in *The Midwife* in the eighteenth century, but

Southey made no reference to this during his lifetime. There is no reference to the original story in Southey's personal correspondence, so it would seem that he was unaware of Smart's tale. It has been argued that Southey 'almost certainly heard the story of Nobs from Coleridge' with the intention for the tale to be 'as long winded as possible' and designed to be 'never told twice alike'.⁹ However, in saying this, the narrative of Doctor Daniel Dove did appear several times in print from its original publication in Smart's periodical, in the mid-eighteenth-century, to when it is seen within *The Doctor, &c* in 1834. In fact, it was reprinted several times in various publications so the possibility that Southey had not encountered it in some way seems unlikely.

Following Smart's version, the story of Nobs appeared in *The Nonpareil* in 1757 where it was a reprint of the original tale. In the same year, the text was (this time without the introduction) printed in the Dublin publication, *The Merry Fellow*. Philip Lyman Strong has observed that the *Midwife's* 'essays and poems were frequently pirated by other periodicals'¹⁰ and that it is likely that many other reprints existed during the 1750s. In 1770, Smart's tale (without the introduction and supplementary 'Proposal' and 'Catalogue' this time) now appeared in *The New Entertaining Humourist*. However, instead of the tale being written under the persona of Mary Midnight (the elderly midwife who narrates the tale), the name had been changed to 'Sally Sable'.¹¹ In August 1793, the tale is seen in *The Kentish Register* and was introduced as being: 'a fact, extremely well known in this neighbourhood',¹² although some details are different. For example, in Smart's tale Nobs' apparent death is the result of him being 'fasten'd to the Brew-house Door [where] within NOBS'S Reach there

was a Tub full of Wine Lees, which he without so much as a saying *here's to you*, or using any other Ceremony, fairly swigg'd off in a Trice, the Consequence of which was, that he fell down dead drunk'.¹³ Yet, in *The Kentish Register*, Nobs's death occurs when he is at the Doctor's house, where 'in the morning, the Doctor's dairy-maid had brewed a barrel of strong beer [and] carelessly left the door of the brew-house open'.¹⁴ Moreover, *New Wit's Magazine* printed a copy of the tale, though without the introduction and supplementary materials, again in 1805. The tale had appeared in print at least six times before the time Southey started to write *The Doctor, &c.*

With so many publications of the tale in circulation, it is extraordinary to think that Southey appeared to have known none of these published versions despite being, as the first chapter demonstrated, exceptionally well read. What is even more extraordinary is the fact that from the original date of publication, coinciding with Coleridge's designed purpose for the tale, it was 'never told twice alike'¹⁵ in the printed versions that occurred from the years 1757 to 1805. Regarding the story, in a letter to Caroline Bowles, Southey merely writes he believed that the tale had 'been made into a hawker's book'.¹⁶ However, Southey's son, Cuthbert, had a vague recollection of his father's intention regarding the text, 'What the original story of The Doctor and his Horse was I am not able to say accurately. I believe it was an extremely absurd one, and that the horse was the hero of it, being gifted with the power of making himself 'generally useful', after he was dead and buried, and had been deprived of his skin'.¹⁷

Chandler has recognised that there is no evidence to suggest that Southey himself had any knowledge of Smart's tale. There is nothing in Southey's personal correspondence or otherwise that directly connects Southey's Doctor Daniel Dove to Smart's. Yet, Cuthbert's recollection illustrates that Southey must have – consciously or not – heard, seen or in some way, shape or form been told of Smart's tale. In the *Midwife*, Smart writes

the Doctor, upon Inspection concluded [Nobs] to be absolutely defunct, and had him flead [sic], and sold his Skin to a Tanner [...] by this time restored to the most perfect Sobriety, and very prudently trots home to the Doctor's Door, at which he whinnied with great Emphasis¹⁸

In both Cuthbert's comment and the original tale, Nobs is proclaimed dead and his skin taken. If Southey had not been aware of Smart's tale, or indeed the six versions that appeared in print between the years 1757 to 1805, then how could the character of Nobs in Cuthbert's recollection end up with a similar fate to that of Smart's? Although there is no evidence to create a strong link between Southey's and Smart's tales, Southey was quite aware of Smart's works and life. He had even included Smart in the second volume of his *Specimens of the Later English Poets* (1807) and wrote the following commentary on him:

Smart's was an unhappy life; imprudent, drunken, poor, diseased, and at length insane. Yet he must not be classed with such as Boyse and Savage, who were redeemed by no virtue, for Smart was friendly, and liberal, and affectionate. His piety

was fervent, and when composing his religious poems, he was frequently so impressed as to write them on his knees. In his fits of insanity, it became his ruling passion, he would say his prayers in the streets, and insist that people pray with him. He composed a Song to David when in confinement, and being denied the use of pen, ink, and paper, indented the lines upon the wainscot with the end of a key¹⁹

This passage indicates Southey's acute knowledge of Smart with detailed examples of what Smart was like. Speculation may be the only basis for supporting this claim, but is it believable, or indeed even credible, that for as widely-read as Southey was, he had not heard of Smart's tale before beginning work on it himself? If the answer is no, then the question remains: did Southey hear this tale from someone who thought he had invented the characters of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs by himself?

George Saintsbury, in the original *Cambridge History of English Literature* (1907-21), initially made the connection between Southey and Coleridge whilst discussing *The Doctor, &c.* Saintsbury observed that the story 'seems, originally, to have been a sprout of Coleridge's brain'.²⁰ Else Niebler expressed a similar view to Saintsbury when she stated that Southey 'learned the story from Coleridge, who used to tell it among his friends'.²¹ Yet, despite these early claims, the link between the two has generally been ignored (with the exception of David Chandler) by critics today. In order to comprehend Southey's reasons for writing this narrative, it is important to examine to what extent Coleridge played a role in helping Southey conceive the idea for his text. In terms of

Doctor Daniel Dove, there are three direct instances that connect Coleridge to the story. Firstly, Clement Carlyon, in his book *Early Years and Late Recollections* (1836-58), appears to give the earliest form of independent evidence by recalling a nonsensical story that Coleridge had described in Germany to a group of friends in 1799

the story of Dr. Daniel Dodds, and his horse Knobs – who drank wine-dregs at the Dapple Dog, in Doncaster; &c. &c. [Coleridge] concluded by giving the preference to a narrative connected with the traditions of his own native parish²²

Secondly, Southey states in a letter to Caroline Bowles in 1835 that

Coleridge used to tell it [the story], and the humour lay in making it as long-winded as possible; it suited however, my long-windedness better than his, and I was frequently called upon for it by those who enjoyed it, and sometimes I volunteered it²³

The third and final example is from Coleridge himself in a letter he wrote to his wife on 24 April 1812:

Give my kind Love to Southey, and inform him that I have, egomet his ipsis meis oculis [with my own eyes], seen Nobs, alive, well, and in full fleece – that after the death of Dr Samuel Dove of Doncaster, who did not survive the loss of his faithful wife, Mrs Dorothy Dove, more than eleven months, Nobs was disposed of by his executors to Longman &

Clementi, Musical Instruments Manufactures – whose grand Piano-forte Hearses he now draws in the streets of London [...] His legs & hoofs are more than half-sheepified, and his fleece richer than one sees even in the Leicester Breed; but not so fine as might have been the case had the merino cross been introduced before the surprising accident and *more* surprising remedy took place²⁴

It is this letter that I would like to examine in more detail as it is significant for several reasons. Not only does it show the tale to be a recognised joke between Coleridge and Southey, but there also appears to be a serious undertone to Coleridge's words. For instance, although the focus at the beginning is relaying the fate of Nobs to his wife, the fact that Coleridge mentions 'Longman & Clementi' as the place for the executors to take Nobs to is the integral aspect. Initially, this may not seem to suggest much. However, 'Longman & Clementi' was no longer in operation when Coleridge was writing the letter in 1812. Clementi & Co was a musical instrument manufacturers established in London, who collaborated with many partners during the time they were in business. After acquiring the rights to Longman & Broderip in 1798, the founder, Muzio Clementi, changed the company's name to Longman & Clementi soon thereafter. However, they were forced to return to Clementi & Co after Longman left in 1800.²⁵ Clementi & Co was the recognised name of the business from 1800 until 1820 – the period in which Coleridge wrote this letter. Arguably, Coleridge's 'invention' of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs can then be seen to be as old as the business' name that appears in Coleridge's

letter, which was established from 1798 to 1800. Following on from this, what appears next in the letter strengthens the claim that this tale was ‘invented’ at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Coleridge and resonates with Smart’s original tale.

In Smart’s original tale

Doctor Dove order’d six Sheep to be kill’d instantaneously,
and cover’d NOBS with a Woolen Garment. To make short of
my Story, the Nag recovered, and bore two Tod of Wool every
year, as many thousand Persons can testify, among which I
must include myself; who am now in Possession of a Flannel
Petticoat made of the very identical Wool which was shear’d
from the Back of Dr.Dove’s Horse NOBS²⁶

Chris Mounsey, in his book *Christopher Smart: Clown of God* (2001), has argued that Smart’s tale of Doctor Daniel Dove and Nobs ‘may be read as direct criticism of the government’s failure to produce a coherent wool policy [...] the re-clothing of the skinless horse with six sheepskins suggested that the English flocks were able to produce up to six times as much wool as their French counterparts’.²⁷ It is not difficult to see why as the political significance within the periodical is highlighted prominently. The tale of Doctor Daniel Dove is sandwiched between two anecdotes. Preceding the tale, Mrs Mary Midnight delivers a speech entitled ‘The difference between the French and the English’ in which she is extremely accusing

And pray, what have you done to gratify the French? Why, is it true [...] you have suffered them to run away with your unmanufacture'd wool, and wink'd at it; to seduce away your Manufactures and Shipwrights, and wink'd at it; to make up Goods cheaper than you, and forestall you at your own Markets, and wink'd at it²⁸

Following the tale, there are two further discussions entitled 'A serious Proposal for improving the Woollen Manufactory. The Hint taken from the above true Story' and 'A Catalogue of beneficial Consequences deducible from the above Scheme'. Likewise, in Coleridge's letter, he also appears to reference a similar issue when he describes Nobs' legs and hoofs as being 'more than half-sheepified, and his fleece richer than one sees even in the Leicester Breed; but not so fine as might have been the case had the merino cross been introduced'.²⁹

In my view, Coleridge is referring to the several widely-publicised experiments that took place within the first decade of the nineteenth century in crossing merino sheep (which is a Spanish breed of sheep) with British breeds. Most notable for these experiments was Caleb Hillier Parry, who began his natural history experiments on wool-breeding in 1792 when he crossed his Ryeland ewes with Spanish merino rams.³⁰ His essays 'Clothing Wool' (1800) and 'An Essay on the nature, produce, origin, and extension of the Merino breed of sheep: to which is added a history of a cross of breed with Ryeland ewes' (1807) were both driven by his 'firm conviction that English manufactures were unnecessarily importing materials that would be better grown locally'.³¹ Parry rarely left Bath after 1779, but he was considered an influential physician and

scientist within England and knew the likes of Jane Austen, Edmund Burke and even Robert Southey, with letters exchanged between the two in 1798 regarding a print of Joan of Arc. Even more intriguing, however, is that Parry's son, Charles, was a companion of Coleridge's and accompanied him on his 1799 visit to Germany, during which Coleridge told the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove.³² Therefore, Coleridge's stance within his tale of Doctor Daniel Dove, much like the original tale by Smart, is political.

In Coleridge's letter, the implication is that Nobs is wearing sheep's wool but, although the type of sheep's wool is not specified by Coleridge, his fleece is richer than English wool (the 'Leicester Breed' being an English breed of sheep, which originated from the Midlands in the 1700s). By mentioning and referring to Nobs' fleece as being 'richer than one sees even in the Leicester Breed', Coleridge is suggesting that the wool is foreign, but 'not so fine' had the 'merino cross been introduced'.³³ This is a direct reference to Parry's desire to breed British sheep with Spanish merinos so that manufacturers would stop importing materials from abroad. The fact that both Smart's and Coleridge's tales have a political connotation imbedded within the meaning may well be coincidental, yet it is also suggestive that both tales have been deliberately told in a manner to portray each author's viewpoint on certain matters.

Extraordinarily as it may appear, the letter itself, it could be argued, is a minute version of *The Doctor &c.* The tale of Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs that Coleridge writes of to his wife has so much more meaning than the playfulness that it is credited with. It demonstrates that Coleridge clearly believed that the story was his invention, and illustrates that he was encouraging

Southey to publish the tale that had been in circulation between the two as early as the turn of the nineteenth century.

While there is no denying that the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove was an original invention of Smart in his periodical *The Midwife*, this is not the only feature that shows Coleridge's connection to *The Midwife*. According to Min Wild, 'via *Biographia Literaria* and a bizarre musical instrument called the cat-organ or 'cat-harpsichord''³⁴ Coleridge had, to a certain extent, an 'acquaintance with the satirical prose writing of Christopher Smart'.³⁵ Yet, it must be noted that although 'certain Midnightian echoes of subject occur in Coleridge's prose [...] they cannot be taken as incontrovertible evidence that Coleridge knew [of] the *Midwife*; they could just as well be sounding via other, more current periodicals'.³⁶ Just like Southey, there is no mention or reference to Smart in Coleridge's letters, periodicals, notebooks or other prose. Nonetheless, it is difficult to ignore that there are several crossovers between Smart, Coleridge and Southey with the former's work mentioned in both of the latter. Therefore, the connection between Smart's and Southey's work seems to be through Coleridge.

The most obvious, yet simple, link between Smart and Coleridge is that both men were educated at Cambridge University and wrote periodicals: Coleridge's *Watchman* and *Friend* and Smart's *Midwife*. Despite these half-submerged parallels between the two, both present themselves as occasionally engaging within a literary sub-genre that D.W Jefferson once famously called the 'tradition of learned wit'. Learned wit can be identified as being rhetorically sophisticated in a pre-enlightened mode of verbal play. If any one person was to

be attached to this genre, Rabelais would be a shining emblem of what learned wit reads like. The first point I would like to raise is that Coleridge may have read - or known of - Smart's periodical. As Wild has noted, in Chapter Seven within the first philosophical volume of *Biographia Literaria* (1817), Coleridge references a letter printed in December 1750 from the *Midwife* by Mary Midnight from the aptly titled chapter 'A Letter from *Mary Midnight* to the ROYAL SOCIETY containing some new and curious Improvement upon the CAT-ORGAN'. Coleridge attacks, what he viewed to be, the shortcomings of David Hartley's doctrine of associations, better known as 'Hartleian association'. Coleridge's change of heart about the philosopher makes this attack even more impassioned as he uses Mrs. Midnight's diabolical machine (the cat-organ) to illustrate his point. To combat the assumption that 'the will, and with the will all acts of thought and attention are parts and products of blind mechanism', he argues, on the contrary, for the presence of 'distinct powers, whose function it is to control, determine and modify the phantasmal chaos of association'.³⁷ In Hartley's account, Coleridge explains

The soul becomes a mere ens logicum; for, as real separable being, it would be more worthless and ludicrous than the Grimalkins in the Cat-harpsichord, described in the Spectator. For these did form a part of the process; but, in Hartley's scheme, the soul is present only to be pinched or stroked, while the very squeals or purring are produced by an agency wholly independent and alien³⁸

In Mrs. Midnight's (allegorical) account of the cat-organ, cats of various sexes and sizes are imprisoned within a harpsichord-like box. Various pressures are then applied to them so that they produce a range of sounds. These cats belong to Ivan Pavlov and they are responding to external stimuli. The critical point here is that the *Midwife's* cat-organ simile is preferable to 'associationist accounts'³⁹ and is similar to what might happen by the laws of logic – there is a rational causative connection between stimulus and sound. By extending this analogy, Coleridge stresses in his passage that in 'Hartley's scheme' the soul is silent and without purpose. The 'Grimalkins' here cannot even produce sounds. Thus, Coleridge's comparison has deliberately been designed to show that the soul itself in Hartley is an inert thing for something else is making the noises. Moreover, Coleridge goes on to say that according to Hartley's hypothesis, his own 'disquisition [...] as truly said to be written by St Paul's church, as by *me*, for it is the mere motion of my muscles and nerves; and these again are set in motion by causes equally passive'.⁴⁰ Clearly outraged by Hartley's move away from logical causation, not least because it is based on 'intercommunion between substances that have no one property in common',⁴¹ Coleridge also felt Hartley did not practice what he preached.

Smart's cat-organ is invoked by Coleridge to demonstrate two crucial objectives in regards to Hartley's theories of association. It is the perfect pedagogical analogy for Coleridge's case against what he considered to be a 'passive, apathetic, unreflecting subject of associationist philosophy, in whom individual will and identity is not properly acknowledged'.⁴² The cat-organ appears to have become part of his 'mental furniture'.⁴³ In a letter to Thomas Allsop in 1820, it

became entangled with the digestive process, which can be viewed as being both entertainingly unfortunate and physiologically severe: in the early morning, Coleridge writes, ‘is the hour in which the Cat-Organ of an irritable Viscerage is substituted for the Brain and the Mind’s instrument’.⁴⁴ What sort of acquaintance might Coleridge have had with the *Midwife*, Smart himself or even eighteenth century periodicals?

In 1992, Brent Raycroft was the first to suggest that Coleridge had incorrectly remembered the origins of the cat-harpsichord, and had Smart’s Mrs. Midnight’s contraption in mind when writing his own comparison. Further to this, Coleridge also refers to ‘poor Smart’ in *Biographia Literaria* while quoting a short trisyllabic rhyme of his to support a poetic meter discussion: ‘Double and trisyllable rhymes, indeed, form a lower species of wit, and attended to, exclusively for their own sake, may become a source of momentary amusement; as in poor Smart’s distich to the Welch ‘Squire’.⁴⁵ The cat-organ and this rhyme were reprinted in several miscellanies throughout the later part of the eighteenth-century and, arguably, Coleridge may have come across them in a variety of places. However, just like Southey not encountering the original publication of the *Midwife* or its reprints, is it by sheer coincidence that Coleridge too was unaware? Like Southey, Coleridge was a self-confessed ‘library cormorant’⁴⁶ so that both of these intellectual men (and they were not afraid to let their intelligence be known) did not know the origins of Doctor Daniel Dove or the Cat-organ in the *Midwife* is highly improbable.

While echoes of certain subjects discussed by Mrs. Midnight occur in Coleridge’s prose, they cannot be irrefutably taken as evidence that Coleridge

knew of the *Midwife* because, as stated, there is no other mention of Smart in Coleridge's letters, periodicals or other prose. In saying this though, there is an entry in Coleridge's notebook in 1812, which contains an inspired plagiarism of Smart's most favourite remark. A young Smart, regarding the demeanour of Thomas Gray, declared that 'he walks as if he had fouled his smallclothes, and looked as if he smelt it.'⁴⁷ In his notebook, Coleridge writes 'Guilt is ever on the Look-out, quick nosed, far-sighted walks as if it had fouled itself & looks as if it smelt it.'⁴⁸ Coleridge's playful and intolerant remark was perhaps somewhat provoked by what he considered to be the shortcomings of the *Edinburgh Review*. Whilst this may be a mere appropriation of a throwaway witty comment, it provides yet another link between Coleridge and Smart and also implicates Southey as the entry in Coleridge's notebook was written in the same year in which Coleridge was urging Southey to tell the story of Doctor Daniel Dove.

Comparing Coleridge's notebooks to Southey's commonplace books is revealing in that it demonstrates Southey's essentially anecdotal mind, which is very unlike Coleridge's speculative and philosophical intelligence. On the one hand, Coleridge thought and wrote with a view to understand himself and often dealt with large philosophical and aesthetic subject matters. On the other hand, Southey's mind worked as a storyteller writing literary and historical works, which accumulated in collections of his materials. Chandler has noted that William Hazlitt's comments are particularly suggestive of this, 'Mr Southey's conversation has little resemblance to a common-place book'; Southey 'always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a common-place book under his arm.'⁴⁹

As discussed in the first chapter, his extraordinary notes to *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) not only anticipate the techniques of his later work but reveal the mind that he fully disclosed in *The Doctor, &c.*

1812 was also the year that Coleridge and Southey completed work on their final collaborative project, *Omniana, or Horae Otiosiores (About Everything, or Leisure Hours)*. This was characterised by Jack Simmons as being ‘a discursive collection of miscellaneous anecdotes and comments on literary and philosophical subjects’.⁵⁰ The fact that *Omniana* was completed in the same year that Coleridge urged Southey to write *The Doctor, &c* is indicative because of the similarity of materials involved. *Omniana* was created from Coleridge’s notebooks and Southey’s commonplace books. It has been proposed that *The Doctor, &c* was encouraged by Coleridge as a way of not contributing anything further to *Omniana* as well as saving Southey from embarking on a career as a historian and biographer and steering him towards imaginative literature.⁵¹ However, the part Coleridge played in influencing Southey to write the tale may be as early as 1803.

Coleridge encouraging Southey to publish the tale in 1812 was by no means the first time he had encouraged Southey to publish his work, or even help conceive an idea for Southey to work upon. In a letter to Southey in July 1803, Coleridge proposes a scheme ‘or rather a rude outline of a scheme’ of Southey’s ‘grand work’.⁵² The letter reads

What harm can a proposal do? If it be no pain to you to reject it, it will be none to me to have it rejected. I would have the

work entitled *Bibliotheca Britannica*, or an History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical [...]

Then each volume would awaken a new interest, a new set of readers, who would buy the past volumes of course, then it would allow you ample time and opportunities for the slavery of the catalogue volumes, which should be at the same an index to the work, which would be, in very truth, a pandect of knowledge, alive and swarming with human life, feeling, incident. By the by, what a strange abuse has been made of the word encyclopaedia! It signifies, properly, grammar, logic, rhetoric, and ethics and metaphysics⁵³

As Coleridge's letter shows, he wishes Southey to undertake an enormous and detailed project in which a 'History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical' will arouse 'new interest, a new set of readers' and allow a 'pandect of knowledge alive and swarming with human life, feeling, incident'.⁵⁴ Who better to do so than Southey? Coleridge had after all credited Southey with attempting 'almost every species of composition known'⁵⁵ in addition to introducing several new ones. Therefore, Southey was the ideal choice to help create a multivolume composition in which everything from English poetry, prose and poets were discussed and analysed in terms of philosophy, religion, science and metaphysics. When reading Coleridge's letter to Southey, it is impossible to ignore the similarities between the proposed plan for *Bibliotheca Britannica* and *The Doctor, &c.* In my opinion, *The Doctor, &c* encompasses a variety of social, economic and religious topics that opens an old

curiosity shop of knowledge or a kaleidoscope of intellectual thought, which appears to be exactly what Coleridge is proposing to Southey when he proposes the *Bibliotheca Britannica*.

It has been established that the plot of *The Doctor, &c* is vague, disjointed and occurs rarely compared to the politics, religion and the ‘pandect of knowledge’⁵⁶ that appears within it. It would seem befitting to consider that the failed *Bibliotheca Britannica* (it was abandoned by the prospective publishers, Longman and Rees, in August 1803) had left Southey to not only work upon the foundation of Coleridge’s notion, but developed it further into the concept of *The Doctor, &c*. To some extent, I believe this to be true. My reasoning for this is based on Southey’s personal correspondence with Coleridge himself, Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, Mary Barker and Grosvenor Charles Bedford between the years 1803 to 1815. Before replying to Coleridge’s proposed *Bibliotheca* letter, Southey writes to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn on 23 July 1803 and tells him ‘the plan of the Bibliotheca’ in which he proclaims

It has made me quite happy in the future tense, & given a present value to all stray reading. All the dormant capital of knowledge in my cerebrum & cerebellum is about to be made productive. & my old stall gleanings to be sprouting out like potatoe[sic]-rinds, into an uncalculated return⁵⁷

From this letter, Southey appears to be excited about the work and glad to be able to turn his ‘dormant capital of knowledge’⁵⁸ into productivity. Yet, by the time Southey responds to Coleridge on 3 August 1803, apologising for his late

reply and blaming ‘those little units of interruption and preventions [that] have come in the way’,⁵⁹ he is expressing doubts about the proposed project and even in his ability to undertake such a venture

Your plan is too good, too gigantic, quite beyond my powers.

If you had my tolerable state of health, and that love of steady and productive employment which is now grown into a necessary habit with me, if you were to execute and would execute it, it would be, beyond all doubt, the most valuable work of any age or any country; but I cannot fill up such an outline [...] For my own comfort, and credit, and peace of mind, I must have a plan which I know myself strong enough to execute⁶⁰

In addition to Southey’s belief that he does not feel ‘strong enough to execute’ the *Bibliotheca*, he is sceptical about Coleridge’s dedication to the project. Although, in saying this, he is adamant that if Coleridge were to execute it, it would be ‘the most valuable work of any age or any country’.⁶¹ He outlines the problems he sees between himself and Coleridge’s working style in the same letter

I can take author by author as they come in their series, and give his life and an account of his works quite as well as ever it has yet been done. I can write connecting paragraphs and chapters shortly and pertinently, in my way; and in this way the labour of all my associates can be more easily arranged.

And, after all, this is really nearer the actual design of what I purport by a *bibliotheca* than yours could be, - a book of reference, a work in which it may be seen what has been written upon every subject in the British language: this has elsewhere been done in the dictionary form⁶²

Beyond this date, there is no further communication between Southey and Coleridge regarding the *Bibliotheca Britannica*. However, just two years after Coleridge and Southey discussed the *Bibliotheca Britannica*, Doctor Daniel Dove is first mentioned by Southey in a letter to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn in 1805. Dated 8 January, Southey expresses his sadness at not being at Wynn's side but assures him if he were then he 'should have the story of Doctor Daniel Dove of Doncaster, & his horse Nobbs'.⁶³ He likens the tale to 'the mysteries of the Druids' and is adamant that it 'must never be committed to writing'.⁶⁴ What is the most intriguing is the fact that one year after his letter to Wynn, Southey writes another to Mary Barker on 3 November 1806, in which he states

But here I am Senhora working six hours at every sheet of Palmerin & resting from that only to turn to something else. It is very well as it is, but it might be better. It is better than law – better than physic – better than divinity, - in short better than anything else that I could have done, - but it may be better yet; - & till it is I shall say Aballiboozobanganorribo, & when it is better I shall say so still⁶⁵

Although Southey does not go into detail about the ‘something else’ that he refers to, it is my claim that this is *The Doctor, &c*. I believe this to be the case for two reasons. First, as Southey mentions ‘it is better than law – better than physic – better than divinity – in short better than anything else that I could have done’. Bearing in mind that Southey considered *The Doctor, &c* to be his magnum opus, the few sentences written by Southey to describe this particular work that he has turned his attention to suggest that it is *The Doctor, &c* that he has in mind. Understandably, this may not be grounds to make a strong claim. Therefore, the second point rests upon Southey labelling this ‘something else’ as being ‘Aballiboozobanganorribo’. This word is the title of an interchapter in *The Doctor, &c* which Southey uses as an example to demonstrate ‘certain letters of unknown significance’⁶⁶ of which ‘commentators say that the meaning of these initials ought not to be inquired’.⁶⁷ There is one of two ways to view this. Firstly, since this word becomes the title of his interchapter regarding his opinions on the religion of Islam, was he writing this interchapter in 1806? If so, the text can then be viewed as a work in progress which contains autobiographical elements of his life in regards to his views and opinions. However, this claim I would like to explore in more detail towards the end of this chapter when I discuss the text as being a literary self-portrait. Secondly, as the narrative of Doctor Daniel Dove is quite independent of the digressions that appear in the text, could it be the case that Southey had merged two ideas into one to form *The Doctor, &c*?

2.2 The Personal Correspondence concerning ‘The Doctor’

In a letter to Caroline Bowles dated June 1835, Southey reveals that the character of the Bhow Begum had been based on Mary Barker and ‘that whole chapter is from the life, and the Book grew out of that night’s conversation, exactly as there related’.⁶⁸ The ‘whole chapter’ Southey is referring to is ‘Chapter VII. A.I’ of the text in which he exclaims ‘I was in the fourth night of the story of the Doctor and his horse, and had broken it off [...] It was thirty-five minutes after ten o’clock, on the 20th of July, in the year of our Lord 1813’ and, turning to his companion, the Bhow Begum, he declares that ‘it ought to be written in a book!’ to which the Bhow Begum simply replies ‘certainly it ought’.⁶⁹

According to Southey, the idea of *The Doctor, &c* was conceived on the evening of ‘20th July, 1813’, in the company of Mary Barker, ‘exactly as there related’⁷⁰ in the chapter. Southey goes on to declare: ‘but to go farther back with its history. There is a story of Dr. D. D. of D., and his horse Nobs’.⁷¹ Indeed there is, and the history appears to date back as far as the turn of the nineteenth century with Coleridge. Although Southey states that the conception of the text took place on ‘20th of July, in the year of our Lord 1813’, there is evidence from Southey’s letters that prove this was much earlier. From the years 1805 to 1812, Southey’s correspondence with Mary Barker and Grosvenor Charles Bedford helps formulate a better understanding of not only the conception of Doctor Daniel Dove, but also the digressions that appear within the text. In order to explain this clearly, I will alternate between the letters to both Barker and Bedford, adhering to their chronological sequence.

The first letter to Barker, dated 3 November 1806, has already been mentioned. In the same letter, Southey begins by explaining what the meaning of Aballiboozobanganorribo is

Senhora you mistake the orthography of Aballiboozobanganorribo. You write it as if it were two words making the first syllable an interjection & the remainder either noun or adjective. In common cases the Ladies must be allowed their privilege of having but one rule for spelling & for every thing else⁷²

This passage reflects a similar sentiment written within the first few opening lines of *The Doctor, &c* where the author, ‘thirty-five minutes after ten o’clock, on the 20th July, in the year of our Lord, 1813’ concluded it ‘ought to be written in a book!’⁷³ Southey had based the character of the Bhow Begum on Mary Barker, and the clear parallels between this letter and the beginning of the chapter cannot be mistaken. For instance, where the author corrects the Bhow Begum by stating ‘it *must* be written in a book’ for ‘the mood was the same, the tense was the same, but the graduation of meaning was marked in a way which a Greek or Latin grammarian might have envied as well as admired’.⁷⁴ The playful tone in both letter and chapter reflects the relationship between the two. Intriguingly, although Chapter VII A.I appears first within the text, it is not the first chapter relating to Doctor Daniel Dove. On the contrary, ‘Chapter I P.1: The Subject of This History at Home and Tea’ marks his first appearance in the book. The beginning of the book introduces the author’s conversation with the Bhow Begum and begins a countdown – in terms of chapters – until the plot of

Doctor Daniel Dove starts. Chapter VII then followed by Chapter VI which is then proceeded by Chapter V and so on until 'Chapter I: no book can be complete without a preface' is introduced. Following Chapter I, an 'Ante-Preface', 'Preface' and 'Initial Chapter' are printed before 'Chapter I P.I: The Subject of This History at Home and Tea' begins. Thus, the text can be read from the 'Initial Chapter' backwards to Chapter VII A.I and still make perfect sense. The seven chapters that appear before the plot has even begun are digressive, present Southey's justification for writing the text and appear to have a common thread running through them: who will Southey dedicate his book to? Southey asks his wife's eldest sister if she would give him the honour of permitting him to 'dedicate the Book to her' before moving on to his wife's youngest sister and finally his 'wife and Commandress'.⁷⁵ All ladies reject Southey's request to dedicate the book to them and it is only in Chapter II A.I - 'Concerning dedication, printers' types, and Imperial ink' - that Southey reveals he 'will have an Imperial Dedication' where 'therein is mystery' before stating he dedicates it to the 'Bhow Begum'.⁷⁶

Southey first met Barker in Lisbon in 1796, considering her his intellectual equal and, according to William Arthur Speck, 'was to become infatuated with her'.⁷⁷ Southey's relationship with Barker has previously been the topic of discussion by both his biographers: Mark Storey and Speck. For Storey, Southey's relationship with Barker is nothing more than friendship and he cites her as a 'lifelong friend'.⁷⁸ Speck, on the other hand, has explored this relationship further and suggests that Barker fulfilled for Southey a far more significant role in an emotional as well as an intellectual capacity. Therefore, to

dedicate his self-proclaimed magnum opus to the woman he once described in a letter to John May in 1800 as being ‘a very clever girl, all good humour, and a head brimful of brains’⁷⁹ not only demonstrates the utmost respect he held for Barker but also, as Speck has insinuated, suggests that her role in Southey’s life was greater than has previously been proposed.

By 1804, Barker had already become Southey’s main confidante after he had poured his heart out to her on hearing the death of his daughter.⁸⁰ Speck has noted that in Southey’s *The Life of Nelson* (1813), ‘treatment of Nelson’s relationships with his estranged wife and his voluptuous mistress was one of the main challenges of the biography of his hero’.⁸¹ The reason for this was not only owing to the fact that both women were alive when he wrote the book and so he had to proceed with caution, but also due to Southey’s private relationship with his wife and Barker. Richard Holmes points out that while Southey does not condone Nelson’s behaviour, he does convey his understanding of it when he writes: ‘that here was the grand passion of Nelson’s life, an “infatuated attachment” of a supremely sexual nature’.⁸² Like Speck, I believe that ‘Southey’s appreciation of the temptation presented to a man married to a dull wife by a beguiling woman’⁸³ had its origin in his own relationships with his wife Edith and Barker because this is not the only instance where Barker is influential in Southey’s writings. For example, in his epic poem, *Roderick the Last of the Goths* (1814), Southey writes

He took my hand

And said, Florinda, would that thou and I

Earlier had met! Oh what blissful lot

Had then been mine, who might have found in thee

The sweet companion and the friend endear'd⁸⁴

Roderick kisses Florinda again but, hearing somebody approaching, he begs her to meet him again the following evening. Florina is guilt-ridden, but agrees to meet him although she has made a vow to enter a nunnery and remain a virgin. When they meet, Roderick tells her that he would divorce his wife so that he could marry her, but she tells him of her vow and they quarrel about it:

Till in the passionate argument he grew

Incensed, inflamed, and madden'd or possess'd,..

For Hell too surely at that hour prevail'd⁸⁵

Although what follows is vague and ambiguous, it would seem that Roderick forces himself on her. Arguably, this passage is one of the most astonishing in the whole of Southey's poetic output. The reason for this, as Maurice Fitzgerald points out, is 'there are few scenes in English poetry of a more intense dramatic feeling'.⁸⁶ Dramatic and intense as it may be, this passage seems to offer a sympathetic portrayal of a woman who is passionately in love with a married man. Therefore, the question then arises of what - or who - inspired Southey to write upon a topic so sensitively? Speck has noted that a possible explanation is Southey's own 'intimate relationship with Mary Barker'.⁸⁷

In early 1813, Southey had been working on this book of the poem but was having problems with it. Sending a draft to Walter Savage Landor, Southey told him that ‘here you have a part of the poem so difficult to get over even tolerably that I verily believe if I had at first thought of making Roderick anything more than a sincere penitent this difficulty would have deterred me from attempting the subject’.⁸⁸ Southey resolved the matter by making sure Florinda was partly to blame – and responsible – for Roderick’s actions. It is my opinion that this resolution and the words Southey chooses for Florinda to speak appear to be based on a woman’s experience as opposed to a man’s imagination. As a result, like Speck, I believe that the only woman who could have communicated such emotions was a woman he thought of as being his intellectual equal, a woman’s opinion he respected and a woman who influenced his life greatly. This could only have been Mary Barker.

Essaka Joshua, in her review of Speck’s *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (2006), makes an interesting comparison between Speck’s biography of Southey and Mary Storey’s earlier biography entitled *Robert Southey: A Life* (1997). Joshua states that Speck’s ‘enjoyable biography traces the lake poet’s development from revolutionary rebel to reactionary apostate, focusing on his experiences of both isolation from and engagement with scholarly friends’,⁸⁹ whereas Storey ‘similarly presents the poet as the consummate man of letters, and likewise characterises him as a private and conflicted man whose family was the source of both happiness and of much of his grief’.⁹⁰ Joshua’s words not only highlight key elements from both biographies but also describe the main features of *The Doctor, &c.* As mentioned in the previous chapter, Southey

engages with his scholarly friends and foes throughout the text. With regard to his family, they are mentioned in the first seven chapters in his explanation of the conception of the text. Yet, there is a difference of opinion, with an underlying tension, as demonstrated in Chapter VII. At when the narrator is deliberating whether to write the book in the first place, “‘He *will* write it!’” said the Bhow Begum, taking up her snuff-box, and accompanying the words with a nod of satisfaction and encouragement. “‘He will never be so foolish!’” said my wife’.⁹¹ This exchange between the Bhow Begum and Southey’s wife illustrates the nature of their strained relationship and demonstrates how conflicted Southey felt between the two.

The next time Doctor Daniel Dove is mentioned in Southey’s letters is again to Barker on 27 September 1808, when he compares the daughter of Mr Horton to ‘the hero of that noble story of Dr Daniel Dove of Doncaster’.⁹² While the character of Mr Horton remains unidentifiable in the accompanying notes, according to Speck ‘among the visitors that summer were a family called Horton, friends of Mary Barker’s’.⁹³ From Southey’s description in the letter, it can also be certain that Southey visited the Hortons as he believed Borrowdale was nothing compared to Dovedale and complained that the roads to Borrowdale were ‘intolerable, too bad for anybody’s horse or carriage’.⁹⁴ He describes Mr Horton to ‘be all that is deaf & good natured’ whilst his wife was ‘as unpleasant a woman as one shall meet on a summers day – out of humour with every thing’.⁹⁵ The most remarkable aspect of this letter is the fact Southey nicknames the daughter of Mr Horton ‘Miss Nobs’ for she bears a strong likeness ‘to the hero of that noble story of Doctor Daniel Dove’.⁹⁶ As Southey

considered Nobs, who is Dove's horse, to be the hero of the story, he is comparing the daughter of Mr Horton to Nobs. What this shows is not only Barker's understanding of the tale, but Southey's attachment to it. Southey does not liken the resemblance of Mr Horton's daughter to any mere horse, he specifically mentions the tale of Doctor Daniel Dove. Arguably, if the personality traits of people that Southey came into contact with reminded him of the tale, then the story appears to be prominent on his mind. Therefore, in 1808, it is certain that the tale is intertwined with his daily life and he is thinking about it regularly.

A year later, in a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford on 19 May 1809, Southey writes

I am reading Rabelais, & by the living Butler & the ghost of Martin, I do know somebody who could beat Rabelais out of remembrance, if I could ~~beat~~ but beat him with a due conceit of himself. Indeed indeed Grosvenor if there is one thing which frets me more than another, it is that you will not what I have so often & so earnestly prest upon you⁹⁷

What has often been surmised from this letter is that Southey is referring to the comic inventions he often termed 'Buterisms', originating in the school stories he and Bedford created whilst at Westminster in the style of Rabelais. Although Southey urged Bedford to publish these stories, Bedford did not. Nonetheless, as explained by the supplementary notes to the online edition of *The Collected Letters of Robert Southey*, edited by Ian Packer, Carol Bolton and Tim Fulford,

the stories did later provide the hint for Southey's text *The Doctor, &c.* This is borne out in his acknowledgment preceding the title-page of the text (a form of dedication it could be argued) 'There is a kind of physiognomy in the titles of books no less than in the faces of men, by which a skilful observer will as well know what to expect from the one as the other' – Butler's Remains'.⁹⁸ This is included at the beginning of the united bound copy. Yet, in the single bound volumes, this 'dedication' only appears in the last three volumes.

Much like Coleridge's encouragement for Southey to write *Bibliotheca Britannica* and the story of Doctor Daniel Dove, Southey not only continuously urged Bedford to write the short stories of their youth, but praised Bedford's ability to write such a tale to others. In his letter to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn on 6 July 1809, Southey compliments Bedford's 'power to burst out at once into a reputation surpassing that of any other man in what may be called the grotesque sublime, - far infinitely far beyond Rabelais', so far beyond that 'Grosvenor would exceed him & all other men'.⁹⁹ Further praising Bedford, Southey believed 'this talent' should be 'called out in the history of Martin and his Contessa', in the 'Buterolgy' stories.¹⁰⁰

In earlier correspondence with Bedford himself, Southey frequently writes about the hero of 'Butler', who appears to be the hero from their short stories. For example, in a letter to Bedford, written sometime between 31 December 1805 to 1 January 1806, Southey states 'the language and versification of that poem [*Madoc*] are as full of profound mysteries as the Butler, & he I take it was as full of profundity as the great deep itself'.¹⁰¹ By intimating that the 'language and versification' of *Madoc* (1805) is as 'profound' and mysterious as the

Butler, Southey is insinuating, at the very least, that he has taken inspiration from his schoolboy stories in writing his poem. Southey's determination for Bedford to write these stories is apparent. Continuing his letter, Southey wants 'to hear of the Butler, & William, & of nobody & nothing else but William & the

B U T L E R'¹⁰²

He even goes so far as say that he does not want to 'comprehend' the character of Butler, instead expressing his desire for Bedford to 'biblify him' and longing for him to 'begin – begin – begin - as unmethodically' as he should wish but to 'only begin'.¹⁰³ The connection between the quote that Southey attributes to 'Butler's Remains' in *The Doctor, &c* and Bedford, can be seen as a form of dedication to his friend and the stories that were invented between the two in their adolescence. In this regard, it could be argued that the basis of the stories could also have provided the structure and style for *The Doctor, &c*. The stories themselves were told in the manner of Rabelais and, as Southey stated in his letter to Caroline Bowles, *The Doctor, &c* was written with 'something of Rabelais'.¹⁰⁴ The fact that Southey had been disappointed with the works of Rabelais (as mentioned in his letter to Wynn in 1809) may have encouraged him to write a composition which he felt might improve upon Rabelais.

Four years later, Southey writes to Bedford again on 21 August 1813 'I have great hopes of Dr Daniel Dove, & think it will tempt you to interpose certain ~~parts~~ chapters of the Butler. It is to be The Book ~~xxxxxxx~~ more emphatically than that pretty collection of evidence about the Princess'.¹⁰⁵ According to the notes alongside the letter, this is a reference to *The Genuine Book, An Inquiry,*

or *Delicate Investigation into the Conduct of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales* (1813). As explained in the previous chapter, Southey references the investigation in his countdown chapters to the beginning of the chapter entitled 'No book can be complete without a preface'. This letter highlights the high regard in which Southey holds his opus, or at least the idea of it. Furthermore, it signposts exactly which years and months each chapter was formed or thought of.

It may be coincidental that Southey labels his text 'The Book' that will outdo the *Delicate Investigation*, and then goes on to write about the investigation in his text. There is nothing to suggest that Southey did write Chapter I A.I in this year. However, there is equally no evidence that implies he did not. His letters provide a framework as to when these thoughts were first starting to form in Southey's mind. In saying this, however, there are a few moments in his correspondence when Southey does mention what he has written. On 25 January 1814, in a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford, Southey states 'I have written a chapter this week in Dr Daniel Dove' that 'will delight your heart – it contains an account from Ogham inscription of the second fall of Eve & her eating the forbidden Potatoe [...] I have about a volume of this great history done'.¹⁰⁶ Five months later, on 5 June, Southey, again to Bedford, writes 'to which history I yesterday wrote the preface with a peacocks pen in'¹⁰⁷ my hand. Finally, on 2 June 1815, Southey writes to Bedford: 'I want you here, grievously. Here are some chapters of Dr Daniel Dove which would delight you'.¹⁰⁸

Several critics have noticed that there is a strong similarity between *Tristram Shandy* and *The Doctor, &c.* Although I shall look at this in more detail in the third chapter, I would like to briefly reference a letter that Southey wrote to Grosvenor Charles Bedford on 19 December 1815, in which he states

I have done something to Brazil since my return, & something also to Dr Dove, a secret which we must keep as much as possible, - for a half years secret I think would be very probably worth half a dozen editions. There is so much of Tristram Shandy about it, that I think it will be proper to take the name Stephen Yorickson Esqre in the title page – this is a notion only half a day old¹⁰⁹

From this letter, there is a strong suggestion that – contrary to critics' beliefs that Southey had based his work upon *Tristram Shandy* – Southey had only reflected on the likenesses between his own text and that of Laurence Sterne's in 1815, after he had already written several chapters of his text. In his own words, the notion of including Stephen Yorickson in the title page (because there is 'so much of Tristram Shandy about it') was 'only half a day old'. Critics often attribute this phrase ('this is a notion only half a day old') to *The Doctor, &c* and believe that Southey only started writing the text in December 1815, based on this letter. Lionel Madden states that 'In December 1815 [Southey] referred in a letter to a 'notion only half a day old' which he called 'Dr Dove'.¹¹⁰ Yet, as clearly shown from his previous letters, he insinuated he was considering writing the text as early as 1806, and had even sent one chapter of *The Doctor, &c* to Grosvenor Charles Bedford as early as January 1814.

Therefore, Southey could not have been referencing *The Doctor, &c* as being half a day old. Within this context, he had to be talking about the similarity between his text and *Tristram Shandy*. This is not to say that Southey did not write *The Doctor, &c* with *Tristram Shandy* in mind. In a letter to Caroline Bowles, he explained that his work does have ‘something therefore of Tristram Shandy’.¹¹¹ However, as this letter was written in 1835 to Bowles, there is no timestamp on when Tristram Shandy entered Southey’s mind in regards to *The Doctor, &c*. The only written evidence, in terms of dates, is within this letter in 1815 when the notion of Stephen Yorkinson is ‘only half a day old’.¹¹² What is the significance behind this? This demonstrates that Southey’s intent in writing such a composition had started, in my view, upon the foundation of Coleridge suggesting the Bibliotheca. There is a coherent timeline of Southey’s letters in which he is discussing the Bibliotheca, which disappears before Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs materialises in the letters. There is no mention of *Tristram Shandy* within his letters prior to that of 1815. By this time, though, Southey is in full swing of writing his book, and entrusting Bedford with chapters to read. It would appear that Bedford and Barker are worthy of his dedication in his opus, as well as being his true confidants. From the start of his correspondence with them both, Southey mentions the Doctor but is unwilling to write anything regarding it. Later letters reveal a change of heart to do so and most of what he has discussed with Barker and Bedford later materialised within his text. Whilst it appears that Coleridge planted the seed, it was Bedford and Barker that helped grow it.

2.3 A Literary Self-portrait

Southey is often credited with coining the word ‘autobiography’ in 1809 when, in the *Quarterly Review*, he described the life of the Portuguese painter, Francisco Vieira, as ‘the painter, the best artist of his age, composed by himself. Much has been written concerning the lives of the painters; and it is singular that this very amusing and unique specimen of auto-biography should have been overlooked’.¹¹³ As Eve Claxton has prominently highlighted, it would be gratifying to think that the word ‘autobiography’ was created by a Romantic writer for they were ‘concerned with matters of the individual sensibility and experience’.¹¹⁴ Yet, this was not the case. Twelve years prior to this, in 1797, it first appeared in the *Monthly Review* when Norwich essayist, William Taylor, reviewed Isaac D’Israeli’s *Miscellanies, or Literary Recreations* (1796). In his review, he considered whether the term ‘autobiography’ would not have been a better term to use rather than the ‘hybrid’ word of ‘self-biography’, ‘We are doubtful whether the latter word [‘Self-biography’] be legitimate. It is not very usual in English to employ hybrid words partly Saxon and partly Greek: yet *autobiography* would have seemed pedantic’.¹¹⁵

Linda Peterson has noted that although ‘autobiographical writing in the Western tradition goes back at least to the Greeks and Romans it was specifically in the nineteenth century that this ‘dramatic rise of autobiographical modes of literature’¹¹⁶ really began. Southey had, in effect, taken this word (which had been given negative connotations when Taylor described it as being ‘pedantic’) and turned it into a positive term which is why critics, such as Peterson, believe that the early Victorian Era saw an ‘explosion of writing in an autobiographical

mode'.¹¹⁷ However, as Paul Delany claims, for an educated Englishman during the seventeenth century

a recognised literary genre entitled 'autobiography' did not exist, any more than the word itself (which seems to have been coined by Southey in 1809), yet we see in the seventeenth-century literature many kinds of autobiographical writings, to which their authors gave such titles as 'Journal of the Life of Me', 'History of the Life and Times', 'Adventures', 'Confessions', and so forth¹¹⁸

On the one hand, Peterson argues that it was during the Victorian Era that a rise in autobiographical works was seen. According to the *Periodicals Index Online*, even the use of the word 'autobiography' within the Victorian period corresponds with the increasing number of periodical articles and reviews that can be found on the subject. In the 1820s, there are 34 mentions of the word followed by 127 in the 1840s, 304 in the 1860s and 433 in the first decade in the twentieth century.¹¹⁹ Yet, on the other hand, Delany maintains that there were many kinds of literature being written under this genre (under different titles) prior to the Victorians, predominantly within the seventeenth-century. I would like to focus on and establish what kind of autobiographical literature was being published during this time. In addition, I will consider whether autobiographical writing had an impact on the world of letters. In doing so, what I would like to concentrate on is the impact that the Romantics had upon this literary genre, and develop the notion that Southey's experimental composition - *The Doctor, &c* - is a reflection of himself and might be thought of as a kind of autobiography.

In his book, *Autobiographical Writing and British Literature 1783-1834* (2005), James Treadwell notes that 'it is surprising that there has been no general study of Romantic autobiography under whatever name, until now'.¹²⁰ Whilst Eugene Stelzig agrees with Treadwell's statement, he also points out that his claim is correct 'only in regard to Romantic autobiography in England',¹²¹ and goes on to state that 'the foundational work of modern autobiography is a single volume from the late eighteenth century: Rousseau's posthumously published *Confessions*'.¹²² It is clear that Rousseau is writing in the tradition of Augustine's *Confessions* (A.D 397-400). While it may be argued that Saint Augustine's *Confessions* is the first Western self-reflective piece of work written, it does however center primarily on Augustine's sinful youth and Christianity. For this reason, it could be considered to not be an autobiography. *Confessions* are a deliberate effort, within God's presence, to 'recall those crucial episodes and events in which he can now see and celebrate the mysterious actions of God's prevenient and provident grace'.¹²³ Rousseau, in contrast, emphasises a 'uniqueness and autonomy, the absolute governing freedom, of individual experience'.¹²⁴ Unlike Augustine, Rousseau's aim was 'to give a complete, uninhibited and unapologetic representation of himself, not necessarily to make any point or even justify himself [...] but simply to present himself'.¹²⁵

Treadwell maintains that 'the flourishing of autobiographical writing in something like its modern-form - a continuous narrative of individual self-representation - has often been linked, chronologically and thematically (or ideologically) with Romanticism'.¹²⁶ He goes on to say

Late eighteenth and nineteenth-century accounts of autobiography's place in the world of letters indicate that 'Romantic autobiography' is not to do with aligning specific texts with Romantic ideologies of self-presence and individualism; rather the term describes a tension in the literary field between the idea of the private individual and the processes of publication and circulations¹²⁷

Under these circumstances, what must be asked is: what exactly is an autobiographical piece of work and how can such a piece of writing be identified? For Candace Lang, the answer is simple 'autobiography is indeed everywhere one cares to find it'.¹²⁸ By this claim, Lang is acknowledging a significant problem faced by anyone who studies this topic in that because a 'writer is always, in the broadest sense, implicated in the work, any writing may be judged to be autobiographical, depending on how one reads it'.¹²⁹ Therefore, arguably, any piece of work could be considered autobiographical. However, to reiterate my earlier point, autobiography as a distinct literary genre had only been recognised since the late eighteenth century and became 'an important testing ground for critical controversies about a range of ideas including authorship, selfhood, representation and the division between fact and fiction'.¹³⁰

The Romantics, in particular, focused greatly on creativity, imagination and the value of art whilst emphasising the importance of 'the self'. In this respect, it can be difficult to discuss Romantic period literature in terms of genre.

Nevertheless, as Treadwell argues, by ‘narrating the history of autobiography as a genre [the Romantic writers] located its decisive evolutionary stage – its declaration of independence’ and narrated ‘the history of autobiography as a genre’.¹³¹ He gives the examples of Jean Jacques Rousseau’s *Confessions* (1782-1789), William Wordsworth’s *Prelude* (1799-1850) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *From my Life: Poetry and Truth* (*Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 1811-1833) as representing three of the best examples of the genre. In this regard, autobiography becomes a conscious genre ‘in the sense that it serves a purpose all its own of self-discovery and reconciliation with self’.¹³² That is to say it has concurrently established its own autonomy as well as an independence of its author and subject. As a result, Romantic autobiography, arguably, is created on the basis of ‘an inviting congruence between Romanticism’s persistent thematizing of individual consciousness and the genre’s formal preoccupation with self-expression’.¹³³ The relationship between theme and literary form is evident in Wordsworth’s *Prelude* when he writes

Anon I rose

As if on wings, and saw beneath me stretched

vast prospect of the world which I had been,

And was; and hence this Song, which like a Lark

I have protracted, in the unwearied Heavens¹³⁴

On 1 May 1805, Wordsworth wrote that he was nearing the end of completing ‘the Poem of my life [...] Two Books more will conclude it. It will not be much less than 9,000 lines – not hundred but thousand lines long – an alarming length! and a thing unprecedented in literary history that a man should talk so much about himself’.¹³⁵ Wordsworth’s thoughts here echo slightly Rousseau’s famous opening sentence of his *Confessions*, ‘I have resolved on an enterprise which has no precedent, and which, once complete, will have no imitator’.¹³⁶ Whilst Wordsworth considered *The Prelude* to be a poem of his life, one critic is not so sure. Philip Cox argues that although it is tempting to read the poem ‘as an important early autobiography’¹³⁷ this ‘might lead to the failure to register the fact that it can also be seen to deploy a range of other generic modes including the pastoral, the ode, the romance, the poetic epitaph and travel writing in addition to the more obvious epic form’.¹³⁸ What Cox’s view demonstrates is the difficulty within this period of identifying Romantic autobiographies. Treadwell argues that

one has to look very hard without leaving Britain in order to find anything that resembles an instance of an efflorescing genre with a “purpose all its own”. The purposes of autobiographical writing in the period are usually quite transparent, and have little to do with self-expression’¹³⁹

In effect, beyond these generic testaments, British Romantic autobiography begins to fade and blur. However, if there is such an autobiographical quality to the social and intellectual culture of early nineteenth-century Britain, then it is due to its ‘articulation in the literary field’ because it is ‘better measured by

forms of first-person writing outside the generic borders of autobiography: lyrics and novels of sensibility, perhaps, or the familiar journalism of the new review periodicals'.¹⁴⁰ One of the frequent characteristic gestures of autobiographical writing within this period is the outright denial of self-expression. For example, Thomas De Quincey's assertion in *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821) that 'Not the opium-eater, but the opium, is the true hero of the tale'¹⁴¹ is similar to Coleridge's remark at the beginning of *Biographia Literaria* that 'it will be found that the least of what I have written concerns myself personally'.¹⁴² An editorial comment in an edition of Gilbert Wakefield's *Memoirs* (1804; first published in 1792) sums up this clear sense of the convention

Although his work was established Memoirs of himself, yet it must be confessed that, like the work of many of his predecessors in this department, the greater part of the book consists of matter not immediately connected with the avowed subject of it¹⁴³

At the turn of the nineteenth century Madame de Staël claims: 'there is nothing at all in England memoirs, of confessions, of narratives of self made by oneself; the pride of English character refuses to this genre details and opinions'.¹⁴⁴ Southey and Madame de Staël met several times in London in September-October 1813. Writing to his wife of the encounter, he tells her that he expected to find 'a very clever woman, & found what I had not expected a very sensible & very pleasing one'.¹⁴⁵ Could de Staël's opinions have influenced Southey with regard to the form *The Doctor, &c* took? The fact that de Staël considered

English memoirs to lack details and opinions and met Southey during the time he acknowledges in his letters to writing *The Doctor, &c* does indicate this.

Madame de Staël, writing in 1800, could hardly have guessed that the English autobiography was only just beginning. Yet, the editors of Wakefield's memoir state that they were aware of predecessors. Southey, writing a few years later for *The London Quarterly Review* in 1809, believed that the literary world was on the edge of 'an epidemical rage for auto-biography'¹⁴⁶. This image of self-writing 'as a rampant disease'¹⁴⁷ recurred in 1827 when *London Magazine* noted that 'the malady of memoir-writing continues to rage'.¹⁴⁸ What is important is not how autobiography might be defined but the widespread understanding that it was becoming a very important literary genre. In my view, these conflicting arguments concerning British Romantic autobiography, and the very little research that has gone on regarding this, demonstrate that *The Doctor, &c* is a perfect example of a multi-genre text. As Phillip Cox points out, many of these texts, whilst containing autobiographical elements, also incorporate generic modes. Therefore, because autobiography is a relatively new genre, it is testing and exploring its boundaries.

To understand genre is not a simple matter of cataloguing and exploring particular texts however. It is a 'syntactical process' rather an 'objective taxonomic fact'.¹⁴⁹ It involves an evolving conceptual arrangement, which is attributed to a way of seeing things. This suggests that looking at Romantic period autobiographies could actually mean looking at something other than Romantic period autobiographies. Therefore, poetry can be considered to be autobiography as a form of retrospective narrative. This is demonstrated by

Wordsworth in *The Prelude*. The reason for this is because it covers the first thirty-five years of his life as well as exploring ‘spots of time’, whereby he endeavours to convey key moments in the history of his imagination and his sense of personal identity in regards to nature. This being the case, I would then be inclined to question whether more Romantic lyrical and self-reflective poems, as well as alternative forms of literature written by others in the nineteenth century, can be read as autobiographical? If a Renaissance sonnet sequence is compared to a Romantic lyric, there is a distinct difference. The confessional statements made in a Renaissance sonnet ‘cannot be directly correlated with the experiences or feelings of their authors’,¹⁵⁰ whereas the speaker in a Romantic lyric is engaged in ‘a meditation in a particular landscape [and] achieves an insight, faces up to a tragic loss, comes to a moral decision, or resolves an emotional problem’.¹⁵¹ This speaking voice is the author.

In an age remarkable for what Stelzig has called the ‘autobiographization of literature’,¹⁵² lyrical effusions from the early nineteenth-century ‘do not seek to present the poets’ subjective feeling states in the larger narrative context of their lives’.¹⁵³ The close proximity in which their speaking voices have to their actual life-experiences ‘justifies their being characterized as not only confessional but also, if not as autobiography, then in some instances at least autobiographical’.¹⁵⁴ Wordsworth’s ‘Lines Composed a Few Miles From Tintern Abbey’ (1798) contains a narrative dimension that can be defined as autobiographical. In his poem, Wordsworth focuses upon his changing relationship to nature and this can be viewed as an autobiographical reflection. Wordsworth does this in three stages. From ‘the coarser pleasures of my boyish

days'¹⁵⁵ when nature to him was 'all in all' to the second stage when the twenty-three year old visits the Abbey for the first time 'more like a man Flying from something that he dreads, than one Who sought the thing he loved'.¹⁵⁶

Stelzig has acknowledged that although it is unspecified in the poem itself, there appears to be, through his biography, an acquired context for his dreadful and disturbed state of mind in 1793 in the Reign of Terror in France.¹⁵⁷ The third stage is the moment of composition in 1798 when Wordsworth knows that he is 'changed, no doubt, from what I was, when first I came among these hills'.¹⁵⁸ As the second stage suggests, by the motif of dread, Wordsworth's multilateral schematic overview of his life would require biographical information to explain 'this memoir-like reprise of his relationship to nature that includes the three dimensions of time'¹⁵⁹ and can only be fully understood within a biographical context.

German Romanticist, Jean Paul, in his novel *Siebenkas* (1796-97), coined the term 'doppelgänger'. Explained in a footnote, Paul simply writes that 'doubles are such people who see themselves'¹⁶⁰ (the double being an internal other and not a supernatural creature). Remarkably, the rage that Southey mentioned in regards to autobiography 'comes hand in hand with the fascination in European fiction for doppelgangers and split-selves'.¹⁶¹ In Romantic autobiography, the narrator reflecting 'upon himself as the author as well as the subject of the narrative plays with this sense of double consciousness'.¹⁶² Writing about his childhood in *The Prelude*, Wordsworth states 'I seem/Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself/And of some other being'.¹⁶³ For Wordsworth, to talk about

himself had nothing at all to do with providing a written record of the guests he had entertained or any symptoms he may have endured. Instead, he examined a self that was invisible to himself and the past provided a form of self-haunting. What Wordsworth labelled as bridging ‘the vacancy between me and those days’¹⁶⁴ is a common feature amongst romantic writers and became a means to explore this idea of doubleness. Thomas De Quincey, in his sequel to *Confessions* titled *Suspiria De Profundis* (1845), describes the experiences he felt in remembering earlier versions of himself thus:

An adult sympathises with himself in childhood because he is the same and because (being the same) he is not the same. He acknowledges the deep, mysterious identity between himself, as adult and as infant, for the ground of his sympathy; and yet, with his general agreement, and necessity of agreement, he feels the differences between his two selves as the main quickeners of his sympathy¹⁶⁵

In bridging the vacancy between himself and those days, he is exploring a deep and mysterious identity between adult and infant. However, what if the vacancy to be bridged is not between adulthood and childhood but between narrative and identity? More specifically, Romantic autobiography could also incorporate texts that focus on writers’ childhood or detail their life. Thus, there could be autobiographical elements incorporated into texts that then can be considered to be a form of autobiography. In April 1848, the *Edinburgh Review* commented that Southey’s correspondence would offer ‘lovers of pleasant English prose

[...] as agreeable a specimen of unconsciousness autobiography, in the forms of letters, as any in the language'.¹⁶⁶

Southey's correspondence makes him, as William Arthur Speck has pointed out, an entire man of letters and there is so much content that it could very well be considered an unconscious biography. However, 'Southey's interest in biography did not extend to his own life' Frederick Burwick writes, 'Apart from autobiographical accounts of his childhood in private correspondence, the publication that most represents his character and experiences is his multi-volume fictional work, *The Doctor*'.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, the unconscious biography that the *Edinburgh Review* finds in his letters, should also be extended to his multi-volume fictional work as it includes several autobiographical elements. This is chiefly through his opinions and thoughts as the narrator. However, what you begin to see is Southey, as the unnamed narrator, becoming a character that penetrates into the world with his own creations and generates confusion as to the identity of the author.

As mentioned previously, David Chandler notes that 'Southey was temperamentally averse to writing about himself in the direct autobiographical manner employed on occasion by Wordsworth and Coleridge'.¹⁶⁸ In so doing, Southey incorporated and created an element to his writing that his contemporaries did not. Southey is not only the interpolated narrator of the text, but he is also arguably two characters within the text – three separate entities altogether. He is the character of 'Mr Southey' and elements of Daniel Dove himself. Therefore, if Southey is all three characters, then the presence of the author is neither unique nor reliable. This is one of the reasons why *The Doctor*,

&c can be considered post-modern. This will be looked at in more detail in the following chapter, but what can be concluded from this is that Southey, in his text, had gone beyond his contemporaries in terms of narrative and form. Arguably, he wanted to ‘answer’ the problems he felt his contemporaries’ texts left unresolved and so set out to write his own version. This would not be the first time though. While Southey is praised for his modes of expression and wide-ranging experimental genres, he is also accused by many critics of writing an ‘answer’ to the problems he felt was in *Lyrical Ballads* (1798).

Writing for the *Critical Review* in October 1798, Southey publicly criticised Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) as ‘a Dutch attempt at German sublimity’.¹⁶⁹ His criticism has often been dismissed as a ‘demonstration of his limitations’¹⁷⁰ with Jack Simmons describing his words as ‘doomed to wretched immortality’.¹⁷¹ Southey’s expression has been discredited by the supposition that he attacked the poem in bad faith because of Coleridge’s treatment of him three years earlier as he was jealous of his old friend’s new found literary and personal intimacy with Wordsworth. Inevitably, Southey’s criticism, like all criticism, is personal to some extent. However, it is questionable whether Southey would have reviewed *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* any differently had it been written by anyone else.

Chandler has observed that Southey ‘took a competitive view of the poem as a radically new kind of ballad’.¹⁷² ‘The Old Woman of Berkeley’ may be read as a deliberate answer to the problems he found in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. This is not because he was jealous of the friendship formed between Coleridge and Wordsworth but, in Chandler’s view, he conceived his poem as a

‘protest against Coleridge’s peculiar development of the German ballad’ and as an attempt to restore true ‘German Sublimity’¹⁷³ in the manner of Gottfried August Bürger. This is demonstrated in his letter to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, on 15 January 1799, when he writes that he ‘shall hardly be satisfied till I have got a ballad as good as Lenora’.¹⁷⁴ Supporting Chandler’s argument, Nicola Trott and Seamus Perry both agree that Southey’s *Poems 1799* is in ‘some ways an answer to *Lyrical Ballads*’.¹⁷⁵ Trott and Perry even go as far to suggest that Southey’s ‘small poems, especially inscriptions, ballads and poems on popular superstitions supply Wordsworth and Coleridge in part with models for their joint collaboration in *Lyrical Ballads*’.¹⁷⁶

Writing for *The Times Literary Supplement* on 12 October 1984, Grevel Lindop compiled a list of Southey’s borrowings from *Lyrical Ballads*. This list has, over the years, been revised by Mary Jacobus, Nicola Trott and Seamus Perry. Though there were many findings, I will list only a few to give examples of how Southey adapted his work from *Lyrical Ballads* and other works between the years 1798-9 in the table below:

William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge	Robert Southey
‘Lines Left Upon a Seat In A Yew-Tree’ (<i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 1798)	‘Henry The Hermit’ (<i>Poems 1799</i>)
‘The Idiot Boy’ (<i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 1798)	<i>The Idiot</i> (<i>Morning Post</i> , 30 June 1799)
‘Old Man Travelling’ (<i>Lyrical</i>	‘The Sailor’s Mother’ (<i>Poems</i>

<i>Ballads</i> , 1798)	1799)
<i>Frost at Midnight</i> (Coleridge, February 1798)	<i>Night</i> (<i>Morning Post</i> , 26 September 1798)
‘The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman’ (<i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 1798)	<i>The Song of the Old American Woman</i> (<i>Morning Post</i> , 16 July 1799)
<i>The Ruined Cottage</i> (Wordsworth, 1797)	<i>The Ruined Cottage</i> (<i>Poems</i> 1799)

Marilyn Butler suggests that Southey’s answer to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is in *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) when, in book 4, the hero, dying of thirst in the desert cuts the throat of the equally suffering camel with a view to gaining access to it ‘hoarded draught’.¹⁷⁷ Butler claims that ‘Southey plainly introduces parallels to the slaying of the albatross’.¹⁷⁸ What this table (and Butler’s theory) establishes is that if Southey saw himself as something of a pioneer, experimenter, or an authority in ballad-related work by the time *Lyrical Ballads* had been published, this explains why he felt the need to ‘correct’ his contemporaries’ work in his borrowings – it was a desire to show his peers how it should be done.

On 5 September 1798, in a letter to William Taylor of Norwich, Southey wrote ‘have you seen a volume of Lyrical Ballads &c? they are by Coleridge & Wordsworth but their names are not affixd. Coleridges ballad of the Auncient Marinere is I think the clumsiest attempt at German sublimity I ever saw’.¹⁷⁹ A few days later, Southey began writing a new ballad of his own on the last day of

his 'pleasant visit at Hereford'.¹⁸⁰ This ballad was 'The Woman of Berkeley'. Taylor thought the poem was 'unquestionably the best original English ballad',¹⁸¹ and showed it to his friend Frank Sayers in 1798. Reporting back to Southey enthusiastically, Taylor wrote

We both like your ballad infinitely – it is the best possible way of treating the story – it is everything that a ballad should be – old in the costume of the ideas, as well as of the style and metre – in the very spirit of the superstitions of the days of yore – perpetually climbing in interest, and indeed the best original English ballad we know of¹⁸²

Such high praise from both Taylor and Sayers convinced Southey that he understood better what a ballad should be than Coleridge. The significance behind this is all three poets, Southey, Taylor and Sayers, were interested in supernatural ballads that reflected the Bürger model. Taylor and Sayers both wrote ballads on 'The Old Woman of Berkeley' and Southey, in 1805, hoped to juxtapose his and Taylor's versions in a new edition of his *Poems*. Whilst 'The Old Woman of Berkeley' is hardly read at all today, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* has become a key canonical text largely due to the very qualities that Southey objected to. In effect, this has made 'The Old Woman of Berkeley' seem pointedly uncanonical to a modern-day reader. In a similar manner, *Biographia Literaria* and *The Prelude* are key texts studied today whilst *The Doctor, &c* has no relevance.

Frederick Ruf has concluded that *Biographia Literaria* 'is one of the most unusual and frustrating works in English'¹⁸³ but it is 'an autobiography, and despite Coleridge's title, it is more than a literary autobiography. This book, with its extravagant collection of forms, is a depiction of the self'.¹⁸⁴ The key word in Ruf's summary is 'autobiography'. As mentioned earlier, whilst autobiographical elements can be found in many texts during the Romantic Movement, Coleridge's piece is not an autobiography but accommodates autobiographical elements to it. 'Viewed as a masterpiece of digression',¹⁸⁵ there are some parallels between Coleridge's work and Southey's. Even though Southey had criticised *Lyrical Ballads*, it did not interfere with Coleridge and Southey's friendship. In fact, only five years later, Coleridge proposed the joint venture of *Bibliotheca Britannica*.

As I have explored in this chapter, Coleridge brought to Southey's attention not only Doctor Daniel Dove but also the project of *Bibliotheca Britannica*. In a letter to William Taylor on 28 June 1803, Southey wrote 'Coleridge and I have often talked of making a great work upon English Literature'.¹⁸⁶ My strong claim is that Southey and Coleridge started out with one vision - the *Bibliotheca Britannica* – but as this dream died out both *Biographia Literaria* and *The Doctor, &c* were indirect products of the original project. I have touched upon Coleridge's letter to Southey in July 1803 earlier in the chapter, in which Coleridge wanted to create a joint-project that involved 'a History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical [...] history of some one subject'.¹⁸⁷ I have included a larger segment of the detailed letter below. Coleridge wants the first volume to

contain the history of the English poetry and poets [...] the first half of the second volume should be dedicated to great single names, Chaucer and Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Taylor, Dryden and Pope – Swift, Fielding, Richardson, Sterne [...] the second half of the second volume should be a history of poetry and romances, everywhere interspersed with biography [...] the third volume I would have dedicated to English prose, considered as to style, as to eloquence, as to general impressiveness. These three volumes would be so generally interesting, so exceedingly entertaining [...] then let the fourth volume take up the history of metaphysics, theology, medicine, alchemy, common canon, and Roman law, from Alfred to Henry VII [...] the fifth volume – carry on metaphysics and ethics to the present day in the first half; the second half, comprise the theology of all the reformers [...] in this (fifth volume), under different names [...] the spirit of the theology of all the other parts of Christianity [...] the sixth and seventh volumes must comprise all the articles you can get, on all the separate arts and sciences that have been treated of in books since the Reformation¹⁸⁸

Upon reading this, two things became apparent: Coleridge has an ambitious plan for what he calls an ‘encyclopedia’¹⁸⁹ and most of what he mentions appears in both Southey’s and Coleridge’s texts later on. Elements of each volume that Coleridge proposes are evident in the later works. For Coleridge, *Biographia*

Literaria is a discourse of literary criticism, discussions on philosophy and views on religion – volumes four, five, six and seven of the proposed *Bibliotheca Britannica*. For Southey, *The Doctor, &c* is an amalgamation of not only a novel with a plot but of his own ‘encyclopaedia’ where he can discuss philosophy, religion, the history of the poetry, historical events – all of which are mentioned by Coleridge in his letter. Like *Biographia Literaria*, *The Doctor, &c* then becomes an experiment for Southey, encouraged by Coleridge, which forms, consciously or not, an autobiographical work that explores the boundaries of narratology and mixes genre and forms like *Biographia Litararia*. The only difference is that Southey, while answering a problem, is doing so with his friends by his side. He may want to create a text bigger than his friends but he is not criticising their work in the process. This is evident in a letter to John Murray on 4 October 1817, when he writes ‘Besides this I should really very much like to take up Coleridges book, & fight ~~xxx~~—his battle & Wordsworths & my own, in which if I do not thrash Jeffrey more severely than Copplestone did’.¹⁹⁰ Referring to Coleridge’s *Biographia Litararia*, the enemy is now *The Edinburgh Review* who, led by Francis Jeffrey, continued their hostility to Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge. Southey achieved his revenge in *The Doctor, &c* when he ‘thrashes Jeffrey’¹⁹¹ at every opportunity from his Preface to chapter dedications.

On 29 August, 1837, Southey wrote an anonymous letter to a lady he was not acquainted with. Signing the bottom of the letter with ‘the mark of the author of the Doctor’, he simply referred to the woman as ‘Madam’ who is ‘Somewhere’.¹⁹² In his letter, he told her ‘Whatever you may think of Dr Dove,

the book represents his disciple and biographer to the very life, neither less playful, nor less pensive, nor more wise, nor more foolish than he is, an old man with a boy's heart'.¹⁹³ The sentiment of this letter echoes another which Southey wrote to Caroline Bowles much earlier and one I have referred to throughout this chapter. He claimed of *The Doctor, &c*, that although 'with something of Tristram Shandy, something of Rabelais, and more of Montaigne, and a little of old Burton, the predominant characteristic is still my own'.¹⁹⁴ In both letters, Southey conveys his unwavering insistence to both recipients that his text has not only been written within a jovial setting, but 'represents [the] biographer to the very life'¹⁹⁵ with 'the predominant characteristic'¹⁹⁶ reflecting so much about himself. His choice of word - biographer - indicates that Southey thought of himself as such – a man writing about life. In this case, his very own.

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- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Ibid, 619.
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- ³⁴ Min Wild, 'Christopher Smart, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the Learned Wit' in *Reading Christopher Smart in the Twenty-first Century* ed. Min Wild and Noel Chevalier et al (Maryland: Bucknell University Press, 2013), 28.
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- ⁵³ *Ibid.*

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- ⁶³ Southey, *Letters*, 1014.
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- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
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- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid.
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Chapter III: The Perception of the Mind: a postmodern narrative

‘My career as a poet is almost at an end’,¹ Southey declared in early 1822. Confessing that his ‘love of writing poetry’ had ‘departed’² from him, Southey was, by now, known more as a historian than a poet. As William Arthur Speck has pointed out, Southey’s ‘major poetic works had all appeared before 1822, and his main publications thereafter were to be in prose’.³ Like many of his Romantic counterparts, Southey’s literary life encompassed various different manners of writing. Yet, unlike his Romantic counterparts, Southey was prolific in all of them: letter writing, essay writing, poetry, prose, scholar of Spanish and Portuguese history, biographies and many more. He was indeed an ‘entire man of letters’ and pushed literary boundaries during his lifetime. His friend, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, credited Southey with having attempted ‘almost every species of composition known’⁴ in addition to adding several new ones. Today, critics still consider this to be true. Carol Bolton has argued that ‘Southey is a writer who provoked and who continues to provoke unease and who resists categorisation’⁵ whilst Elisa Beshero-Bondar, in her book *Women, Epic and Transition in British Romanticism* (2011), has suggested that Southey was a ‘trendsetter in reinventing and gothicizing the epic’.⁶

The Doctor, &c certainly does not fit within any given category. It is a text, according to Speck, that ‘readers either love or loathe’.⁷ The primary reason for this is due to the fact that, on the surface, the text appears to be a distorted fragmentation, with no clear narrative or plot, which delves into Southey’s thoughts and opinions. I have discussed in the previous chapter where these

lines separate and where they merge in relation to Southey's life. The focus of this chapter, however, explores how these distorted fragments of Southey's mind represent themselves on the pages of *The Doctor, &c* in terms of critical theory and literary response.

Tristram Shandy (1759) has been viewed as a text in which Laurence Sterne 'uses both graphic design and paratexts to test the boundaries of the emerging genre itself, rearranging the conventional ingredients of an eighteenth-century book to challenge readerly expectation'.⁸ For this reason, *Tristram Shandy* is often seen to be the 'precursor of the postmodern'.⁹ Therefore, 'there is so much of *Tristram Shandy* about'¹⁰ *The Doctor, &c*, that even if Southey thought 'it will be proper to take the name of Stephen Yorickson Esq',¹¹ then it too should be treated like a 'precursor of the postmodern'.¹² However, it should not be treated as a postmodern text solely for this reason. As the beginning of this chapter will demonstrate, there are valid and just reasons for why *The Doctor, &c* can be viewed as an early postmodern text in its own right.

This chapter will explore *The Doctor, &c*'s links to postmodernism and modernism. By looking at these two elements, I will show that *The Doctor, &c* accommodates a multitude of several genres fused within a multivolume text. I will explore elements of genre theory and examine how *The Doctor, &c* fits the structure of a postmodernist text. By highlighting these techniques and features, this chapter, with more emphasis on the postmodern, will ultimately demonstrate that Southey's text is characteristic of early postmodern and modernist thought. This will be demonstrated through an examination of the literary devices that can be seen in *The Doctor, &c* but, as the end of this

chapter will establish, Southey also exhibits this through the postmodern musical notation that he creates within the text.

3.1 A Modern Genre?

How can Modernism have any affiliation with Romanticism? One is so sceptical, fragmented, impersonal and oblique whilst the other was once described as being a type of literature that depicts 'emotional matter in an imaginative form'.¹³ Given this, it would be preposterous to consider the notion that Southey has written a text that is Postmodern. The Romantics evoked subjectivity, emphasised inspiration but, primarily, focussed on the importance of the individual; modernism, on the other hand, 'was preoccupied with the question of renewal or adaptation of the traditional genres'.¹⁴ In addition, Modernist writers challenged many conventions such as: 'narrative authority and reliability, a contemporary setting, representative locations, ordinary speech, linear plots and extensive use of free indirect discourse'.¹⁵ Yet, the notion that Modernism – or even Postmodernism - is an extension of Romanticism is not a new one. Peter Ackroyd has recognised that the Romantics were 'important because they helped to define, and indeed to create, the modern world. They helped to fashion the way in which we all now think and imagine'.¹⁶ This view is supported and developed by Isaiah Berlin who observes

The importance of Romanticism is that it is the largest recent movement to transform lives and the thought of the Western world. It seems to me to be the greatest single shift in the

consciousness of the West that has occurred, and all the other shifts which have occurred in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century centuries appear to me in comparison less important, and at any rate deeply influenced by it¹⁷

Therefore, what genre, if any, can *The Doctor, &c* be categorised under? It is my belief that it is one of the early nineteenth-century's most experimental and unique texts. Although written during a period considered predominately Romantic, Southey uses techniques which are considered both Modernist and Postmodernist. To begin, I would like to discuss what type of genre Southey is using within his text and how this is applicable to Modernism.

What is the difference between literary fiction and genre fiction? In its basic form, literary fiction is identified as being 'a style that involves a particular set of characteristics'.¹⁸ These characteristics may include, but are not limited to, technique, tone and content. Many people find it difficult to classify or break literary fiction down into subcategories. In comparison, genre fiction includes many subcategories like: romance, science fiction, thriller or mystery and horror. Simply put, literary fiction is anything that does not fit into a genre. This debate has gone on for many years, and was recently ignited by the release of David Mitchell's book, *Slade House* (2015). Mitchell has been shortlisted for the Man Booker prize twice and has long been a beloved writer of the literary establishment, with many critics regarding him as a "formidably talented literary writer".¹⁹ Yet, in 2014, his book *Bone Clocks* (2014) won 'best novel' in the World Fantasy Awards and a little over a year later, he published *Slade*

House (2015) – a ghost story – or, as the Chicago Tribune labelled it, his ‘take on a classic ghost story’.²⁰

Anita Mason suggests that the fundamental difference between literary and genre fiction is ‘if a book slots easily into its genre, it’s because it’s been designed that way by a writer who knows exactly what he or she is doing [...] there is a difference in the level of planning’.²¹ Mason certainly creates a convincing argument that ‘genre is governed by limitations, and the whole of the writer’s skill is directed towards creating the best possible novel within those limitations [whereas] a literary novel is governed by nothing [...] and the whole of the writer’s skill is directed towards creating the best possible novel’.²² From this it may be argued that a crime writer is aspiring to form a puzzle of some kind and take the reader on a journey of suspense that builds up over the course of the text. However, what is a literary novel aspiring to? In Mason’s words ‘it is extraordinary difficult to say. The work may have excellent qualities, yet it fails in its own terms. Because it is reaching beyond. To what? An epic canvas? A psychological depth? A vision of the human predicament? The truth?’²³ By this account *The Doctor, &c* should be recognised as an exemplary instance of literary fiction precisely because it is so hard to define what it is attempting to achieve.

Daniel Chandler has observed that ‘the word *genre* comes from the French (and originally Latin) word for ‘kind’ or ‘class’ [and] the term is widely used in rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and more recently linguistics, to refer to a distinctive *type* of text’.²⁴ Robert Allen has noted that for most of its two thousand years, genre study has been primarily nomological and typological in

function. That is to say, it has taken as its principle task the division of the world of literature into types and the naming of those types – much as the botanist divides the realm of flora into varieties of plants.²⁵ Therefore, if the world of literature's chief task has been to divide and label these 'types' into different genres then is it as simple to define the genre of a text – as Allen suggests - by examining its content, plot and characters, or is it far more complicated than this? David Duff, in his study *Modern Genre Theory* (2000) believes it is the latter. In contrast to Allen's statement, in his introduction Duff's opening statement simply reads '[i]n modern literary theory, few concepts have proved more problematic and unstable than that of genre'.²⁶ Likewise, Robert Stam believes that a 'number of perennial doubts plague genre theory' and questions whether genre really is 'out there in the world' or if it is 'merely the constructions of analysts?'.²⁷ Stam furthers his line of questioning by asking if there is a 'finite taxonomy of genres or are they in principle infinite? Are genres timeless Platonic essences or ephemeral, time-bound entities? Are genres culture-bound or transcultural?'.²⁸ It is for reasons such as these that 'the notion of genre is one whose meaning, validity and purpose have been repeatedly questioned in the last two hundred [years]'.²⁹ These types of questions are precisely why genre theorists, according to Edwin Bryant, agree on the 'inherently unstable and generic instability of genre'.³⁰

Duff notes that in the modern period the perception of genre has disappeared steadily while in its place an 'aesthetic programme' has emerged to dispense with 'the doctrine of literary kinds or genres'.³¹ Two movements which have given impetus to this 'aesthetic stance' are the 'anti-generic tendencies'³² of

Romanticism and Modernism. In fact, Duff goes further in saying that without ‘the dissolution of genres’, the ‘liberating ambition that links the otherwise radically opposed poetics of Romanticism and Modernism’³³ would never have been merged. It is a view that is shared by many. Like Duff, Randall Stevenson believes Modernism’s treatment of ‘contemporary economic and political history [...] helps locate the movement within the wider evolution of literary history’.³⁴ For this reason, Stevenson argues that this ‘allows modernism to be seen as a late extension of romanticism, or perhaps a modified replacement for it’.³⁵ In his view, Modernism ‘offers Utopian compensation for the dehumanizing nature of life in a late phase of industrialism’.³⁶

Supporting Stevenson’s argument, Michael Whitmore feels that the ‘impersonality of modernist poetry was contrasted with the supposed personal expressive quality of the romantic lyric [and] its precise use of metaphor with the supposed vagueness of romantic thinking’.³⁷ Whitmore believes that critics felt the need to clarify to what extent that modernists writers were indebted to Romanticism ‘and the extent to which they were engaged in a distinctive project’.³⁸ He acknowledges Frank Kermode’s and Majorie Perloff’s works on this topic, which he considers to be influential. In particular, ‘Kermode reminded critics of assumptions about the status of poetry and the poet that modernism inherited from romanticism, via the late nineteenth-century symbolist movement, while Perloff recognised that there were several distinct strands within modernism each with different relations to nineteenth-century precedents’.³⁹ In contrast, writing of the time when Modernism was first introduced, Rolfe Arnold Scott-James, in his study *Modernism and Romance*

(1908), felt that ‘the old fixed canons of taste have lost their validity [and] the novelist ignores the earlier conventions of plot [...] vocabulary, literary structure, and orthodoxy of opinion’.⁴⁰ He was concerned that the modernists’ fascination with the ‘extremes of psychological analysis’ in the development of characters constituted ‘modernism with a vengeance’.⁴¹ Scott-James viewed Modernism as a dangerous tool which could potentially ruin contemporary literature. Stevenson finds Scott-James’ comments intriguing because they are written

at a time when it is unusual to find the word ‘Modernism’ applied to literature at all. For any study of writing in the early twentieth-century, there is a good deal to be learned not only from Scott-James’s remarks themselves but from the surprisingly early date of their publication⁴²

Scott-James’ views were supported by Elizabeth Drew who, in 1926, had published her own study entitled *The Modern Novel: Some Aspects of Contemporary Fiction* and remarked that

The great majority of the present generation of novelists [...] have made psychology, conscious and deliberate psychology, their engrossing interest, and it is natural that such an interest should entail their finding the older technique too clumsy for their new purposes⁴³

What is known today as Modernist fiction is ‘usually defined on the grounds of its rejection of techniques and conventions’⁴⁴ and ‘a principal part of these new

interests is usually held to have been in the ‘psychology’ – or heightened concern with individual, subjective consciousness’.⁴⁵ While Scott-James may have used the term Modernism prematurely, he certainly did not use it approvingly.

Many critics today argue that Modernism is an extension of Romanticism, but Modernist writers themselves believed otherwise. It is Peter Childs’ opinion that ‘modernist writing is most particularly noted for its experimentation, its complexity, its formalism, and for its attempt to create a tradition of the new’.⁴⁶ Likewise, Rachel Potter argues that ‘modernist writers claimed that they were creating new kinds of fictional realism’.⁴⁷ In other words, Modernists’ determined revolt against traditional literary forms meant that they were experimenting with expression, narrative and writing style. In doing so, most literature of the early twentieth century is obedient to Ezra Pound’s maxim to ‘make it new’. The reason for this, I believe, is not because it was a new concept. The fact that Pound’s motto was not even his own invention is significant. He had in fact translated the saying from the inscription on an ancient Chinese Emperor’s bathtub.⁴⁸

I agree with Helen May Dennis’ view that for Pound ‘making it new always meant creating new works from old’.⁴⁹ In this regard, to ‘make it new’ means ‘to remake or break with the past, in order to respond to, or indeed sculpt, the experience of living in a palpably modern world’.⁵⁰ Yet, T.S. Eliot still maintained that ‘the progress of the artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality’⁵¹ and that ‘poetry is not the turning loose of emotions but an escape from emotion, not the expression of personality but the

escape from personality'.⁵² Here, Eliot is referring to the emotive state of Romanticism and believes that he and his fellow writers were escaping from such matters. However, as Tim Blanning argues, this was precisely the opposite of what Eliot achieved 'it is difficult to imagine a more anti-romantic utterance, or one that was so comprehensively contradicted by everything that Eliot created, which is as original as it is expressive'.⁵³

Much like T.S. Eliot, in her essay 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown' (1924), Virginia Woolf proclaimed 'that in or about December, 1910, human character changed'.⁵⁴ The essay was Woolf's response to Arnold Bennett's criticism that the novel was in crisis as a result of the failure of Georgian novelists in their lack of 'character making', which Bennett believed was crucial for success in novel writing. Furthermore, he felt that the Georgian novelists created characters that were not real, true or convincing. He claimed that Edwardians like himself, HG Wells and John Galsworthy, had invented societies, perhaps even utopias, in which recognised people lived. In contrast, Woolf believed that a novel's purpose was to represent character. She stated 'Bennett convinces us so well that there is a house, in every detail, that we become convinced that there must be a person living there'.⁵⁵ To illustrate the difference between the Edwardians and Georgians, Woolf invented the character of Mrs Brown. It is the representative figure of Mrs Brown that is the key issue between the writers. For example, Woolf decided that Bennett would be descriptive of Mrs Brown's dress, face and body without the reader knowing her in any meaningful sense,⁵⁶ whereas Georgians were interested more in her mind and thinking. Woolf issued a challenge to move away from realist literature. When compared to the

Edwardians (1901-1910, the period in which Edward VII reigned), the Georgians (1910-1936, the period in which George V reigned) rejected the traditional realism that the Edwardians espoused for experimental forms of many different kinds. This resulted in literature which seemed devoted to experimentation and innovation. Therefore, Woolf believed that literature had to change in response to the change in human character. In saying this, it is still debatable when modernist literary techniques began.

Peter Ackroyd accepts that ‘the concept of Modernism is by no means a recent one’⁵⁷ and critics have often disputed where the origins of Modernism lie. Most critics agree that the movement spans from the late nineteenth century until the early twentieth century. Amongst those is Randall Stevenson who considers the ‘roots of transformation in modernist writing’⁵⁸ to reach as far back as Henry James (1848-1916) with his novel, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). Much like Stevenson, Michael Gorra in his critically acclaimed biography of James - *Portrait of a Novel: Henry James and the Making of an American Masterpiece* (2012) - underlines how radically James shifts away from the fictional practices of the nineteenth century with his emphasis changing more towards character than plot and introducing what is considered one of the earliest examples of stream of consciousness. However, critics, such as Darrel Mansell, argue that stream of consciousness can be dated back further still to Jane Austen’s *Emma* (1815) most notably in the character of Miss Bates.⁵⁹ However, Tony Tanner is less convinced. He believes it is ‘misleading to deem it [Miss Bates’ words] a portrayal of ‘stream consciousness’⁶⁰ although he agrees that ‘it is certainly a discontinued but connected jumble of fragments of conscious and semi-

conscious (and perhaps unconscious) thought'.⁶¹ Although it must be noted that her consciousness is never represented, only her speech. While the phrase itself was not coined until 1890 by William James in his book *Principles of Psychology*, it was still very much within literature, except under the guise of another name – 'interior monologue'.

Claire Drewery believes that although stream of consciousness gained favour particularly after the First World War, the interior monologue technique 'predates this significantly'.⁶² In attempting to define the origins of this technique, Drewery cites Martin Friedman as 'acknowledging the presence of the 'silent inner voice' in much earlier texts'.⁶³ 'Socrates,' she writes 'certainly noticed it, and Plato described thought in several of the *Dialogues* as a dialogue of the soul with itself'.⁶⁴

If many writers had been employing the stream of consciousness technique before the time period that is associated with Modernism, then did Modernist techniques in fact pre-exist the likes of Ezra Pound, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and T.S Eliot? I believe so as these techniques were in existence before Modernism and can be traced back as far as Plato. Peter Childs sums this up perfectly when he states

Modernism is regularly viewed as either a time-bound or a genre-bound art form. When time-bound, it is often primarily located in the years 1890-1930, with a wider acknowledgement that it develops from the mid-nineteenth century [...] when genre-bound, Modernism is associated with

innovation and novelty, and has been stretched to include such British and Irish figures as John Donne, William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Laurence Sterne⁶⁵

In contrast to the aforementioned views of David Duff, who believes it was in fact the ‘dissolution of genres’ which caused critics to consider the links between Romanticism and Modernism, Childs believes that it is genre based techniques that connect the two. Both are right: Duff in a philosophical sense and Childs in a literary sense. Arguably, if Modernism is construed generically rather than as a literary period, there is no contradiction in describing writers of earlier periods as Modernists, because genre, unlike period, is not time-bound. Therefore, my study on Southey is based upon genre-bound forms of Modernism (and not time-bound) in arguing why Southey should be considered a genre-bound early Modernist.

One thing that immediately makes so-called Modernist writing appear difficult to read, is its evident violation of narrative coherence. Modernism’s obvious stress upon the centrality of human consciousness demolishes the old standard ways of representing character, breaking up narrative continuity, violating traditional syntax and narrative coherence. The following three examples are typical devices and literary tactics of Modernist writers:

- i. narrative fragmentation, which more strikingly causes the radical disruption of the linear flow of narrative

- ii. the frustration of conventional expectations concerning unity and coherence of plot and character and consequent causal development, including the writer's self-conscious proclamation of the practice of his art
- iii. the prominent use of irony and ambiguity, and the opposition of inward consciousness and the subjective to the apparently rational, bringing hitherto habitually accepted norms into question

It is clear that Modernism is as much about ideas as about form. The interdependence of the two is plain when the extent to which Modernism puts the human consciousness centre-stage is recognised. Virginia Woolf believed it was important to convey the internal subjective reality and, as shifts in human consciousness occur in a matter of seconds, Woolf recognised that neither dialogue nor narrator would allow her to present the complexity of human relationships. Woolf accomplished this in *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) with free indirect discourse. This is a narrative technique which exposes the consciousness, dramatises impressions and develops characters in ways that simple direct and indirect discourse cannot. The following passage in *Mrs Dalloway* demonstrates free indirect discourse:

And this had been going on all the time! He thought; week after week; Clarissa's life; while I – he thought; and at once everything seemed to radiate from him; journeys; rides; quarrels; adventures; bridge parties; love affairs; work; work, work! and he took out the knife quite openly – his old horn-

handled knife which Clarissa could swear he had had these
thirty years – and clenched his fist upon it⁶⁶

The focus is on a single character, in this instance Peter Walsh; however, the narrative seldom remains straightforward within that single characters perspective; instead it moves fluidly between characters. As characters utterances can be in first-person narrative, it removes the speech tags and linguistic indicators, therefore, identifying the person is reliant upon the character's voice and can be uncertain.⁶⁷ The effort of this is not just to create a smooth transition from Peter Walsh to Clarissa Dalloway's point of view, but the movements between the characters, and elsewhere in the text between focalised narratives and passages of omniscient descriptions, make it difficult for the reader to locate the source of any given thought. Therefore, free indirect discourse is used here to blur the distinction between Peter Walsh and Clarissa Dalloway. Woolf refused to believe that there was a difference between the male and female mind, insisting that the mind is androgynous.⁶⁸ An androgynous mind neither represents a specifically masculine or feminine point of view. Therefore, I would contend that, by using free indirect discourse in the passage, the interconnection between Peter Walsh and Clarissa Dalloway is representing an androgynous mind and articulating that women are equal to men.

Like Woolf, Southey believed 'that [his] mind should be delivered of some of its cogitations as soon as they are ripe for birth'⁶⁹ for he knew 'not whence thought comes; who indeed can tell'.⁷⁰ Southey, in *The Doctor, &c*, demonstrates these 'cogitations' by portraying his internal subjective reality

through the literary technique of free indirect discourse. Although the theory of free indirect discourse is typically associated with modern texts, 'Jane Austen is generally acknowledged to be the first English novelist to make sustained use'⁷¹ of it through 'the representation of figural speech and thought'.⁷² Daniel Gunn makes a convincing argument to suggest that 'two theoretical tendencies' often inhibit the discussion of free indirect discourse in Austen's work. Gunn makes his case using Austen's novel *Emma* (1815), but his argument is equally applicable to Southey's text. First, free indirect discourse is often held to be incompatible with 'authoritative narrative commentary'.⁷³ Secondly, Gunn argues that free indirect discourse 'has often been characterized as innately disruptive and destabilizing'.⁷⁴ This technique 'allows other voices to compete with and so undermine the monologic authority of the narrator or the implied author'.⁷⁵

As my first chapter touched upon, this can be seen in Interchapter VII where there appear to be several voices competing to be heard over the narrator when asking who the Doctor is. This disjointed narrative, as explained, even led Edgar Allen Poe to speculate whether there was more than one narrator. Free indirect discourse is a characteristic of *Mrs Dalloway* and many other modernist texts. Yet, as Gunn points out 'these characterizations [...] are inadequate and misleading' in respect of Austen's novels and earlier texts, 'which deploy free indirect discourse in conjunction with a trustworthy, authoritative narrative voice and which repeatedly intertwine free indirect discourse with narratorial commentary, sometimes inside of a single sentence'.⁷⁶ This is equally applicable

to *The Doctor, &c* as it is a text in which the consciousness of the narrator intertwines with authorial commentary within the fragmented narrative.

3.2 'Out-Sternifying Sterne'

Virginia Woolf considered *Tristram Shandy* to be a modern novel. In her essay - 'The Sentimental Journey' (published originally in the *New York Herald Tribune* on 23 September 1928 in which Woolf investigated Sterne's narrative *A Sentimental Journey*) she remarked that *Tristram Shandy* was 'singularly of our own age'.⁷⁷ Like Woolf, Carol Watts has suggested that '*Tristram Shandy* is a thoroughly postmodern work in every sense except the period in which it was written'.⁷⁸ Walter Göbel expands on this by adding that '*Tristram Shandy* is generally regarded as a precursor to postmodernism, anticipating many of its techniques'.⁷⁹ Time and historiography play a significant role in both *The Doctor, &c* and *Tristram Shandy* and the way these disruptions can be viewed as postmodern.

When the first volumes of *Tristram Shandy* were published in 1759, it made an 'impact on the circles of fashionable literary life'.⁸⁰ The feeling it evoked in the public is perhaps best described by Thomas Turner, a local shopkeeper from East Hoathly, a small Sussex village. Writing on 24 September 1762, he records in his diary, '[a]t home all day and pretty busy. In the afternoon employed myself a-writing. In the even Mr Tipper read to me part of a - I know not what to call it but *Tristram Shandy*'.⁸¹ The telling break in Turner's sentence ('part of a - I know not what to call it') indicates the reader's confusion regarding the text. In fact, ironically, Turner has written this sentence in true

Shandean style by the use of the hyphen. The public's fascination with the tale is due to Sterne's disruption of established novelistic conventions. For example, the figure of Parson Yorick dies in Volume One, his demise marked solely by a blank page in the novel, yet reappears later for the rest of the story. Carol Watts sums up *Tristram Shandy* well when she states

the author's preface appears in volume three, chapters are jumbled and missing, a dedication is hawked to the highest bidder [...] the narrative appeared curiously fragmented by numerous digressions and stories. Punctuation ran riot, with a breathless use of dashes, asterisks, and squiggly lines⁸²

Horace Walpole was intrigued by this wayward narrative. He decided that Sterne's approach involved 'the whole narration always going backward [...] I can conceive of a man saying it would be droll to write a book in that manner, but have no notion of his persevering in executing it'.⁸³ Others were less impressed. Samuel Johnson declared that it was 'not English [...] Nothing odd will do for long'.⁸⁴ Yet, despite this, *Tristram Shandy* was recognised as being 'a creature of the market [and] vulnerable to literary fashion'.⁸⁵ In Sterne's own words, *Tristram Shandy* 'was made to baffle all criticism – and I will venture to rest the book on this ground – that it is either above the power or beneath the attention of any critic or hyper-critic whatsoever'.⁸⁶ Many nineteenth-century English critics agreed with Sterne's statement, but many expressed a moral disgust with F.R. Leavis dismissing Sterne in the footnote of an essay as being 'irresponsible' and 'trifling'.⁸⁷ It was not until the early twentieth century that both writers and critics began to celebrate this 'backward narration'. For James

Joyce, Sterne employed the ‘same tradition of comic protest as his fellow countrymen’ but ‘knew the seriousness of [his] formal absurdity’⁸⁸ while for Virginia Woolf, Sterne’s writing brought the reader ‘as close to life as we can be’.⁸⁹

After being expelled from Westminster School in 1792, Southey found out that he had been rejected from Christ Church, Oxford University (instead being accepted at Balliol College). Depressed by the reality of being expelled from school, he began drinking heavily for two days in Brighton whilst on a sojourn visiting his school friend Thomas Davis Lamb. It was after this hard drinking session that Southey first decided to read *Tristram Shandy*, a novel that was to become a favourite over the course of his lifetime, and a text that has led many critics to point out the Shandean humour that informs ‘Southey’s own attempt to become a novelist in his rambling novel *The Doctor*’.⁹⁰ In a letter to Caroline Bowles, Southey admits that he intended ‘little more at first than to play the fool in a way that might amuse the wise’⁹¹ but soon

perceived that there was no way in which I could so conveniently dispose of some of my multifarious collections, nor so well send into the world some wholesome but unpalatable truths, nor advance speculations upon dark subjects without giving offense or exciting animadversion. With something therefore of *Tristram Shandy*, in its character, something of Rabelais, more of Montaigne, and a little of old Burton, the predominant character is still my own⁹²

For Southey, Sterne's work was so impressive that he not only loosely modelled his opus on it, but quoted *Tristram Shandy* and referenced the text throughout his private correspondence. In a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford, on 31 May 1792, Southey begs Bedford to teach him music as he is 'ignorant of the tune'.⁹³ The reason for this, as he goes on to explain, is because he has 'been reading *Tristram Shandy* & I want that whistle as bad as ever Toby did'.⁹⁴ One month later, Southey talks about *Tristram Shandy* again but this time in a letter to Thomas Philipps Lamb in which he boldly declares

May all Doctor Slops curse the rude critic goad who shall dare
to find fault with my wonderful ode! [...] Unfriended,
unpitied, let him howl, rage, and moan, till like Obadiah
repentance atone [...] May I beg you will write on receipt, and
pray tell if the sheep and the corporal both are quite well, if
Mr. Matthews prevailed on his lady to call, and if poor
Obadiah got well of his fall. Some account, too, pray send if
hostilities stop, or if Widow Wadman has won Doctor Slop⁹⁵

Southey is not just introducing characters from *Tristram Shandy* into his letters, but treating them as if they are real life people that he has encountered. Ironically, it could be argued this is true. Characters of much loved books are figures readers wish could be true. If this passage is read with no prior knowledge of *Tristram Shandy*, it may be imagined that Southey is talking about real life people. Southey does the same in a letter to his brother, Henry Herbert Southey, on 27 May 1807, when he laments that he is a 'face-reader &

Mrs Gonne used to tell me Mary Sealy ‘had a heart’. – now as *Tristram Shandy* says many persons have either a pumpkin or a pippin in the place of one’.⁹⁶

In December 1811, Southey writes to Grosvenor Charles Bedford. In his letter he states ‘I shall take care to write fully as usual, – but *print* a string of asterisks ~~like the in~~ like the recital of ~~xxxx~~ <what was said to> *Tristrams*–~~misfortune~~ when the misfortune happened to him at the window’.⁹⁷ Here Southey is referencing Shandy’s circumcision when the window sash breaks. The event is usually referred to in the novel by the use of asterisks. Southey appears to be so fascinated with Sterne’s text that he references it throughout his life when referring to everyday minor incidents or comparing real life events to things that have occurred in the novel.

It would appear that Southey, like Sterne, wanted to create a literary world in which the boundaries of the self could be tested for and the political, religious and social establishments could be questioned. Ultimately, both texts ask the question: what happens when you are born into a world of risk and imaginative experiment? For Sterne, this provoked a shocked reaction from the public. His power to shock lay primarily in his text’s ‘frank and comic acknowledgement of the libidinal energies that animated eighteenth-century life’.⁹⁸ For example, Sterne’s writing is viewed by some to have challenged the moral order of the church and state as well as being a political allegory of its day. In addition to this, it was also seen as ‘an acute satirical take on the “vices of the ages”’.⁹⁹ Mark Currie has noted that ‘Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy* is a novel about the form of the fictional narrative because it comically highlights formal conventions in the novel’.¹⁰⁰ Whilst Southey attempts something similar, his text did not

receive the high praise that Sterne's did. Yet, both texts, in their own right, risk and explore the boundaries of experimental writing as they distort reality and make the reader enter a realm of literary uncertainty.

According to Tatyana Fedosova, one of the essential aspects of postmodern literature is the reflection on the following question: 'what is reality?'¹⁰¹ In my view, everyone has their own reality. Thus, everything that is accepted as reality is a mere representation of it, for language does not only express reality but also creates it. In this way, it is impossible to know reality as it really is, that is to say, independently 'of the structuring framework that conditions how the world appears to us'.¹⁰² Text and time may be understood similarly, and are so treated within Postmodernism. Premodern texts have their meaning in their relation to a world outside the text, but in the postmodern text there are only other texts outside the text. Time, too, is not allowed to exist independent of the text. It is subjective. Consequently, it is viewed differently by different people. A writer's personal experience of time is given special attention when describing sequential experiences. Philip Rosen has likened this experience to a battlefield, 'modern temporality is like a battle terrain on which the disordering force of time struggles with the need and desire to order or control time'.¹⁰³ In Postmodern literature, this sometimes results in narrative chaos as 'writers intentionally break off a chronological narration with reminiscences of characters of prolepsis'.¹⁰⁴ It is this narrative chaos - in regards to time within the text - that I would like to explore in more detail within both Southey's and Sterne's texts and in order to show how they exploit and demonstrate this Postmodern trait.

3.3 Time is Crucial

Time is a key theme within both *Tristram Shandy* and *The Doctor, &c* and it appears in many forms. Sterne is concerned with the nature of time and he considers time in many of its aspects: time as duration, both chronological and psychological, the time it has taken a reader to actually read the text in addition to the time that the reader feels or accepts has passed within the text; the time it takes for events to take place as well as time as an organisational device. I will be exploring the idea of suspended time and how time is used as a structural device within both texts. Firstly, however, I would like to focus on how time is perceived through the eyes of the reader, characters' and writer. To put this in perspective, I will briefly discuss how the text's publication dates are integral in this.

In May 2014, *19*, Birkbeck University's online journal for Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century, launched a new digital reading project called 'Dickens' Our Mutual Friend'. Copying its monthly rhythm of publication 150 years after it was published, from May 2014 to November 2015, the Reading Project's aim was to engage in a reading experiment to capture nineteenth-century modes of reading through twenty-first-century eyes. Ultimately, it asked the question: what happens when a text is read in parts?

Literary invention is shaped by the formal constraint of the narrative units reflected within each volume of *The Doctor, &c*. The printing schedule produces a narrative rhythm. Going against this rhythm and the immersive possibilities of a bound book, reading at intervals interrupts the flow of

narrative. Subsequently, this frustrates reading for the plot and co-articulates narrative and reading time with the rhythm of production. In Dickens' case, the Dickensian novel is often associated with the long form, but it is de-familiarised by the thirty-two page units of attention contrived by its original mode of publication. The fleeting paratext of advertisements captures each instalment of *Our Mutual Friend* in the marketplace, and anchors the text to its contemporary moment of cultural consumption. Yet, its periodical publication articulates a sequence of dispersed reading sessions separated by regular intervals. Therefore, if reading long form requires an extended investment of time enunciated by the rhythm of work and recreation, then to read at yearly intervals (as is the case with *The Doctor, &c*) extends the experience of the text over the course of thirteen years.

How *The Doctor, &c* is read today – in its one bound form – is entirely different to how it would have been viewed during its time of publication. The first two volumes appeared in 1834 with the third in 1835. The fourth volume was published in 1837, the fifth in 1838 and the last two posthumously in 1847. This raises one vital question: what form of text is it? It is now considered a book because of the loose plot of Doctor Daniel Dove and its seven volumes are read bound into a single volume. However, as the reviews at the time suggest, it was difficult to identify exactly what this text was about. If the text was read as it was originally intended, then it would certainly hinder the way in which it is now viewed. Today, a bound book gives the reader an option of deciding when and where to stop the flow of narration. In the different years Southey published

his volumes, this would not have been the case. The flow of narration was decided by Southey and separated by intervals at his pleasure.

From his letters, it has been proven that he began writing this text at the beginning of the nineteenth century. According to his letters, the majority of the material, if not all, had been written by the time the first two volumes were published in 1834. This raises one vital question: why had Southey decided not to publish the text in its entirety? He deliberately isolated the volumes and published them separately. To the modern-day reader, there is a connection to be made in Southey's second volume, between the wedding music of Daniel and Deborah Dove in the second volume and the discussion in the sixth posthumously published volume of the music of 'My Mistress or Mrs. Mace', because both passages are now bound within one volume. However, this connection would have been lost on the contemporary reader during that time as there is a thirteen year gap between these volumes being published. The same can be said for the reader of *Ulysses* (1922) who read the text as it was first published and would have been in the same position, as would the reader of *Tristram Shandy*, or, even, as I mentioned, *Our Mutual Friend*.

Reading in parts shapes the play of suspension, anticipation and retrospection speculated by reader response. This is certainly the case for Dickens' novels that were published in instalments or even the 'penny dreadful' which was targeted at young working class men. Yet, even more intriguing is the fact that the same story appeared in more than one text, and was re-printed in various publications. It was so immensely popular that it was quickly translated from a periodical into

book form, which was published in many editions. Is it a matter of coincidence that the same plot is engaged in two separate texts and told over a number of publications? Furthermore, was it a deliberate and conscious decision on Southey's behalf to make the text as long-winded as possible so that it unfolds over thirteen years and allows him to manipulate time?

3.4 Writer's Time

Time has various functions within a literary text. On the one hand, it 'has the ability to set events in order' as well as establish a 'continuity and one way orientation'.¹⁰⁵ Yet, on the contrary, time can also operate more fluidly in its representation of the 'movement from the past to the future'.¹⁰⁶ In any given text, 'at the author's will, events can change their order, move from the end to the beginning, step over certain intervals and stages, stop, and freeze stretch or compress. They can even disappear and at the author's will, appear again'.¹⁰⁷ In this respect, postmodern time is unsteady, varied, and reversible. This is seen in both *Tristram Shandy* and *The Doctor, &c.* In terms of *Tristram Shandy*, the novel opens in 1718 but ends in 1713. Sterne takes the reader through a historical journey that ranges from Henry VIII's time all the way through to 1766. While Mrs Shandy's labour begins in Volume I, Tristram is not born until Volume III. Subsequently, even though Tristram is an eight month old baby, his birth takes one year as this is the time that has passed between the publication of Volume I and Volume III.

For *The Doctor, &c.*, Southey begins the text with the Doves in their home, the next two chapters are focused on explaining to the reader who the Doctor is

before Southey, in chapter four, introduces the birth of the Doctor who is ‘Daniel, the son of Daniel Dove and of Dinah, his wife was born near Ingleton in the West Riding of Yorkshire, on Monday the twenty-second of April, old style, 1723’.¹⁰⁸ By using the narrative form of external analepsis, Southey narrates a past event (this being the birth of Daniel) later than its chronological place in the story. In fact, it is a flashback before the narrative has even really begun. As the reader is aware, the adult Daniel is currently, within the text at this point, ‘sitting in his arm-chair’¹⁰⁹ in chapter one. Southey does not return to the adult Daniel again until chapter six. Therefore, Southey has suspended the time and the plot related to him. However, as the birth of baby Daniel occurs within this suspended time period in chapter four, baby Daniel has been born at the same time that adult Daniel is resting in his arm-chair. Therefore, both baby and adult Daniel exist at the same time.

Tristram refers to the time in which he is writing the novel, and places the reader in the room where he is writing. He writes about the weather and describes his activities. One particular thought comes to him: ‘this very rainy day, *March* 26, 1759, and between the hours of nine and ten in the morning’.¹¹⁰ The year is the actual time when Sterne was writing this volume. The narrator, however, tells us ‘And here I am sitting, this 12th day of August, 1766, in a purple jerkin and yellow pair of slippers, without either wig or cap on, a most tragicomical completion of his prediction that I should neither think, nor act like any other man’s child, upon that very account’.¹¹¹ The intrusion of the narrator’s (and arguably Sterne’s) time brings to the forefront the artificiality of the novel as well as the fictionality of the characters who have been, thus far,

convincingly alive for the reader. Moreover, it raises the question of the relationship between the actual writer (and not the fictional persona) and the novel. In fact the narrator disrupts the narrative so persistently that Southey's characters fail to convince, a point made by Jean Raimond when she argues that the text is a 'hybrid book with hardly any plot - the story of Dr Daniel Dove of Doncaster is only a slender thread – *The Doctor* amounts to a collection of endless digressions upon an infinite variety of topics, teeming with quotations from innumerable authors'.¹¹²

The narrator (within the seven chapter countdown to the beginning of the story) states

I was in the fourth night of the story of the Doctor and his horse, and had broken it off, not like Scheherezade because it was time to get up, but because it was time to go to bed. It was at thirty-five minutes after ten o'clock, on the 20th July, in the year of our Lord 1813 [...] There had been a heavy thunder-storm in the afternoon; and though the thermometer had fallen from 78 to 70, still the atmosphere was charged¹¹³

According to the narrator, the idea of writing this story came to him in 1813 on the '20th of July' and 'thirty-minutes after ten o'clock'¹¹⁴. However, this is known not to be true. Referring back to his personal correspondence, the previous chapter demonstrated that the thought occurred far earlier than 1813. As mentioned in a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford, dated 19 December 1815, Southey writes

I have done something to Brazil since my return, & something also to D^r Dove, – a secret which we must keep as much as possible, – for a half years secret I think would be very probably worth half a dozen editions. There is so much of Tristram Shandy about it, that I think it will be proper to take the name of Stephen Yorickson Esq^{re} in the title page, – this is a notion only half a day old. I would give one of my ears, if I could have both yours just now to try some of this book upon them. So much of it is done, that I shall very probably put it to press in the spring. It is very doubtful ~~at this time~~ whether I do not lose more than I gain by giving up so much time to reviewing; – & whenever that ceases to be doubtful, huzza for a joyful emancipation!¹¹⁵

Therefore, the concept that *The Doctor, &c* resembled *Tristram Shandy* only occurred to Southey in 1815 – two years after the narrator of the text insists that the idea occurred in 1813. Although the volumes themselves were published between the years 1834–1847, two were published posthumously. In this respect, the writer's time continues after his death. Mark Currie has pointed out that if *Tristram Shandy* is read in the right order, it becomes 'asymmetrical in the same way that time is, since the present of the reading becomes a kind of gateway through which words, descriptions and events pass in their transition from the realm of possibility into the realm of actuality'.¹¹⁶ Like Sterne, Southey transports the reader through time periods blurring the lines between actuality and possibility.

3.5 Suspended Time

In *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne inserts digressions and flashbacks within a moment that stops the characters' time while, theoretically, providing information which supplements the plot of the novel. For instance, in Volume One, Uncle Toby's reply to his brother is interrupted, 'I think, replied my uncle *Toby*, taking his pipe from his mouth, and striking the head of it two or three times upon the nail of his left thumb, as he began his sentence, - I think, says he'.¹¹⁷ Yet, only two pages later, Tristram returns to Toby without any time apparently having passed in Toby's world, 'But I forget my uncle *Toby*, whom all this while we have left knocking the ashes out of his tobacco pipe'.¹¹⁸ It is not until Volume Two - where time is reversed - that Sterne brings the attention of the reader back to Tristram's father's question ('What can they be doing, brother?'.¹¹⁹). It is at this moment that the reader learns what Toby has to say in response. It is neither an explanation nor theory, but a suggestion that they ask a servant. In similar fashion, Southey begins the narrative of the plot by stating that '[t]he clock of St. George's had stuck five. Mrs Dove had just poured out the Doctor's seventh cup of tea. The Doctor was sitting in his arm-chair'.¹²⁰ However, for the next five chapters and eighteen pages, Southey takes the reader on a historical journey in which he gives a detailed account of Daniel Dove's family background as well as diverting off course with numerous digressive narratives where he discusses philosophy, literature and religion. Between chapters one and six, it is almost as if the Doctor, 'sitting in his arm-chair', has vanished from the narrative and is forgotten about. Yet, at the start of chapter six, Southey begins by stating

Reader, you have not forgotten where we are at this time: you remember I trust, that we are neither at Dan nor Beersheba; nor anywhere between those two celebrated places; nor on the way to either of them: but that we are in the Doctor's parlour, that Mrs. Dove has just poured out his seventh cup of tea, and that the clock of St. George's has struck five¹²¹

Southey suspends time and interrupts the order of the narrative to present his own digressive thoughts as well as an insight into the Doctor's family. In doing so, the technique functions for Southey, as it had for Sterne, to suggest how experience might be accumulated more quickly than it can be written down, so that all narrative moves backwards rather than forwards. Sterne explains the problem very clearly:

I am this month one whole year older than I was this time twelve-month; and having got, as you perceive, almost into the middle of the fourth-volume – and no farther than to my first day's day – 'tis demonstrative that I have three hundred and sixty-four more days to write just now [...] And for what reason should they be cut short? at this rate I should just live 364 times faster than I should write¹²²

Southey has attempted to write in Sterne's likeness, the only difference being that Southey has endeavoured to write his text on a grander scale for 'he who speaks well and wisely will never be accused of speaking at too great length'.¹²³ Furthermore, Southey is creating a 'humorous tale' that, as stated in a letter to

Caroline Bowles in 1835, is to be ‘as long-winded as possible’.¹²⁴ This he achieves. He has created a tale so long-winded that the plot is lost within the digressions. To go back to chapters one and six, the narrator explains why there is a need ‘to have gone back to the Doctor’s childhood and his birth-place’,¹²⁵ the reason being the Doctor ‘never could have been seated thus comfortably in that comfortable parlour [...] had it not been for his father’s character, his father’s books, his schoolmaster Guy, and his Uncle William, with all whom and which, it was therefore indispensable that thou shouldst be made acquainted’.¹²⁶ Southey is manipulating the use of time and narration because, as Tatyana Fedosova points out, in a postmodern sense, as time in a text can be stopped or frozen, the order of events can change or ‘even disappear and at the author’s will, appear again’.¹²⁷ This narration is again lost for the next twenty two chapters, in amongst the politics, religion and philosophy, until the reader encounters the Doctor at ‘that very parlour wherein, as thou canst not have forgotten, Mrs. Dove was making tea for the Doctor on that ever memorable afternoon’¹²⁸ at the end of chapter twenty-eight. The narrator begins chapter twenty-nine by proclaiming that

we have arrived at that point which determines the scene [...]
in our method of narration, nothing has been inartificially
anticipated; that, there have been no premature disclosures, no
precipitation, no hurry, or impatience on my part; and that, on
the other hand, there has been no unnecessary delay, but that
we have regularly and naturally come to this development¹²⁹

It would seem that after such a long and elaborated explanation, the narrator would then proceed to go beyond the seventh cup of tea and the Doctor sitting in his arm-chair. Yet, this is not the case. The narrator continues to lament further on ‘the rhyming art’¹³⁰ of his profession before mentioning the Doctor and his tea again

My good reader will remember that, as was duly noted in our first chapter P.I the clock of St. George’s had just struck five, when Mrs. Dove was pouring out the seventh cup of tea for her husband, and when our history opens. I have some observations to make concerning both the tea and the tea service, which will clear the Doctor from any imputation of intemperance in his use of that most pleasant, salutiferous and domesticising beverage: but it would disturb the method of my narration were they to be introduced in this place. Here I have something to relate about the Clock¹³¹

This chapter finishes with the narrator describing the history of the clock of St. George, which he continues to do at great length for the next few chapters. Much like Uncle Toby’s response, there is no explanation or detail as to whether the Doctor goes onto his eighth cup of tea, whether he rises from his air-chair or what the next part of the tale is. Paul Cobley, in his book *Narrative* (2001), offers a simple and straightforward analysis in regards to story, plot and narrative. He defines ‘story’ as consisting ‘of all the events which are to be depicted’¹³² within the text whereas ‘plot is the chain of causation which dictates that these events are somehow linked and that they are therefore to be

depicted in relation to each other'.¹³³ Narrative, however, 'is the showing or the telling of these events and the mode selected for that to take place'.¹³⁴ Thus, by this point in *The Doctor, &c*, the reader is seventy one pages deep into the text and, even though the story has moved on, the plot has not and remains in the same place as if you were reading the first page.

Though the plot has not advanced in its narration (in fact it has travelled backwards in time), Southey does alter the use of tense each time Mrs Dove pours out the cup of tea. In the first chapter, the narrator states 'Mrs. Dove *had just* poured out the Doctor's seventh cup of tea. The Doctor was sitting in his arm-chair'.¹³⁵ The use of the past perfect simple tense, 'had poured', indicates that the action has been completed. By Chapter Six, 'Mrs. Dove *has just* poured out the seventh cup of tea, and that the clock of St. George's has struck five'.¹³⁶ Past perfect simple has become present perfect simple, the tense for a past action that remains incomplete.

The last time Mrs Dove's tea is encountered is in chapter twenty-nine when Southey writes 'the clock of St. George's had just struck five, when Mrs. Dove was pouring out the seventh cup of tea for her husband, and our history opens'.¹³⁷ Here a 'past continuous' tense is used that invites the reader to imagine the tea at the moment when it is being poured. What is interesting to note is that the act of pouring the tea lasts over the course of the first three single bound volumes published between 1834 and 1835. In this regard, the pouring of the tea lasts for an entire year. However, this would not be noticeable to a reader who had a copy of the single collected volume.

Both Sterne and Southey deal with two different kinds of time: the literal time of the reader, which is measured by the clock, and the reader's sense of how much (fictional) time has elapsed in the lives of the characters. For Southey, if the example of Mrs Dove pouring the tea is taken, fictional time has stood still whilst the literal time of the reader advances for as long as it takes to read 28 chapters to be precise. The time it takes to read 71 pages will vary depending on the reader's reading speed, but however long it takes the effect is to make the reader as active a participant in the text as the characters themselves. Given the publication dates of the first three volumes of *The Doctor, &c*, it would have taken its first readers at least a year to have read the account of Mrs. Dove pouring a single cup of tea. Sterne, on the other hand, demonstrates this differently. Tristram observes that it would have taken the reader about 90 minutes to read what happened since Uncle Toby rang the bell and Obadiah left for Dr. Slop: 'so that no one can say, with reason, that I have not allowed *Obadiah* time enough, poetically speaking, and considering the emergency too, both to go and come'.¹³⁸ Yet, in fictional time, the characters have performed actions that require more than the ninety minutes of the reader's literal time.

Like Sterne, Southey proves to show no regard for the laws of the novel. He begins his story with a single paragraph before disrupting the order and takes no interest in the chronology of events. In my view, Southey was revolting against the established conventions of supplying a novel with a beginning, middle and end. In this respect, the book almost reads as a parody of novels of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century which presented a chronological evolution of the literary hero from his birth to his grave in a straightforward and

simple manner. In the exaggerated appearance of disorder that it cultivates, and in its disruption of the normal order of events *The Doctor, &c* may well, like Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, be considered an anti-novel. This is evident within the first three chapters.

The Doctor, &c's first chapter – 'The Subject of This History at Home and at Tea' – begins in a conventional manner that is familiar from other novels. Although it consists solely of one paragraph, Southey has written it in a coherent order with a linear structure

The clock of St. George's had struck five. Mrs. Dove had just poured out the Doctor's seventh cup of tea. The Doctor was sitting in his arm-chair. Sir Thomas was purring upon his knees; and Pompey stood looking up to his mistress, wagging his tail, sometimes whining with a short note of impatience, and sometimes gently putting his paw against her apron to remind her that he wished for another bit of bread and butter.

Barnaby was gone to the farm: and Nobs was in the stable¹³⁹

This chapter, the narrator tells the reader, has 'begun according to the most approved forms'.¹⁴⁰ Conforming 'to the Horatian precept [and] rushing into the middle of things',¹⁴¹ Southey asks what in 'the few lines of the preceding chapter [...] requires explanation? - Who was Nobs? – Who was Barnaby? Who was the Doctor? – Who was Mrs. Dove? – The place, where? – The time, when? – The persons, who? -'.¹⁴² What Southey is stating, within a satirical context, is that he has begun his text in a way that is considered to be the 'right' method –

‘the most approved’ approach’.¹⁴³ Comparing Southey’s opening paragraph to popular eighteenth-century texts, it is easy to understand why he has done this and what he means by it. Daniel Defoe, in *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), begins by stating

I WAS born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but, by the usual corruption of words in England, we are now called - nay we call ourselves and write our name - Crusoe; and so my companions always called me¹⁴⁴

Likewise, Jonathan Swift, in *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), also begins his text in a similar manner

My father had a small estate in Nottinghamshire: I was the third of five sons. He sent me to Emanuel College in Cambridge at fourteen years old, where I resided three years, and applied myself close to my studies; but the charge of maintaining me, although I had a very scanty allowance, being too great for a narrow fortune, I was bound apprentice to Mr. James Bates, an eminent surgeon in London, with whom I

continued four years. My father now and then sending me small sums of money, I laid them out in learning navigation, and other parts of the mathematics, useful to those who intend to travel, as I always believed it would be, some time or other, my fortune to do. When I left Mr. Bates, I went down to my father: where, by the assistance of him and my uncle John, and some other relations, I got forty pounds, and a promise of thirty pounds a year to maintain me at Leyden: there I studied physic two years and seven months, knowing it would be useful in long voyages¹⁴⁵

Both of these opening paragraphs have one thing in common: even though they appear to have been written depicting the beginning of the hero's life, and gives the reader the backdrop to it, they do, as Southey states, rush 'into the middle of things'.¹⁴⁶ Thus, leaving the reader asking: who is the hero 'born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family'¹⁴⁷ and what 'corruption' has led him to change his name from 'Crusoe' to 'Kreutznaer'.¹⁴⁸ Swift's opening paragraph is slightly longer and his hero leaves the reader intrigued as to where this educated young fellow's story will end up. As Southey makes plain in chapter two, he has followed the rules in his first chapter and conformed to 'rushing into the middle of things'¹⁴⁹ as was the common practice for most novels before him. Interestingly, the rules he follows are then disregarded in chapter three when he begins by the narrator asking 'who was the Doctor?' several times. Yet, each time the question is attempted to be answered, the narration is interrupted and the linear flow disrupted

Who was the Doctor? We will begin with the persons for sundry reasons, general and specific. Doth not the Latin grammar teach us so to do, wherein the personal verbs come before the impersonal, and the *Propria que muribus* precede all other nouns? Moreover by replying to this question all needful explanations as to time and place will naturally and of necessity follow in due sequence.

Truly I will deliver and discourse

The sum of all

Who has the Doctor? Can it be necessary to ask? – Alas the vanity of human fame! Vanity of vanities, all is Vanity! “How few,” says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, “have heard of the name of Veneatapadino Ragium!” [...] ‘Who was the Doctor? Oh that thou hadst known him, Reader! Then should I have answered the question, - if orally, by an emphasis upon the article, - the Doctor; as if in written words, THE DOCTOR – thus giving the word that capital designation to which, as the head of his profession within his own orbit, he was so justly entitled [...] *para todos; porque es un aparator de varies materias, donde el Filosofo, el Curtesano, el Humanista, el Poeta, el Pridicador, el Teologo, el Soldado* [...] ‘Who was the Doctor? The Doctor was Doctor Daniel Dove’¹⁵⁰

There are three attempts made to answer the question of who the Doctor is and – after switching to Spanish for a lengthy period of time – the narrator finally answers it. However, after his answer, the reader still does not know much more than the hero's full name. Southey builds the suspense and tension over three pages only to reveal the hero's birth name and, when compared to Swift's and Defoe's opening paragraphs, it is clear that Southey is mocking earlier conventional novels and the 'approved forms'¹⁵¹ they are written in. This is very reminiscent of modernist writers who sought to break away from Georgian and Victorian writing to create something new.

The narrator then refers back to the first chapter and asks again "for in the few lines of the preceding chapter how much is there that requires explanation? - Who was Nobs? – Who was Barnaby? Who was the Doctor? – Who was Mrs. Dove? – The place, where? – The time, when? – The persons, who? -".¹⁵² Southey's use of the em dash here is odd. Em dashes are typically used as a substitute for a colon, semi colon, commas or parentheses. However, to use an em dash in the middle of the sentence to divide completely formed sentences is perplexing since it would not be used when writing positive statements ending with full stops. As the question mark acts as the punctuation mark in this instance, grammatically, there is no need for it. Therefore, I would argue that the em dash is a replacement for the quotation mark to signify speech and represents the readers' voices. However, Southey was not the first to ignore typographical convention. In the 1748 edition of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, even though he did use quotation marks 'at the exact point a quotation began',¹⁵³ he also marked his speakers by using dashes or lines.

According to Keith Houston, the use of the quotation mark in the eighteenth-century 'came from the drive for realism'.¹⁵⁴ Writers like Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson eschewed paraphrasing 'reported speech filtered through a narrator [...] presented readers with their characters' unvarnished words, and with this new directness came a need to separate speech from narration'.¹⁵⁵ While Southey does use quotation marks in places, he also uses em dashes in others. Modernist writers, like James Joyce, also used em dashes to represent quotation marks. Today, em dashes and quotation marks have become optional in some novels. Cynan Jones in his novel *The Dig* (2014) uses none

We've had a report of fly-tipping. He waited. I just wanted to
ask whether you would know anything about that.

What did they tip? asked the man.

The policeman didn't respond. He was looking at the junk and
the big man saw and said, Does it look like I throw things
away?

Just wondered if you could help, sir, said the policeman¹⁵⁶

What this demonstrates is that writers like Southey, Sterne and Richardson were experimenting with forms and words back in the eighteenth and nineteenth

century. However, they were in the minority. It is not until the early twentieth century when the movement of Modernism appeared that these forms became acceptable or, at the very least, more common. Today, they are still being used. What this suggests is that a progression of creative ideas started with Sterne and Southey. To take the example of the em dash, although it was not commonly used at the time, Southey and Richardson do use it in their work. They then become the forerunners of what is considered modern for their time. To use Southey's digressive thoughts from *The Doctor, &c* 'the exceptions in grammar prove the rule, so the occasional interruptions of order here are proofs of that order, and in reality belong to it'.¹⁵⁷ Southey is attempting to create a literary universe where the disruptions of the narrator, including em dashes, become the reality because as he states

When I ought to have been asleep the "unborn pages crowded on my soul". The Chapters ante-initial and post-initial appeared in delightful prospect "long drawn out;" the beginning, the middle and the end were evolved before me: the whole spread itself forth, and then the parts unravelled themselves and danced the hays'¹⁵⁸

3.6 Southey's Postmodern Music

In his 'Interchapter XIV - concerning interchapters', Southey explains why he feels the need to include interchapters within the text. Just like Sterne writing his Preface in the middle of *Tristram Shandy*, Southey has given his reasons for including interchapters nearly half way through the text: 'It occurs to me that

some of my readers may perhaps desire to be informed in what consists the difference between a Chapter and an Inter Chapter [...] A Chapter is, as has been explained, both procreated and procreative: an Interchapter is like the hebdomad'.¹⁵⁹ As with all the chapters and interchapters in *The Doctor, &c.*, Southey includes an epigraph directly under the chapter-title. Interchapter XIV's quotation reads '[i]f we present a mingle-mangle, our fault is to be excused, because the whole world is become a hodge-podge'.¹⁶⁰ Taken from the Prologue of John Lyly's play *Midas* (1587) the quotation in full states

Time hath confounded our minds, our minds the matter, but all cometh to this pass: that what heretofore hath been served in several dishes for a feast is now minced in a charger for a gallimaufrey. If we present a mingle-mangle, our fault is to be excused, because the whole world is become a hodge-podge¹⁶¹

According to Daniel Vitkus,

Lyly jokingly excuses the generic mixing that characterizes his play by pointing out that cultures, like plays, are no longer pure or separate: English identity is being transformed by imported foreign commodities and practices into a "gallimaufrey," and the theatre, reflecting this cultural mixing, "is becoming a hodge-podge"¹⁶²

Southey's is, he claims, as the *Quarterly* reviewer has recognised, 'an extraordinarily book', and hence the 'natural division of the subject matter'¹⁶³ into chapters that is appropriate in ordinary books will not do for his.

'A chapter is,' according to Southey, 'both procreated and procreative: an Interchapter is like the hebdomad, which profound philosophers have pronounced to be [...] motherless as well as a virgin number'.¹⁶⁴ He has 'interspersed them where [he] thought fit, and given them the appellation which they bear, to denote that they are no more a necessary and essential part of this *opus*, than the voluntary is of the church service'.¹⁶⁵ For this reason, Southey's text reads like a hodgepodge of ideas. However, it is not just the words on the page that read in this manner. Southey has, on two separate occasions, included musical scores in the text. The first time it is encountered is in Chapter Thirty-Two when it marks Daniel Dove bringing his wife, Deborah, home for the first time:

What said the Bells of Doncaster to our dear Doctor on that
happy morning which made him a whole man by uniting to
him the rib that he till then had wanted? They said to him as
distinctly as they spoke to Whittington, and to the Flemish
Window ¹⁶⁶

Below I have included the musical score that appears directly after the above passage

Nempt een man!—Take a Spouse, Take a Spouse!" "Aye Daughter!" said the Confessor, when she returned to him with her report, "If the bells have said so, so say I; and not I alone, but the Apostle also, and the Spirit who through that Apostle hath told us when it is best for us to marry!" Reader thou mayest thank the Leonine poet Gummarus Van Craen for this good story.

What said the Bells of Doncaster to our dear Doctor on that happy morning which made him a whole man by uniting to him the rib that he till then had wanted? They said to him as distinctly as they spoke to Whittington, and to the Flemish Widow,

Daniel Dove brings Deborah home.

Daniel Dove brings Deborah home.



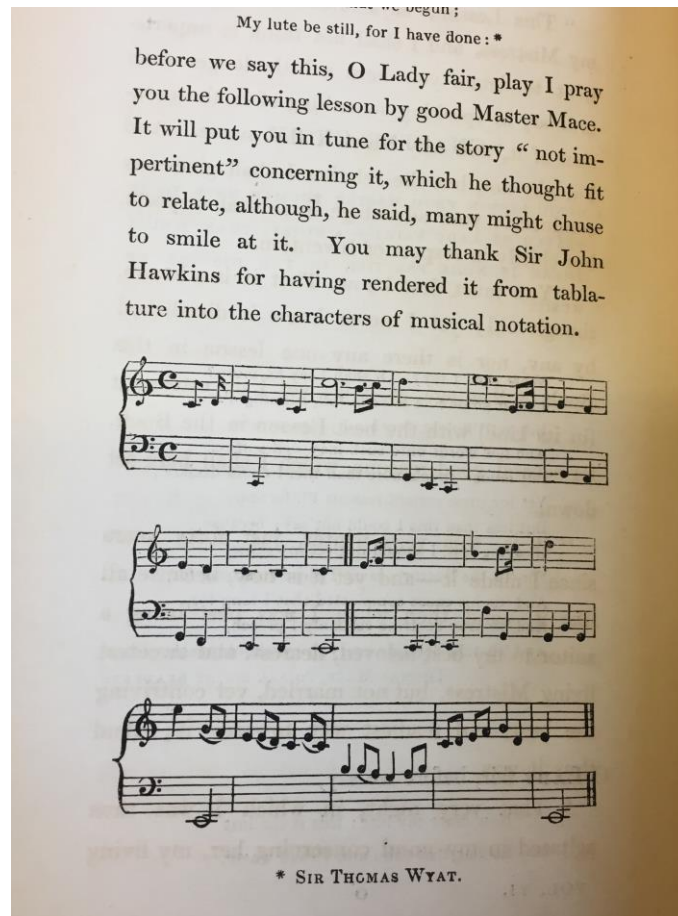
Daniel Dove brings Deborah home.

But whither am I hurrying? It was not till the year 1761 that that happy union was effected; and the fourteen years whose course of events I

(Figure 1, Southey, *The Doctor, &c.*)

What is interesting in the musical score above is that Southey has descended the major scale.¹⁶⁷ The note placed above Daniel's name has a three syllable note. However, Daniel's name is only two syllables. In Deborah's case, the musical note attributed to her is only two syllables whereas her name has three.¹⁶⁸ What Southey has done here is switched the syllables so, when played, it would make no sense and would disrupt the flow of the music. In a similar manner, but in more detail, the second time music is encountered is in chapter one hundred and ninety-four, in which Southey writes 'O Lady fair, play I pray you the following lesson by good Master Mace [...] You may thank Sir John Hawkins for having

rendered it from tablature into the characters of musical notation'.¹⁶⁹ He then places the following musical score below the passage:



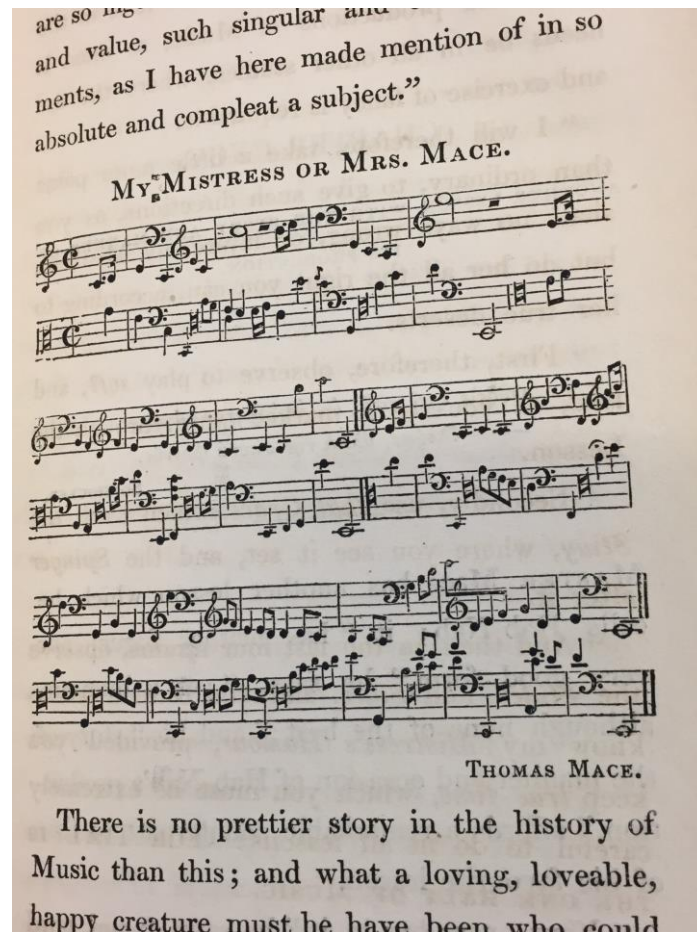
(Figure 2, *The Doctor, &c.*)

Southey then continues

“This Lesson,’ says Master Mace, “I call my Mistress, and I shall not think it impertinent to detain you here a little longer than ordinary in speaking something of it [...] chiefly in respect of Invention’¹⁷⁰

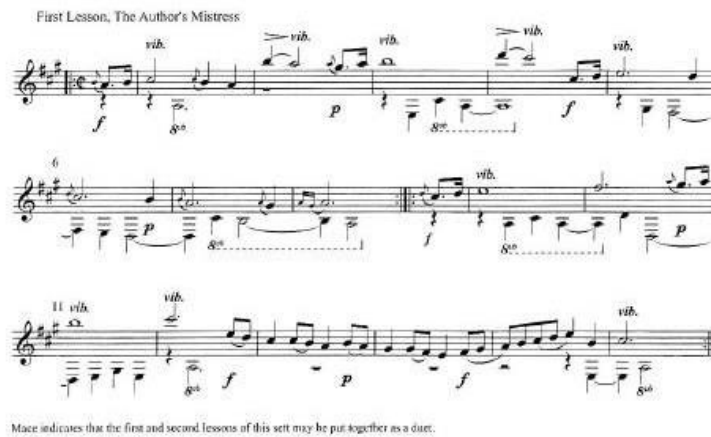
On first reading, it is easy to mistake this chapter for a man who has written a musical score for his mistress. However, this is not the case as towards the end

of this chapter, Southey includes another music score from Thomas Mace – a seventeenth-century musical theorist and music master at Cambridge University:



(Figure 3, *The Doctor, &c.*)

This piece is entitled, according to Southey, 'My Mistress or Mrs Mace'. However, originally, it is from Mace's book *Musick's Monuments* (1676) and called 'The Author's Mistress':

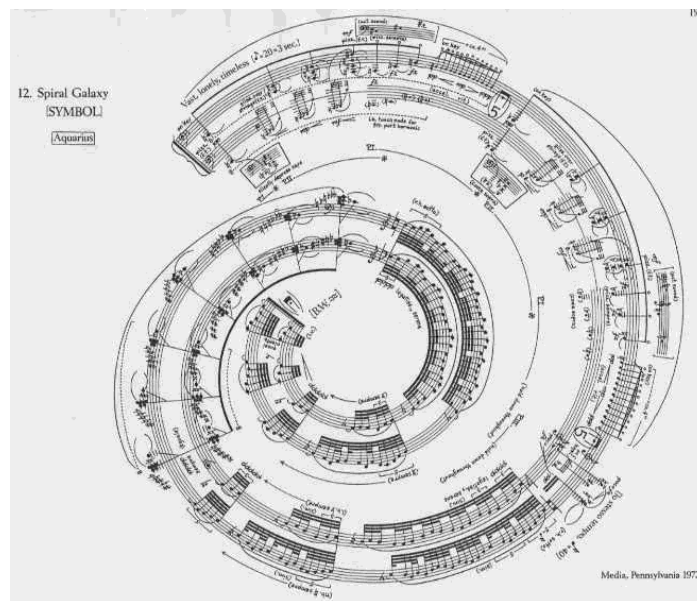


(Figure 4)

This piece had been composed by Mace before he was married and at a time when he was alone and deliberating on an intended wife. It is written in tablature, which is a form of musical notation indicating instrument fingering rather than musical pitches and is common for fretted stringed instruments like the lute.¹⁷¹ As can be seen, Figure 2 is left very simple while Figure 3 looks very cramped. Mace's original composition is very well written in a musical sense¹⁷² whilst Southey's version appears to offer a 'musical alternative'.¹⁷³ According to Simone Spagnola, Figure 3 has several unnecessary notes inserted into the composition. Spagnola played Southey's composition on a piano. Given that this is supposed to be a composition where the man is wooing his lover, the music is jagged and, in Spagnola's words, 'unusual' with 'funny jabs' as it is disrupting the natural order of how the music was intended to be played by Mace. This appears to be, according to Spagnola, a representation of a 'graphic notation' or a 'joke score' written, most frequently, for humorous or ironic effect and is very commonly found in postmodern music. Composers rely often on graphic scores in experimental music where standard musical notation can be

ineffective.¹⁷⁴ This type of musical score is referred to as graphic notation as it represents music through the use of visual symbols which are considered outside the realm of traditional music notation, and believed to be postmodern as they are typically used in experimental music that originated in the 1950s.¹⁷⁵

In Spagnola's view, what Southey has attempted to do here is a postmodern graphic notation. He has combined Thomas Mace's 'The Author's Mistress' and added his own notes to create music that is not to be played, but rather to be seen.¹⁷⁶ In effect, the notation is a visual piece that is striking to the eye. George Crumb's 'The Magic Circle of Infinity' (1973) exemplifies this



(Figure 5)

As shown, this piece is exploring the piano's 'seemingly infinite sounding possibilities [and] recalls the instrument's boundless sound opportunities in its title and circular shape'.¹⁷⁷ Southey's score is not pictorial but the notes arranged on the score would, visually, tell you that this piece, when heard, would not flow if listened to would dispel any romantic notion of a man wooing

his lover. This is confirmed by the piece played by Spagnola as it is very jagged with ‘funny jabs’ that disrupt the intended order of the original score.¹⁷⁸ Thus, this piece is not intended to be played for musical enjoyment.

According to Southey’s biographer, Speck, during his time at Oxford University ‘Southey sang discordantly to the music produced by his friends [George] Burnett and [Nicholas] Lightfoot on a harpsichord, a piano and a flute’.¹⁷⁹ Southey was familiar with the piano, flute and harpsichord and used to play around with music when he was younger with his friends. Therefore, he does have some understanding of music. Visually, Figure 1 is simple and plain. Even if the reader knows nothing about music, the simplicity of the piece is clear to see when compared to Figure 2. So why has Southey written a ‘graphic notation’? In giving a history lesson about Thomas Mace within these chapters, Southey is demonstrating that his music, much like his narrative, will be disrupted. Southey is making his own rules. At the time Southey wrote this, postmodern graphic notation did not exist of course. It is only in today’s modern age that it can be argued that Southey’s musical score is very similar to postmodern graphical notation. Much like Crumb’s ‘The Magic Circle of Infinity’ exploring the piano’s ‘boundless sound opportunities in its title and circular shape’,¹⁸⁰ Southey is continuing to demonstrate, this time with music, that his narrative order is disruptive and that his text is very much an anti-novel.

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- ¹³⁶ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 29 (the italic emphasis is not Southey's but my own)
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Chapter IV: Paradoxical Identity: the political and religious struggle of Robert Southey

Born into an Anglican family, Southey's relationship with religion was complicated. According to Mark Storey, 'he was regarded as the arch apostate of the Romantic period.'¹ This view is supported by David Marcellus Craig who states 'Robert Southey has been remembered not just as a romantic poet but also as a political apostate.'² While not uncommon for Romantic writers to shift towards a more conservative position as they aged (Wordsworth, like Southey, also accepted the post of poet laureate in 1843), Southey was more savagely attacked than his contemporaries for his fluctuating views on politics and religion. It is common enough for a free-spirited youth to become more conservative as he grows older, and it might be argued that Southey's drift towards conservatism began very early, while he was still an undergraduate, under the guidance of his friend, Edward Seward.

Once inspired by Edward Gibbon and Voltaire, Southey began to detest their anti-Christian views and, influenced by his uncle, started to identify as Anglican. He soon abandoned the Pantisocratic dream of living in the wilderness on the banks of the Susquehanna River. Throughout his life, Southey was controversial in his views regarding religion. Labelling Sanskrit as a baboon language³, he was 'ardent in making the world English'⁴ but opposed Catholic Emancipation. Fascinated with the Quran and the East, Southey often wrote about Islam many times during his lifetime. Whilst his earlier works, like *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), present a favourable insight into Islam, by the

time *The Doctor, &c* was published, he considered the religion to be founded by an imposter. This chapter will examine Southey's relationship with religion and politics during his life. I will predominantly focus on Southey's controversial views regarding Catholic Emancipation, the British Empire and Islam and how these views are expressed through his self-reflexive digressions and plot in *The Doctor, &c*. In doing so, I will establish at what point his views started to change during his lifetime, particularly in how he viewed Islam, and how, if at all, it impacted his writing. To begin, however, I will outline Southey's ever-changing religious views and political beliefs during his youth as this is of crucial importance to his later life in writing *The Doctor, &c*.

4.1 Youthful Exposure

Southey's ill-fated involvement with *The Flagellant* (a magazine co-founded during his time at Westminster School and the sole reason for his expulsion as it included satirical condemnation of corporal punishment and mocked the Athanasian Creed) had revealed his enthusiasm by Gibbon and Voltaire. As a result of his contributions to the magazine, he was expelled and refused a place at Christ Church, Oxford University. Southey's depressed state and radical views had intensified by the time he turned eighteen. By now he considered both the Church and State as being 'rotten at the heart' and deserving to be 'hewn down & cast into the fire'.⁵ His attitude strengthened by events that were taking place both at home and abroad at the time. In the spring of 1792, a 'Church and King' mob had attacked dissenters in Nottingham. Denouncing the attack, Southey claimed that the government was at fault for encouraging 'a mob to burn the dissenters houses'.⁶ Furthermore, he objected to the attempts

made by Austria and its allies to quash the French Revolution. According to him, ‘oppression leads his thousands against the French’ and what was needed was a ‘good flaming libel’ in addition to ‘a good hot inflammatory piece of treason’.⁷ He considered ‘the whole bench of Bishops & every Schoolmaster in the Kingdom’ as being his ‘avowed enemies’.⁸ However, less than six months later, Southey’s enthusiasm for the French Revolution had moderated. In a letter to Thomas Phillipps Lamb, on 26 September 1792, Southey wrote

Time has justified all your prophecies with regard to my French friends – the Sans Culottes the Jacobines [sic] & the Fishwomen carry every thing before them – every thing that is respectable every barrier that is sacred is swept away by the ungovernable torrent – the people have changed tyrants & for the mild irresolute Louis bow to the savage the unrelenting Pethion [...] these horrid barbarities however have rendered me totally indifferent to the fate of France⁹

Upon arriving at Balliol College (having secured a place there instead of Christ Church) in the middle of January 1793, Southey’s previous radical views quickly and substantially softened under the influence of Edmund Seward. Seward, three years older than Southey, had been at Balliol since 1789 and had a profound influence upon him. Southey’s father had died just one month before (Robert Senior’s ill-health contributed to his bankruptcy and imprisonment for debt) and Seward became a father figure to him. In a letter to John May in 1818, Southey described Seward as a man who ‘led me right, when it might have {been} easy to have led me wrong [...] I loved him with all my whole heart, ✕✕

~~xxx xx~~ & shall remember him with gratitude & affection as ~~xxxxx~~ one who was my moral father to the last moment of my life'.¹⁰ Under Seward's tutelage, Southey's rebelliousness was tamed. For example, Southey had at first objected to Balliol's ban on wearing boots and brazenly refused to have his hair cut and powdered by the college barber. His insistence on appearing in public with unpowdered hair was the sign of a radical as it was a demonstration against the tax that the prime minister, William Pitt the Younger, had imposed on hair in 1786. Under Seward's guidance, Southey had come to regret this gesture and observed that philosophy 'is not wearing the hair undressed in opposition to custom perhaps [...] this I feel the severity of & blush for'.¹¹ It was Seward who advised Southey to read *All the works of Epictetus* (1758). Teaching him how to make virtues of necessities, it was this book that Southey carried in his pocket for twelve years and he maintained its principles for the rest of his life. In particular, the practice of self-restraint (as being more beneficial and satisfactory than self-indulgence) was key to Southey.

It was during his time at Oxford that Southey began to detest Gibbon's and Voltaire's anti-Christian views. Instead Jean-Jacques Rousseau began to impact on his ideology. Although Rousseau was condemned as anti-Christian, insisting that organised religion corrupted man's natural benevolence, Southey denied this. He accepted that Rousseau endorsed anti-clericalism but insisted that Rousseau had 'been branded as an Infidel. he was not one. The Savoyard curate speaks his faith – it is <the> creed of rational Xtianity' whereas 'Voltaire was a man totally devoid of principle'.¹² In contrast, Southey objected to the 'witty impiety of Voltaire & the artful infidelity of Hume. The man who destroys

religion deprives us of the only substantial happiness'.¹³ During the summer of 1792, Southey, with Steward, went to Cambridge to visit the latter's brother who was at St John's College. It was here that Southey attended the trial of William Frend, a fellow of Jesus College, who had been an Anglican minister until he was deprived of his living as a result of becoming a Unitarian. Following this, in February 1793, Southey published *Peace and Union recommended to the associated bodies of Republicans and anti-Republicans*. Rejecting political extremes, Southey proposed a programme of moderate reform of English institutions (these included parliament, the law and the Church) which all sides could agree upon. This was typical of Southey who would offer reform programmes on several issues throughout his life.

During the autumn of 1793, after borrowing William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) from Bristol library, Southey found himself completely immersed and converted to the theories that were advanced in it. Godwin held that the test of the effectiveness of any institution was whether or not it conformed to reason, and believed that exposing monarchy and aristocracy to rational inquiry would reveal them as demonstrably preposterous. Instead, Godwin argued for democracy, implemented within small communities, in which anti-social behaviour would be eliminated by the application of reason. *Political Justice* encouraged Southey's measured conversion from Enlightened philosophers. Writing in 1799, he reflected 'I counteracted Rousseau by dieting upon Godwin and Epictetus. They did me some good, but Time has done more'.¹⁴ Southey never did completely reject Rousseau but he did offset his Romanticism with his own practical stoicism. Months before meeting

Coleridge, Southey had already envisioned a utopian community and contemplated emigrating to America. After reading William Enfield's *History of Philosophy* (1791), Southey was intrigued by the history of Gallienus, who had envisaged a platonic utopia, and imagined himself creating a similar city state called 'Southeyopolis'.¹⁵ Southey met Coleridge during the month of June in 1794. They were introduced by a mutual friend, Robert Allen, because they held similar views on politics, religion and had a shared love of poetry. Soon after, they established a utopian commune. Years later Southey looked back at this time remarking 'We planned a utopia of our own upon the basis of common property – with liberty for all – a Pantisocracy – a republic of reason and virtue'.¹⁶ However, their planned utopia was soon abandoned due to a number of reasons, a clash of personalities being one: Southey was critical of Coleridge's loose morals while Coleridge was not keen on Southey's 'strength of mind and confirmed habits of strict morality'.¹⁷ Perhaps the most important reason, though, was that Southey's uncle, Herbert Hill, was not pleased with him deserting his studies and instead being preoccupied with the notion of Pantisocracy. Southey had written to his uncle to inform him that he had been forced to leave his aunt's house. His uncle's reply, written from Lisbon where Herbert was residing on 24 January 1795, would influence Southey's future decisions but devastated him at the time

I was more concern'd than surprized at your letter. I knew
what your politics were and therefore had reason to suspect
what your religion might be [...] I have no reason to be angry
with you on account of the resolution you have taken, for as

you never consulted me on the subject you have spared me the mortification of having my advice slighted. I have still less reason to be so on account of your not taking Orders – for I never, that I recollect, proposed it to you or in the least hinted that the education given you was with that view – if you have been taught, as you say you have been, to look upon the Church as your future destination – it must have been by some of your friends, who perceived that in that line you had an establishment ready for you [...] At present perhaps those friends may think you desert both. – But you say your plan is fixed. – If however any circumstance should occur to induce you to give up this plan you would do well I think to make some excuse to your Tutor for your absence – put yourself on board a packet and come for a short time to Lisbon¹⁸

Although it is not known when Southey received this letter, his uncle's cold calculated rebuke caused a stunned Southey to send the letter to Bedford. When Southey did not book a passage to Portugal, his uncle went to England and insisted Southey decide on a career. At the same time, Southey and Coleridge's relationship started to deteriorate further, which ultimately led to Southey's decision in settling on a legal career studying in London. Coleridge saw little difference between a clerical and legal career and criticised him for this decision. After moving out of the lodgings he shared with Coleridge, the two Pantisocrats parted ways with Southey complaining that Coleridge 'had behaved wickedly'¹⁹ towards him and Coleridge writing a scathing letter to Southey,

complacently renouncing him, 'You are lost to me, because you are lost to Virtue'.²⁰ Coleridge assumed this would be the last letter he would ever write his former friend (not knowing he would be reconciled with Southey and resume his correspondence with Southey a year later although not as intensely as when they had originally met) so dedicated three thousand words to describing 'the History of our connection', outlining the story of their friendship before ending it with 'farewell!'²¹ Interestingly, long-winded writing appeared to have even manifested itself in their personal correspondence long before the idea of *The Doctor, &c* was thought of. Southey suffered from bouts of melancholy and frustration in the aftermath and decided to take his uncle up on his offer. The two set out from Falmouth on 8 December 1795, arriving at Corunna five days later, and it was here that Southey witnessed Popery first hand and this reinforced his radicalism.

4.2 'A Very Catholic Taste'

Religion was a controversial topic in considerable dispute within the early nineteenth century, with several different viewpoints 'vying for ascendancy and credibility'.²² The Church of England held the status of established church. However, there was a growing tolerance for other religions and other varieties of Christianity. This is evidenced by *The Doctrine of the Trinity Act 1813*, which legalised non-trinitarianism. The limitations of this relative tolerance were tested by the increasing prominence of divergent religious beliefs. Pantheism, for instance, flourished within the Romantic Period and Atheism was defended for its consistency with adhering to the empirical principles of the Age of Enlightenment. Andrew Porter has argued that 'the great power of

religious belief and institutions in national and international politics’²³ generated ‘serious conflicts of belief and values, between church and state or religious and political leaders’.²⁴ However, The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 seemed to be a major turning point.

William Wordsworth’s ‘Ode: Intimations of Immortality’ (1807) and Percy Bysshe Shelley’s ‘The Necessity of Atheism’ (1811) illustrate the widely divergent religious views available to Romantic writers, who might assume a pantheist or a Protestant stance, and might equally well adopt a position consonant with the anticlericalism of the French Revolution. These controversies were pursued in poems, and in books, pamphlets, broadsheets and periodicals. Southey himself wrote in all these forms. With his essays for the *Quarterly Review* and works like *The Book of the Church* (1825), Southey established himself as, in David Craig’s words, the ‘typical Tory’.²⁵ For this reason, Southey’s work is often understood as mounting a vigorous defence of the establishment. However, a few observers have noted that this may not entirely be correct. In his more nuanced portrayal of Southey, William Hazlitt, for example, acknowledged that far from being a complete conformist, Southey had not wholly forgotten his radical youth. In *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), Hazlitt says of Southey ‘at the corner of his pen “there hangs a vaporous drop profound” of independence and liberality [...] once a philanthropist and always a philanthropist. No man can entirely baulk his nature: it breaks out in spite of him’.²⁶ Likewise, ‘J S Mills also considered Southey more theoretical in his viewpoint than a traditional Tory may be’.²⁷ He argues that Southey had become

an 'aristocrat in principle' but rejected 'aristocratic vices and weaknesses'.²⁸ Subsequently, although he was disliked by the Tories, the Whigs and radicals abhorred him. Southey is primarily viewed as a strong Tory who wrote pamphlets, reviews and histories to argue for a Protestant state.

This view is supported by Stuart Andrews who argues that Southey is an anti-Catholic polemicist who is eminent for his eloquence and that his denunciation of global Catholicism is essential to understanding his life, works and times.²⁹ Instead, Southey 'placed his faith in education – provided it was under Anglican control – and that the idea of his *Book of the Church* began as a school textbook'.³⁰ Alex Watson notes, that during the years 1796 to 1800, Southey observed 'the poverty and squalor of Spain and Portugal under the rule of the Catholic King Carlos' and, due to this, he had 'hardened his sceptical attitudes towards organised religion'.³¹ Upon his arrival in Madrid in 1795, Southey thought it was 'a lovely country, a paradise of nature' but observed that 'the inhabitants are kept in ignorance and poverty by the double despotism of their church and State'.³² Southey's own experience of Catholic countries only confirmed in him his deep distrust and detestation of the Catholic faith.

In 1822, Southey wrote to Blanco White (a former Jesuit turned Protestant) and promised 'an epitome of our religious history, written for the purpose of making the rising generation feel and understand what they owe to the Church of England'.³³ Ten years prior to this, Southey had agreed to write a history of the church in England for use in Andrew Bell's proposed National Schools. He

promised it would include ‘a view of Popery with its consequences – from which the Reformation delivered us’.³⁴ When the book finally appeared, entitled the *Book of the Church* (1822), Southey claimed to show

from what heathenish delusions and inhuman rites the inhabitants of this islands have been delivered by the Christian faith; in what manner the best interests of the country were advanced by the clergy even during the darkest days of papal domination; the errors and crimes of the Roman Church, and how when its corruptions were at the worst, the day-break of Reformation through evil and through good; the establishment of a church pure in its doctrines, irreproachable in its order; beautiful in its form; and the conduct of that Church proved both in adverse and prosperous times³⁵

To reinforce his religious position, Southey’s opening chapter began with the words ‘The light of God, which at creation was imparted to man, hath never been extinguished’.³⁶ However, Southey did not stop there. In a letter to his brother, Thomas, on 15 June 1800, while in Lisbon, he ridiculed the Catholic ‘mummery’ like the feast of Corpus Christi, which allowed one to ‘see the nakedness of the nonsensical blasphemy’.³⁷ Describing, in some detail, the festivities of Trinity Sunday 1800, which marked the end of the reign of that year’s Emperor of the Holy Ghost, Southey writes to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn in June 1800, remarking ‘His mountebank-stage was illuminated, his

flags floating across the street, and barrels of pitch blazing all along it, whose light flashed finely upon the broad flags. It was somewhat terrible - they were bonfires of superstition – and I could not help thinking how much finer a sight the spectators would have thought it, if there had been a Jew or a Socinian like me in every barrel’.³⁸

In addition to the Catholics, in a letter written to John Rickman on 19 March 1806, Southey also feared that Methodism, which he labelled the ‘damned system of Calvinism’,³⁹ and the ‘accursed religion’ of Popery, was politically dangerous as well as conspiratorial. However, he feared that the threat which the irrational appeal of religious enthusiasm (‘epidemics of mind’) posed to rational judgement was more alarming. Less than a year, in a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford on 2 February 1807, Southey’s thoughts were still the same. He concluded that ‘religious enthusiasm’ was an infectious form of ‘gratuitous lunacy’ that affirmed the ‘morbid anatomy of the human mind’.⁴⁰ Yet, he considered himself to be a true Christian believer. His ambivalent attitude to religious beliefs was, needless to say, a representation of his split nature.

Southey’s *Book of the Church* was published in the same year as William Wordsworth’s *Ecclesiastical Sketches* (later changed to *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*). Wordsworth felt compelled to write a history of the Anglican Church when, on ‘one of the most beautiful mornings of the mild season’,⁴¹ he had accompanied a friend to visit the site of a proposed new church. This inspired him to write the sonnets: ‘The Catholic question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts on the same course, and it struck me that certain points in the ecclesiastical history of the country might advantageously be presented to

view in verse'.⁴² Stuart Andrews has argued that both texts, Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* and Southey's *Book of the Church*, address socio-political issues of the 1820s during a time when government 'would grant seats in Parliament to those who recognised the authority of a foreign and allegedly infallible ecclesiastical power' and could 'seem as deserving of censure as a government which, three decades earlier, chose as allies in the war against France three despotic European powers'.⁴³ These powers being Austria, Prussia and Russia.

It would seem absurd to a modern day reader that defending the Anglican Church in such a way was, to the Lake Poets at least, a matter of protecting 'Englishness' and their identity. In today's world, the Pope visits London, English Catholic worshippers 'almost match Anglicans in number'⁴⁴ and, being 'English', also includes the growing numbers of non-Christians within England as well as those who believe in no God or follow no church yet during this time, religion, politics and nationhood were inseparable. The fact that in 1825 Wordsworth and Southey unintentionally coincided in a vigorous defence of the constitutional established Church of their day underlies just how much this topic was talked about.

In his Preface to *Colloquies on Society* (1829), Southey denied that he advocated Catholic Emancipation, 'I have ever maintained that the Romanists ought to be admitted to every office of trust, honour, or emolument, which is not connected with legislative power; but that it is against the plainest rules of policy to trust men with power in a state whose bounden duty it is to subvert, if they can, the church'.⁴⁵ The Preface was dated 9 March 1829 and, according to

his biographer, Speck: 'already the defences of the Protestant constitution, as [Southey] saw it, had been breached'.⁴⁶ The Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 completed the process of Catholic Emancipation throughout Britain. In Ireland the government repealed the Test Act of 1673 and the remaining Penal Laws which had been in force since the passing of the Disenfranchising Act of the Irish Parliament of 1728. The Test and Corporation Acts, passed within the reign of Charles II, had effectively kept Roman Catholics out of power. The Test Acts established a religious test for public office and imposed various civil disabilities on Roman Catholics and Nonconformists. This all changed when a Roman Catholic Irish lawyer, Daniel O'Connell, was elected MP for County Clare for a second time in a by-election held in May 1829. Under the existing law, O'Connell was forbidden from taking his seat in Parliament. With the possibility of a revolution brewing in Ireland, and in response to the widespread agitation led by O'Connell's Catholic Association, in 1829 the Prime Minister Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, passed the Catholic Emancipation Act. This enabled Catholics to sit in the British Parliament at Westminster.⁴⁷ Sir Robert Peel, the Home Secretary, who had until then always opposed emancipation concluded 'though emancipation was a great danger, civil strife was a greater danger'.⁴⁸

Some disabilities remained. For example, no Catholic could be Regent, Lord Chancellor, Lord Chancellor of Ireland or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, nor could a Catholic mayor wear his civic robes at public worship. Furthermore, the Irish county freehold franchise for parliamentary elections was raised from 40

shillings to £10.⁴⁹ Amongst these opposed to Catholic emancipation were some of the literary figures of the day including Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey.⁵⁰

Southey was outraged at what he considered to be a betrayal of the Constitution of Church and State by the Prime Minister and Home Secretary. Although he could sympathise with the Duke of Wellington's dilemma, he had none for Peel who by his

imbecility and half measures has suffered the danger to grow up to which he now yields. He has neither bottom nor brains [...] we have been betrayed by imbecility pusillanimity, and irreligion [...] Our citadel would have been impregnable if it had been bravely defended⁵¹

Subsequently, Southey organised a petition to the House of Commons against Catholic Emancipation.⁵² He further circulated two more petitions, one to the House of Lords and another to the King, in which he urged the King to 'dissolve parliament because the House of Commons does not represent the wish of the people'.⁵³

As mentioned previously, in Chapter IV, 'A.1 – A CONVERSATION AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE', Southey wonders who he should dedicate the book to. His wife's eldest sister declines insisting the book is 'nonsense' as does his wife's youngest sister. When he asks his wife, she answers 'not unless you have something better to dedicate' to which Southey subsequently writes 'so Ladies

[...] the stone which the builders rejected'.⁵⁴ Jesus is the stone rejected by the builders who later become the cornerstone of the Church. Southey's comparison of himself to Christ may seem comically inflated, but he goes on to write “and this in the title-page!” So, taking out my pencil, I drew upon the back of a letter the mysterious monogram, erudite in appearance as the diagamma of Mr A. F. Valpy'.⁵⁵ In 1838, Thomas Carlyle explained that 'A.F' Valpy is in fact A.J Valpy (Abraham John Valpy, 1787- 1854), an English printer and publisher.⁵⁶ Carlyle argued that A J Valpy's 'diagamma' is not a diagamma at all

that monogram he, with equal incorrectness, calls a diagamma. It is not a diagamma, for the diagamma, which, towering over the alphabet [...] is very much different from an F; whereas Valpy's mark is a combination thus [...] tending to indicate the words Tom Fool and fitly heralding many a number of the Classical Journal⁵⁷

The 'diagamma' that Carlyle refer to is Valpy's publishing trademark, often seen on the title page of his volumes of *The Pamphleteer*. A diagamma is an archaic letter of the Greek alphabet, which appears as an English capital 'F' in italics, but equates to an English 'w'. However, in the nineteenth century (as this letter is in the sixth position of the Greek alphabet) it was used as a symbol for the quantity of six and was referred to as a 'stigma'. Stigma is the singular Greek

word of Stigmata, which is a term used by Catholics to describe body marks, sores or sensations of pain that are situated in the same locations as the crucifixion wounds suffered by Jesus Christ (such as the hands, wrists and feet). Therefore, arguably, 'the mysterious monogram' that is 'erudite in appearance as the diagamma of Mr A. F. Valpy' on the title page of each volume of *The Doctor, &c* is similar to the symbol of the Athanasian Creed. There is only one difference: the symbol is upside down in *The Doctor, &c*. Figure 1 and 2 show this



Figure 1

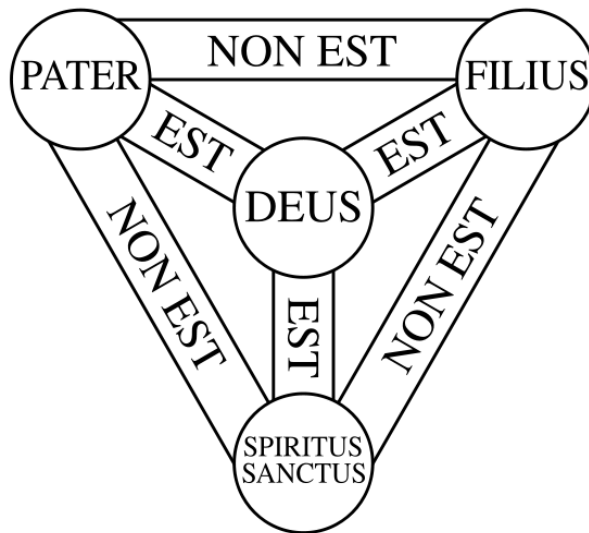


Figure 2

Southey was a surprisingly lukewarm Trinitarian, a man who held the Athanasian Creed in contempt. In 1804, he wrote a letter to his brother, Thomas, declaring: ‘One parcel arrived! another on the road! a third ready to start. – I grudge the time thus to be sold, surely – but patience! it is after all better than reading the Athanasian Creed – pleading in a stinking court of Law’.⁵⁸ What he refers to here is becoming a priest in the Church of England. Two years later, Southey again writes to his brother informing him that he had been introduced to the bishop of Llandaff, ‘I am more in favour than I should be likely to be with any other man who wear an apron, for he is a staunch Whig, and would wittingly see the Athanasian Creed and half a dozen other absurdities struck out of the liturgy as I should’.⁵⁹ Southey’s diagamma has turned the symbol of the Athanasian Creed, upside down.

In my first chapter, I mentioned the ‘Ante-Preface’ in *The Doctor, &c* and suggested that it had reference to the sensational gossip that surrounded Blount’s attempted suicide, over the prohibition of his marriage to his wife’s

sister, in a half-serious manner. Charles Blount was a seventeenth century English deist and philosopher who published several anonymous essays that were critical of the existing English order. In 1689, he wanted to marry his dead wife's sister but, after writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1693, his request was denied and, as a result, he committed suicide in August. In his 'Ante-Preface', Southey writes

'Prefaces', said Charles Blount, Gent, who committed suicide because the law would not allow him to marry his brother's widow – a law, be it remarked in passing, which is not sanctioned by reason, and which, instead of being in conformity with Scripture, is in direct opposition to it, being in fact the mere device of a corrupt and greedy church⁶⁰

Religion and law, in his view, are not in 'conformity with Scripture' and 'not sanctioned by reason'.⁶¹ They are, in fact, in 'direct opposition' with scripture as they are 'the mere device of a corrupt and greedy church'.⁶² Southey's readiness to hold organised religion up to contempt is still more evident in this interchapter, 'ABALLIBOOZOBANGANORRIBO', when he writes

It may be deciphered and interpreted, and give occasion to a religion called Dovery or Danielism, which may have its Chapels, Churches, Cathedrals, Abbeys, Priories, Monasteries, Nunneries, Seminaries, Colleges, and Universities; - its Synods, Consistories, Sacristans, Deacons, Priests, Archdeacons, Rural Deans, Chancellors, Prebends, Canons,

Deans, Bishops, Archbishops, Price Bishops, Primates, Patriarchs, Cardinals, and Popes; its most Catholic Kings, and its Kings most Dovish or most Danielish [...] Attack on one side, defence on the other; high Dovers and low Dovers; Danielites of a thousand unimagined and unimaginable denominations; schisms, heresies, seditions, persecutions⁶³

Comparing *The Doctor, &c* to a Holy Book, Southey is insinuating that it may give a rise to a religion ‘called Dovery or Danielism’ and from this religion many different sects, religious leaders and places of worship will derive. Southey is clearly mocking Catholicism, but other established religions are not excluded from the mockery. The character of young Daniel Dove is discussed in chapter seventeen (‘The Happiness of Having a Catholic Taste’) as being

free from all the *isms* in Lily, and from rhotacism [sic] to boot; he was clear too of schism, and all the worse isms which have arisen from it: having by the blessing of Providence been bred up not in any denomination ending in ist or inian, or erian or arian, but as a dutiful and contented son of the Church of England. In humour, however, he was by nature a Pantagruelist⁶⁴

Southey describes young Daniel ‘as a dutiful and contented son of the Church of England. In humour, however he was by nature a Pantagruelist’.⁶⁵ The same might be said of Southey. Although Anglican, Southey questioned the Church and its mode of operations throughout his life. His humour, and certainly the

manner in which *The Doctor &c* is written, is Pantagruelist. As has been mentioned previously, in his letter to Caroline Bowles, Southey acknowledged ‘something of Rabelais’⁶⁶ in his book. Southey’s enthusiastic defence of the Church of England is always qualified by that other, Rabelaisian side of his character, the part of him that relished that ‘gaiety of mind’ that Rabelais claimed for himself, and was amused rather than shocked by the Rabelaisian humour that many of his contemporaries thought obscene. The chapter begins with the narrator pointing out the differences between father and son:

The Doves, father as well as son, were blest with a hearty intellectual appetite, and a strong digestion: but the son had the more catholic taste [...] the turtle and venison he would have preferred to all the other dishes, because his taste, though catholic, was not indiscriminating. He would have tried all, tasted all, thriven upon all, and lived contentedly and cheerfully upon either, but he would have liked best that which was best⁶⁷

Daniel is catholic rather than Catholic in his tastes, which is why he is not at all attracted by sectarianism. He is a true ‘son of the Church of England [...] free from all the *ism*’. His tastes in food are more catholic than his father’s: he ‘would have eaten sausages for breakfast at Norwich, sally-luns at Bath, sweet butter in Cumberland, orange marmalade in Edinburgh Findon haddocks at Aberdeen, and drunk punch with beef-steaks to oblige the French if they insisted upon obliging him with *dejeûner à l’Anglaise* [sic]’.⁶⁸ The reader is left

to wonder whether his religious tastes are as generously broad as his taste in food.

By the end of the chapter Daniel is recognised as a ‘dutiful and contented son of the Church’, but only after he has been credited with Rabelaisian appetites, and the portrait of Daniel serves also as a portrait of Southey. It is after all Southey who acknowledges in the chapter ‘that all the greatest poets have a spice of Pantagrelism in their composition, which I verily believe was essential to their greatness.’⁶⁹

There are other characters to consider in *The Doctor, &c* that illustrate Southey’s views on religion. For example, Peter Hopkins (who is a practitioner) and the character of the pastor, Mr Bacon. For these characters, it is essential to realise the influence that David Hume may have had on Southey’s thinking. David Craig has argued that ‘a probable influence on Southey’s thinking was Hume’⁷⁰ with Southey once describing Hume as a ‘sagacious’ writer ‘upon all points in which a sense of religion is not required’.⁷¹ Hume denied that government was founded on the consent of the people. All governments had been founded on ‘usurpation or conquest’.⁷² Therefore, the idea that people either ‘actually or tacitly consented to them was absurd’.⁷³ Hume maintained that ‘the general bond or obligation, which binds us to government is the interest and necessities of society; and this obligation is very strong’.⁷⁴ Unlike Hume, Southey adopted a religious approach to natural law and believed that ‘the legitimacy of government was not wholly secular and the obligation of obedience was not entirely self-interested’.⁷⁵ Instead Southey insisted ‘nothing is more certain than that religion is the basis upon which civil government rests,

- that from religion power derives its authority, laws their efficiency, and both their seal and sanction'.⁷⁶ Although it might be understood differently, one interpretation, as Craig points out, 'might be that governments should act in accordance with the laws of God, thus turning mere 'power' into genuine 'authority'.⁷⁷ Religion supported government because it 'created a sense of duty by insisting that observance of the law was the will of God'.⁷⁸ The character of Peter Hopkins is evidence of this. When Southey first introduces Hopkins, he is presented 'as good a practitioner as any in England; though not the best' and one who had 'produced the most effect upon [Daniel's] mind'.⁷⁹ Southey goes on to explain that Hopkins is a perfect example of how society should observe law as it is the will of God

The reader may perhaps remember (and if not, he is now reminded of it,) how, when he was first introduced to Peter Hopkins, it was said that any king would have had in him a quiet subject, and any church a contented conformist. He troubled himself with no disputation in religion, and was troubled with no doubts, but believed what he was taught to believe, because he had been taught to believe it; and owing to the same facility of mind, under any change of dynasty, or revolution of government that could have befallen, he would have obeyed the ruling power. Such would always be the politics of the many, if they were let alone; and such would always be their religion⁸⁰

If this point was not clear to his readers, Southey develops his point by arguing that ‘under the worse scheme of government the desired end would be in a great degree attainable, if the people were trained up, as they ought to be, in the knowledge of their Christian duties; and unless they are so trained, it must ever be very imperfectly attained under the best’.⁸¹ The character of Hopkins typifies the ‘people’ as people believe what they are taught and they believe it because they are taught it. According to Craig, Southey claimed that ‘in the earliest ages of mankind government was ‘patriarchal’ and merely indicated ‘that authority was organised and experienced through the family’.⁸² This notion is further developed when Southey considers the character of the pastor, Mr Bacon: ‘nothing but the most injurious and inevitable circumstances could have corrupted his natural piety, for it had been fostered in him by his father’s example, and by those domestic lessons which make upon us the deepest and most enduring impressions’.⁸³ Through the will of God and religious sense of duty, the characters of Hopkins and Mr Bacon exemplify what Southey considered to be good citizens. It is through a sense of duty to religion and through the will of God, not politics, that a person will observe the law.

4.3 The Near East

Writing in *The Quarterly Review* in 1824, Southey expressed concern that in some parts of Asia and Africa there were still remnants of a ‘patriarchy’ society, but this form had not survived within the rest of the world, ‘this natural order was overthrown as soon as violence began to prevail; government was then established by force; and forms; more or less favourable to the general good, were introduced, as strength and wisdom prevailed’.⁸⁴ The origin of

government, in Southey's mind at least, was that some people were able to use force to overpower others. He develops this argument further in *The Doctor, &c* when he writes about the different religions

Methodism was then in its rampant stage; the founders themselves had not yet sobered down; and their followers, though more decent than the primitive Quakers, and far less offensive in their operations, ran, nevertheless, into extravagancies which made ill-judging magistrates slow in protecting them against the insults and outrages of the rabble. The Dissenters were more engaged in controversy amongst themselves than with the Establishment [...] The Roman Catholics were quiet, in fear of the laws, - no toleration being then professed for a Church which proclaimed, and everywhere acted upon⁸⁵

Wallace Cable Brown has observed that 'the poetry of Robert Southey, like that of Byron, Moore, and numerous versifiers, is an accurate index of vitality of English interest in the Near East in the early nineteenth century'.⁸⁶ Southey's interest in the Near East (a term used to describe what is now considered to be the Middle East or West Asia) manifests itself in his famous poem *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) in which an Arabian youth, Thalaba, seeks vengeance for his family's murder. The appeal of the East to Southey did not stop there as, throughout his life, he continued to explore Britain's relationship with the East.

The presence of Protestant missionaries in Bengal was a controversial matter in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The debate examined whether Protestant missionaries should officially be allowed to actively spread the gospel in India to convert Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. Daniel White has credited the debate with changing the course of the empire in India and it was a debate that Southey participated in. According to White, while Southey was a ‘true believer in the British Empire’,⁸⁷ he had displayed anxiety over the costs of colonialism. Southey, in a letter to government official John Rickman, argued that the British benefited the Indians, because he was ‘ardent in making the world English’.⁸⁸ White has argued that Southey’s writings in the *Annual* and *Quarterly* reviews, as well as *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), were the result of the ‘intense objectivism by which his mind insistently spread itself out upon external things [...] provided by the stories and practices of diverse religious and mythological systems [which] is deeply involved in the evangelical encounter with Hindu idolatry’.⁸⁹

Southey was a true believer in the Protestant establishment and had a ‘fairly comfortable low Arian and Arminian home within the Church of England’.⁹⁰ He may have supported conversion but he was by no means a proselytiser, unlike the Baptists whose ‘anxieties about idolatry were accompanied by an insistence that the end of all religion, regardless of specific eschatology or myths [...] must be a single and singular Calvinistic form of conversion leading to repentance, regeneration, and salvation’.⁹¹ However, Southey did condemn the political condition of England which prompted ‘him to return to Napoleon’s reorganised Egypt as an alternative system of government which he sees as perhaps

embodying the principles of the Revolution'.⁹² This is best seen in a letter to his wife, Edith, in 1799, 'These are evil times and I believe I may write the epitaph of English Liberty! Well well Buonaparte [sic] is making a home for us in Syria, and we may perhaps enjoy freedom under the suns of the East, in a land flowing with milk and honey'.⁹³

Carey Williams, writing in late 1795, stressed that though 'the land is full of idols [...] I do not know that the bulk of the people ever worship them with an expectation of obtaining anything for the *soul*'.⁹⁴ Southey, on the contrary, justified Evangelism in quite different terms. In 1802 he wrote in the *Annual Review* that 'the moral institutes of Christianity are calculated to produce the greatest possible goods'⁹⁵ and, seven years later, he asked in the *Quarterly Review* '[w]hy should we convert them? All the institutions of Christianity operate to produce the greatest possible quantity of virtue and of happiness'.⁹⁶ The Baptists, according to Southey, demonstrated an 'abject prostration of intellect to the dogmas of a miserable and mischievous superstition'.⁹⁷

In Southey's poem, 'Ode Written after the King's Visit to Scotland' (1822), he identifies 'an empire which survives' the Volneyan ruins of realms, 'an empire in the mind / Of intellectual man; which 'By indefeasible right / Hath Britain made her own'.⁹⁸ In what Michael Franklin describes as 'his epic Anglo-centricity',⁹⁹ Southey surveys the world and marvels at its 'awful foreignness, while pondering how British Protestant rationality would make a better colonialist job of it'.¹⁰⁰ Contemporary Scotland may be involved in the 'fair conquest' of India but, according to Southey, the future lay with Anglophone, 'Whereso'er / The British tongue may spread, '(A goodly tree, whose leaf / no

winter e'er shall nip) / Earthly immortals, there, her sons of fame, / Will have their heritage'.¹⁰¹ However, Southey's views went further than this and, in a letter written in 1800 to Charles Watkins Williams Wynn, he remarked that George Strachey (officer of the East India Company) was correct about the Hindu language 'it is a baboon jargon not worth learning: but were I there I would get the Vedams, & get them translated'.¹⁰² Five years later, Southey wrote to Wynn again stating 'If I were not otherwise employed – almost I should like to write upon the duty & policy of introducing Xianity [sic] into our East Indian possessions [...] Unless that policy be adopted I prophecy that by the year 2000 there will be more remains of the Portugueze [sic] than of the English Empire in the East'.¹⁰³ Southey need not have predicted it would have taken quite so long in order for this to happen. In contrast, William Jones, an eighteenth-century philologist and judge on the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William in Bengal, as well as a scholar of ancient India, marked a wave of enthusiasm for the Indian culture for what he considered the 'refined' Sanskrit-derived languages of India.

Resonant with political, religious and ideological undertones, Southey conceived the East against the backdrop of international wars, national dissension and the problems that were raised by imperial, colonial and commercial expansion.¹⁰⁴ Southey's orient was a 'laboratory of cultures' which entered religious preoccupations, especially concerning the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism and the relevance they held to policy making in India.¹⁰⁵ Yet, the letters he wrote during the most intense period of Orientalist activity (this being between the composition and publication of *Thalaba the*

Destroyer and the early 1810s) ‘define his own East as a superimposition of discourses [...] as a territory to be conquered and as a place of intervention in which individual or communal areas may be successfully and profitably deployed’.¹⁰⁶ It has been noted by Diego Sanglia that Southey usually addressed these letters to those who were most ‘intimately connected to the public sphere or actively involved in the administration or the military’,¹⁰⁷ like his brother, Thomas, or John Rickman and Wynn. In these exchanges, Southey often ‘remarks on the need to ensure the duration of an Empire based on the strongest moral foundations, and rooted in an East presented as a strategically crucial place’ that is ‘linked to Europe by a geo-political map that must be increasingly conquered by Britain’.¹⁰⁸

4.4 Southey’s Islam

As mentioned, Southey wrote mostly on the near east religion of Islam and expressed interest in the religion from a young age. Stuart Andrews has argued that ‘Southey’s youthful mingling of Deism and Unitarianism perhaps explains his interest in Islam’.¹⁰⁹ However, according to Nigel Leask, this link has sometimes been exaggerated because Southey ‘presented Islam as a rational Unitarian religion’.¹¹⁰ Daniel White, in his book *Early Romanticism and Religious Dissent* (2006), prefers to think of Southey as viewing Islam as ‘a Unitarian religion that is intuitive’.¹¹¹ Arguably, Southey’s interest in the religion was far more immediate. In his new Preface to *Thalaba the Destroyer*, written for the 1837-8 edition, Southey claimed he had started to write *Thalaba* before he had finished *Madoc* (1805). This is prominently highlighted in July 1799 when

Charles Danvers came down to breakfast on the morning after Madoc was completed, I had the first hundred lines of *Thalaba* to show him, fresh from the mint but this poem was neither crudely conceived nor hastily undertaken. I had fixed upon the ground, four years before, for a Mohammedan tale¹¹²

The conception of *Thalaba*, therefore, is dated to 1795. Coincidentally, this is around the same time that Southey delivered his seventh historical lecture in Bristol in which he encompassed ‘the Rise and Progress of the Mahammedan religion, and the Crusades’.¹¹³ Furthermore, it is also the same year that Southey went to Lisbon for the first time with his uncle. In the 1797 edition of *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, Southey reports that he ‘almost’ regrets the expelling of the Moors from Spain, ‘What has this country gained by their explusion? A cleanly superstition has been exchanged for the filth and ferocity of Monks, & the dogma of Mary’s Immaculate Conception has taken place of the divine legation of Mohammed’.¹¹⁴ Interestingly, this passage was retained in the 1799 edition but later dropped from the revised edition of 1808. What this indicates is that Southey’s opinions on Islam changed constantly during his lifetime. He held a sympathetic view on the religion in his earlier life and works but began to become increasingly hostile towards Mohammad and Islam towards the end.

Many critics support this viewpoint. Naji Oueijan states that, in his notes on *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), Southey explains the ‘Muslim belief that destiny marks man’s actions’¹¹⁵ by writing ‘most probably the idea was taken up by Mohummed [sic] from the sealing of the Elect, mentioned in the

Revelations'.¹¹⁶ Southey 'believed that Islam [was] an extension of Christianity and that Muhammad [was] a biblical prophet'¹¹⁷ as well as making allusions to the prophet's knowledge of and dependence on the Bible. This view is supported by Muhammad Saharafuddin who discusses this in further detail. Saharafuddin argues that 'in *Thalaba* the beliefs and customs of the Islamic Orient are a survival of the ancient life and faith of the Bible'.¹¹⁸ In his view, Southey acknowledges that 'Islam is used as a model for the regeneration of European civilization [and that] Islam in itself could play an effective part in the understanding of man and human consciousness'.¹¹⁹ By recreating an Islamic Pilgrim's Progress in *Thalaba*, Southey not only succeeds in presenting Islam as an authentic religion but also portrays Muslims as being virtuous and faithful in their worship of Allah.¹²⁰

Both these views are reinforced by Southey's reflections on the poem. Writing retrospectively in 1838, Southey recalls *Thalaba the Destroyer* as a 'professedly [...] Arabian tale' seeking to highlight 'the best features of the [Muslim] system of belief and worship' in addition to 'placing in the most favourable light the morality of the Koran'.¹²¹ Yet, just a few years after the publication of *Thalaba*, Southey 'yields to popular misconceptions when presenting contradictory views of Islam' with his prose work, *Chronicle of the Cid* in 1808.¹²² What could have caused Southey's rapid change of views on the religion? Is it then plausible to conclude that Southey simply yielded to popular misconceptions of Islam? In order to answer this question, it is important to understand how Islam was portrayed and presented to the West and how the translation of the Quran played a vital role in this.

According to Ebrahim Shami, the translation of many Arabic books into English was one key factor that led writers, and eventually the Romantic poets, to write about Islam and the East.¹²³ The translation of the Quran played a pivotal role in this. Peter the Venerable, abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Cluny, commissioned the first translation of the Quran in the twelfth century. In his *Conversations or dialogue of a philosopher with a Jew or Christian*, he attempted to demonstrate the superiority of the Christian faith and felt it was only logical to ‘extend this line of thought and apply it to’ the Islamic faith.¹²⁴ However, in order to do this, two things were required. Firstly, a sufficient knowledge of the Quran was a requirement and, secondly, a translation was needed. Peter the Venerable devised a plan for not only ‘translating Islam’s most important book, the Koran, in order to be better able to denounce its contents’,¹²⁵ but also carefully selected other works that would be included within his project such as a ‘remarkable Arabic tract’¹²⁶ that argued the superiority of the Christian faith above Islam. Like Peter the Venerable, in 1698, Italian Oriental scholar and professor of Arabic Lodovico Maracci decided to translate the Quran into Latin having already edited and published it in Arabic earlier. In his version of the Quran, Maracci included an introduction of Mohammad with notes and refutations of ‘Mohometan’ doctrines. In Maracci’s opening, he declared:

Christian reader, I have always been amazed that, while so many learned and good men have written so voluminously against other sects of the true religion, so few have written so little against Muhammad and his impious law [...] The battle

of the Catholic scholars has in the same way raged against the mistakes of the Eutychians, Dioscorians, Nestorians, Macedonians, and other most ancient heresiarchs, to whose overthrow several Ecumenical councils were dedicated [...] Yet those among the ancients and moderns who have written against Muhammad and the Muhammedan superstition, which has persevered for over a thousand years, are few; very few indeed¹²⁷

In his statement, Marracci is refuting the Quran. He believes that ancient and modern heresies (such as Luther and Calvin) 'have all been subject to their fair share of attack and refutation, while the arch-army of Christendom, Islam, remains immune to the attack of the learned'.¹²⁸ He likens the situation of Christendom to that of pre-reconquista Spain, and is concerned that 'with multiple Christian factions warring against each other [...] none [are] paying much attention to the Muslim threat'.¹²⁹ Like Peter the Venerable before him, Marracci believes it is time to attack the Muslims using their own arguments and with their own sources. His strategy for this was to 'provide Christianity with the intellectual means to refute Islam using Muslim materials'¹³⁰ by doing which, he believed that the clergy will unite 'in their struggle against Islam instead of their endless theological conflicts with each other'.¹³¹ However, his strategy did not work as his refutation failed to unite Christians that were writing about Islam at the turn of the eighteenth century. As Ziad Elmarsafy has noted, 'the central question at the heart of Western debates about Islam during

this period was not “How do we defeat the Muslims?” but rather “Who owns the representation of Islam?””¹³²

It is my view that Peter the Venerable’s translation attempted to project and perpetuate false belief as well as create hostile attitudes towards Islam. It is a view shared by others like Shami who argues that it did just this from the twelfth century until the eighteenth century when ‘George Sale’s version of the Quran appeared in London in 1734’.¹³³ Sale’s English translation of the Quran in 1736 was carried out based on Maracci’s 1698 Latin version. It was this version, according to Carol Bolton, that revealed ‘a guiding principle of Enlightenment relativism’¹³⁴ that held that to be ‘acquainted with the various laws and constitutions of civilized nations especially of those who flourish in our own time, perhaps the best part of knowledge’.¹³⁵ In fact, Sharafuddin has stated that ‘so striking was [Sale’s] knowledge and identification with Islam, in an age of dogma and prejudice, that he was known in some conservative circles by the title ‘half-Mussulman’ for his positive view of the Koran’.¹³⁶ Sale considered the Quran to be written in a ‘beautiful and fluent’ manner, describing parts of it as ‘sublime and magnificent’.¹³⁷ Carol Bolton has acknowledged that ‘Sale might have intended his translation to be a positive attempt to present the Koran dispassionately to a critical public’, but nevertheless he ‘detached himself’ by ‘presenting a familiar version of Mohammed as a false prophet to his western readers’.¹³⁸ This view was also favoured by Edward Said, who pointed out that Sale was writing from a Christian tradition that had presented Mohammad as a deceitful other of Jesus Christ.¹³⁹

Sale encouraged the Quran to be read and Islam to be studied, criticising those who were hostile towards the text without any knowledge. In saying this though, he also believed that Islam ‘constituted the word of God’ but did so through its ‘mouthpiece, the divinely inspired Mohammed’.¹⁴⁰ Sale labelled this a ‘pretence’ in his ‘Preliminary Discourse’. Although Sale acknowledges the prophet’s ‘imposture’ he protests against the ‘detestation with which the name of *Mohammed* is loaded’ and the representation of him by Christians as the ‘most abandoned villain’.¹⁴¹ In his introduction, Sale insists that Mohammad should be recognised as equal to the other founders of the world’s great civilisations:

Notwithstanding the great honour and respect generally and deservedly paid to the memories of those who have founded states, or obliged a people by the institution of laws which have made them prosperous and considerable in the world, yet the legislator of the Arabs has been treated in so very different a manner by all who acknowledge not his claim to a divine mission, and by Christians especially, that were not, your lordship’s just discernment sufficiently known, I should think myself under a necessity of making an apology for presenting the following translation¹⁴²

He goes on to argue that

Muhammed gave his Arabs the best religion he could, as well as the best laws, preferable, at least, to those of the ancient

pagan lawgivers, I confess I cannot see why he deserves not equal respect, though not with Moses or Jesus Christ, who laws came really from heave, yet with Minos or Numa, notwithstanding the distinction of a learned writer [i.e. Prideaux], who seems to think it a greater crime to make use of an imposture to set up a new religion, founded on the acknowledgment of one true God, and to destroy idolatry, than to use the same means to gain reception to rules and regulations for the more orderly practice of heathenism already established¹⁴³

Sale's approach to the Quran is echoed by Southey. In a letter to John May, dated 29 July 1799, Southey wrote '[o]f the few books with me I am most engaged by the Koran. it is dull & full of repetitions. but there is an interesting simplicity in the tenets it inculcates'.¹⁴⁴ He goes on to question the motives of Mohammad:

what is Mohammed? self-deceived, or knowingly a deceiver?
if an enthusiast, the question again occurs wherein does real inspiration differ from mistaken? this is a question that puzzles me – because to the individual they are the same, & both effects equally proceed from the first impeller of all motions, who must have ordained whatever he permits¹⁴⁵

Sale's translation of the Quran presented Islam being presented in a positive light for the first time in the West, and fifty-two years later a French translation

was published. Both of these translations were found in Southey's library. The French translation appeared in the sale catalogue of Southey's library and copies of Sale's English translation (Southey owned more than one copy) included the Bath edition of 1795 and the London edition of 1801.¹⁴⁶ It is unlikely that Southey had read Sale's translation of the 1795 edition of the Quran before he had left Bristol to spend the winter in Lisbon during the year of 1795. This then presents the question: when and where did he read it? It is known that he borrowed books from the Hereford Cathedral Library in November 1796 but the cathedral did not have a copy of the Quran. It is also known that Bristol library did hold the 1764 edition of Sale's 1734 translation but Southey did not borrow this. He had clearly studied the translation very well and read the Quran thoroughly which has led to the conclusion that 'no other Romantic writer had absorbed George Sale's excellent translation of the *Koran* to the same degree'.¹⁴⁷ However, could Southey have heard of the religion prior to Sale's translation?

In 1744, the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, presented on its very first performance of *Mahomet the Imposter*.¹⁴⁸ This play was presented to the London stage as a free theatrical adaptation from Charles Voltaire's published text *Mahomet le prophète* (1736). Prior to the Theatre Royal's performance, the play had been presented by the Parisian state theatre, Comédie-Française, earlier in the same year. Yet, it was banned after just three performances. Two years later, Bristol's Theatre Royal 'staged two performances of *Mahomet* [in] July 1766',¹⁴⁹ and revived the play for several performances in 1783 when Southey was a Bristol schoolboy. Bristol library did have a copy of the English version of Voltaire's

play but the date of accession is uncertain and it does not appear that Southey had ever borrowed it. What is known, however, is that Southey joined the Bristol library in the autumn of 1793 and that he considered that the library made him as well educated as he would have been at Oxford University: ‘at least in my own opinion, & you know, to me that is the most material’.¹⁵⁰ Further to this, it is known Southey was inspired by Voltaire and read his works during this time. Therefore, it is mere speculation whether this might have been the first exposure that Southey had to Islam. This is not to say that there were no other popular works available that Southey could have read. Simon Ockley’s *The History of the Saracens* (1708) was well known at the time and Mary Lamb had written the story of ‘The Young Mahometan’ and included it in *Mrs. Leicester’s School: The Histories of Several Young Ladies* (1809).

Though Southey ‘did not set foot on Eastern soil’, he did have a ‘deep understanding of Islam’.¹⁵¹ Shami argues that ‘Islam in the Romantic Movement was of great interest to many prose writers, poets, novelist and dramatists’ as ‘Romanticism, with its basis of freedom from any limits on feeling and imagination and its shaking off or draining constrictions imposed in the name of order, tradition and reason, was instrumental in opening the western mind and soul to Islam’.¹⁵² Many interpretations of Islam, Muslims, Mohammed and the Quran from various viewpoints characterised this period. Shami reinforces his view by stating that ‘most of the romantic poets including Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Southey and Moore portrayed Islam and Muslims in a negative way; they depicted Islam as a false and brutal religion [and] portrayed Muslims as the enemy of humankind [writing] poems which were full of insults

and humiliation to Islam'.¹⁵³ This would certainly explain some of Southey's hostile attitude towards Mohammed in *The Doctor, &c* but he was engaged by the religion and offered a sympathetic view of it in *Thalaba*.

Mohammed and his religion seemed to have captured a youthful Southey's attention for, yet again, he and Coleridge had engaged in a joint venture on writing about the life of Mohammed in hexameters in 1799. Upon hearing that Coleridge was quitting the *Monthly Review*, Southey wrote to William Taylor (of Norwich) 'Coleridge & I mean to march an army of hexameters into the country, & it will be unfortunate to have all the strong places in the hands of our enemies. We have chosen the story of Mohammed [...] the subject is very fine & we have squeezed it into a sufficient oneness. but remember this is a Secret Expedition till the Manifesto accompany the troops. we must bully like Generals – but argue somewhat better'.¹⁵⁴ A month after writing to Taylor, Southey assured Coleridge that he was 'sanguine about Mohammed & I wish I had nothing to call my attention from it'.¹⁵⁵ In December of the same year, Southey had written his 109 lines of hexameters and sent it to Taylor with the explanation that 'they are but apprenticeship lines, but I think that now I can wield the metre, and it makes a meaningful mouthful of sound'.¹⁵⁶ One week after writing to Taylor, Southey told Coleridge that he had 'Boulainvillers [sic] life of Mohammed' and enclosed Francis Bacon's sardonic account of Mohammed's failure to move mountains.¹⁵⁷ Pleased that he had copied the passage, Southey told Coleridge that 'in so doing, I have found how to make this a fine incident in the poem'.¹⁵⁸

Coleridge and Southey continued to discuss Islam in their letters. While in Germany, Coleridge promised Southey that ‘Mohammed I will not forsake’.¹⁵⁹ However, in a letter to Coleridge, on 16 January 1800, Southey pondered over the reason for ‘the great superiority of Europeans over Orientalists’:

neither is Islam in itself hostile to improvement – at one period the Mohammedan courts were the most enlightened of Europe. religion [sic] I conceive only so far hostile to the ~~improvement~~ <advancement> of the species as an establishment is concerned, & the Mufti no worse than an Archbishop & certainly not so bad as the Pope [...] Perhaps Polygamy is the radical evil. the degradation of females in consequence of it is obvious [...] In Arabia women are not slaves, & the Arabs are mostly monogamous¹⁶⁰

It is no surprise, given the history between Coleridge and Southey on collaborative work that their joint venture did not come to fruition. Yet, this letter is significant in understanding Southey’s opinion on Islam as in 1800 he is praising the enlightenment of Islamic courts. In contrast to this view, and the sympathetic portrayal of Islam in *Thalaba*, by the time *The Doctor*, &c is published, Southey describes the ‘false prophet’ as an ‘Imposter [who] found it convenient to issue a portion’¹⁶¹ of the Quran and when he ‘wanted to establish an ordinance for his followers, or to take out a licence for himself for the breach of his own laws, as when he chose to have an extra allowance of wives, or coveted those of his neighbours, he used to promulgate a fragment of the Koran’.¹⁶² Southey’s disregard for Muhammed appears throughout the text but

are is most often seen in the interchapters. In Interchapter Nine ('An Illustration For The Assistance Of The Commentators Drawn From The History Of The Koran. Remarks Which Are Not Intended For Musselmen, And Which The Missionaries In The Mediterranean Are Advised Not To Translate'), Southey uses the history of the Koran to explain to his reader the chronological structure of his text. He begins the interchapter by writing

But the most illustrious exemplification of the difficulty which the Doctorean or Dovean commentators will experience in settling the chronology of these chapters, is to be found in the history of the Koran. Mohammedan Doctors are agreed that the first part or parcel of their sacred book which was revealed to the prophet, consisted of what now stands as the first five verses of the ninety-sixth chapter; and that the chapter which ought to be the last of the whole hundred and fourteen because it was the last which Mahommed delivered, is placed as the ninth in order¹⁶³

Southey is alluding to Muhammed's first revelation in which the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) visited Muhammed and revealed what would later become the Quran. During this first encounter, the first five verses of chapter ninety-six were recited. It is understood that after the initial revelation, a second encounter with Jibril took place when he heard the angel's voice and saw him sitting between the sky and earth. At this time, it is thought the first verse of chapter seventy-four of the Quran was recited, although some Islamic scholars argue that it was chapter sixty-eight that was revealed upon the second encounter. Southey goes

on to remark that Muhammed would dictate a portion of the Quran for his disciples to write down on 'palm-leaves or parchment' which was then 'put promiscuously into a chest. After his death Abubeker collected them into a volume, but with so little regard to any principle of order or connection, that the only rule which he is supposed to have followed was that of placing the longest chapters first'.¹⁶⁴ Yet, not all chapters were written down on palm leaves or parchment. In fact, most were memorised because speaking the Quran from memory was a common mode of teaching it to others during this time (it is still a common practice today among Muslims and elevates who does so to the title of 'Hafiz' or 'Hafiza').

As the Quran was revealed in disjointed chapters and verses over the course of twenty-three years, there came a point when it had to be compiled in written form to preserve the word of God. There have been several disputes whether this was done so during Muhammad's lifetime or whether the fragments were collected and arranged by Abu Bakr after his death. What is known, however, is that some seven hundred people that had memorised the Quran were killed during the Battle of Yamama in 633 AD. It is thought that, after this battle, Abu Bakr ordered the collection of the scattered written portions of the Quran. Nonetheless, most scholars agree that Zayd ibn Thabit and Ubay ibn Ka'b scribed, along with forty-eight others, verses of the Quran during the life of Muhammed. Therefore, a compiled text of the Quran would have existed before Muhammed's death and there would be no need for Abu Bakr to have rearranged the order. What Southey has done is told two parts of two different

tales and mixed them together to create the story within this interchapter. In order to believe Southey's version that Abu Bakr had arranged the order of the Quran, one would have to believe that the portions of the Quran that were memorised by those who died in battle in the minds of the Hafiz, are not in the Quran and Abu Bakr compiled the book solely from the few remaining fragments of palm leaves and parchment. What seems more reasonable is that the Quran was compiled during Muhammed's lifetime and if it was, then the arrangement would already have been in place as it would have been decided by Muhammed. The only possible justification of Southey's history of the Quran is if, as Sunni scholars believe, all aspects of the Quran were written during Muhammad's lifetime but were distributed amongst his companions. This being the case, Abu Bakr did have the task, after Muhammed's death, of finding all portions of it and compiling it into one book.

Southey finishes his chapter by stating 'But my commentators will never be able to ascertain any thing more of the chronology of this Koran, than the dates of its conception, and of its birth-day, the interval between them having been more than twenty years'.¹⁶⁵ This interchapter is included in volume three and published in 1835. His suggestion that the date of conception and the publication of the book is more than twenty-years apart and that 'the commentators will never be able to ascertain any thing more of the chronology' is not entirely true. In his interchapter, 'Aballiboozobanganorribo', Southey writes

Therefore I say again, Aballiboozobanganorribo, and like Mahomet, I say that it is the Sign of the Book; and therefore it is that I have said it¹⁶⁶

It has been mentioned in the second chapter of my thesis that the word ‘Aballiboozobanganorribo’ first appeared in a letter to Mary Barker in 1806 in which Southey writes

Senhora you mistake the orthography of Aballiboozobanganorribo. You write it as if it were two words making the first syllable an interjection & the remainder either noun or adjective. In common case the Ladies must be allowed their privilege of having but one rule for spelling & for every thing else, - that is – their own pleasure; & of treating his Magistys [sic] English with the same omnipotent caprice as they do his male subjects. But this prerogative does not extend to Aballiboozobanganorribo, which is no part of the Kings English but is music & music alone [...] but it may be better yet; - & till it is I shall say Aballiboozobanganorribo, & when it is better I shall say so still¹⁶⁷

Although it may never be known for certain, it can be speculated that the conception of ‘Interchapter II: Aballiboozobanganorribo’ could well have been in 1806. What must not be forgotten is that, though this interchapter was in Volume One and published in 1834, the title word appeared in 1806. This is during the time when Southey’s attitude towards Islam had started to shift. It is

easy to suggest that his later published works present a less than favourable insight into Islam but it must be remembered that some of the content of this chapter can be seen to be formed in 1806. Therefore, Southey is right in one way: establishing the chronology of his book between the conception and publication date will forever remain a theoretical task. What also must be recognised is that Southey has decided to keep within *The Doctor, &c* his views on Islam from 1806, despite it being published in 1834.

After the publication of his text, the word ‘Aballiboozobanganorribo’ was talked about in great detail. *The Village Magazine*, in 1839, remarked ‘this prevailing taste for Greek terminology would be easy to illustrate by numerous other examples equally recondite and not less singular, and all as unintelligible to the rural ‘millions’ as ‘heathen Greek’ to Prior’s Merry Andres or as even to the learned, the mysterious ‘Aballiboozobanganorribo’, the enigmatical Doctor’¹⁶⁸. While *Frasers Magazine*, in 1838, were not amused:

no doubt they might convey mysteries hard to be disclosed, though well understood by the initiated, who have studied for years. They will respond; but no lay the Doctor a bottle of blackstrap that he does not understand us, though we are quite sure he thinks he does. It is a very different thing from his fizzmaggiggery about Aballiboozobanganorribo. Let it amuse him. Here for the present is an end. Full of knowledge, full of poetic ability, full of reading, full of thought, full of honourable feeling, full of true patriotism, full of well renown, is Southey. But – for there is always a but – and when a

laureate is in the case; it should be a full butt – This Doctor
&co., is not the Doctor he wishes us to think him¹⁶⁹

In a letter to John Rickman, dated 18 November 1803, Southey writes ‘the Koran was a masterpiece of policy, attributing sanctity to its language. Arabic thus became a sort of freemason’s passport for every believer – a bond of fraternity’.¹⁷⁰ These views are echoed again later in this interchapter:

Whether the secret of the Freemasons be comprised in the mystic word above is more than I think proper to reveal at present. But I have broken no vow in uttering it. And I am the better having uttered it. Mahomet begins some of the chapters of the Koran with certain letters of unknown signification, and the commentators say that the meaning of these initials ought not to be inquired. So Gelaleddin says, so sayeth Taleb. And they say truly. Some begin with T.II. ; - T.S.M. ; - T.S. or I.S. others with K.M. ; - H.M.A.S.K. ; - N.M; - a single Kaf, a single Nun or a single Sad, and sad work would it be either for *Kaffer* or Mussulman to search for meaning where none is¹⁷¹

Just like in Interchapter Nine when Southey compares the chronology of his book to that of the Quran, in this interchapter he compares the Quran’s words of ‘unknown signification’ with this own nonsense word ‘Aballiboozobanganorribo’. Given the contemptuous regard in which Southey holds Muhammad in this interchapter, it would be easy to argue that he is merely mocking the religion. Yet, this is not the case. Southey’s immense

knowledge of Islam could not simply have been through reading the Quran. For example, he mentions the 'unknown signification' that 'begin some of the chapters' of the Quran. Here he is referring to the Muqatta'āt (which is the Arabic word for 'disjoined') which, within the Quran, signifies the combination of letters that feature at the beginning of twenty-nine, out of the one hundred and fourteen, surahs (chapters). They are spoken just after the word 'Bismillah' (meaning 'God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful'). Although the original significance of these letters is unknown, they have often been interpreted as an abbreviation for qualities of God or the content of the respective surahs. Southey is suggesting his interchapter ('Aballiboozobanganorribo') might be regarded similarly.

He goes on to state that

Mahomet himself tells us that they are the signs of the Book which teacheth the true doctrine, - the Book of the Wise, - the Book of Evidence, the Book of Instruction. When he speaketh thus of the Koran he lieth like an impostor as he is : but what he has said falsely of that false book may be applied truly to this. It is the Book of Instruction inasmuch as every individual reader among the thousands and tens of thousands who peruse it will find something in it which he did not know before. It is the Book of Evidence because of its internal truth. It is the Book of the Wise, because the wiser a man is the more he will delight therein ; yea, the delight which he shall take in it will be the measure of his intellectual capacity. And that it teacheth

the true doctrine is plain from this circumstance, that I defy the British Critic, the Antijacobin [sic], the Quarterly and the Eclectic Reviews, - ay, and the Evangelical, the Methodist, the Baptist, and the Orthodox Churchman's Magazine, with the Christian Observer to boot, to detect any one heresy in it¹⁷²

Thus, showing his paradoxical nature. According to Southey, on the one hand, the prophet is an imposter and promotes the Quran 'that false book'. On the other hand, he claims that the Quran ('that false book') is 'the Book of the Wise – the Book of Evidence, the Book of Instruction'.

Southey finishes his chapter by citing Thomas Fuller and stating that 'Curiosity [...] is a kernel of the Forbidden Fruit, which still sticketh in the throat of a natural man, sometimes to the danger of his choking [...] there is a knowledge which is forbidden because it is dangerous [...] abstain from Aballiboozobanganorribo'.¹⁷³ Therefore, I would argue that, by stating that the Quran 'is the Book of Instruction inasmuch as every individual reader among the thousands and tens of thousands who peruse it will find something in it which he did not know before',¹⁷⁴ Southey is insinuating that looking deep into a text or religion (in this case Islam) could be dangerous as it is the 'Forbidden Fruit' and is not what was meant for you. His views on Islam seem to echo what he believes of the established church; the core values of a religion are not bad in principle but it is the figureheads, who influence people's decisions and decide what they can and cannot do in their life, who Southey dislikes.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Southey called himself a believer in the truth of Christianity and had ‘hardened his sceptical attitudes towards organised religion’.¹⁷⁵ His views in the ‘Ante-Preface’ closely resemble the position he takes in his interchapters in Islam. The structure of *The Doctor, &c* is very similar to the Quran in as much as it was written in disjointed chapters and verses over the course of Southey’s life. This is reflected in the text in terms of plot digression and chapter structure. Southey warns his ‘Greek and Arabian translators’ in Chapter 1. A.1 that how

they render the word, that if they offend the Mufti or the Patriarch, the offence as well as the danger may be theirs: I wash my hands of both. I write in plain English, innocently and in the simplicity of my heart: what may be made of it in heathen languages concerns not me¹⁷⁶

He does just this (although ironically he does not write in plain English as he also writes in French, Spanish, Italian and Latin) and writes his views from his heart whether they are controversial or not.

Southey can be considered to be an anti-establishment figure of the time because, as this chapter demonstrates, he opposed the conventional methods of politics and religion (although he did have some questionable views regarding Catholicism and Mohammed). However, even though *The Doctor, &c* was first published in 1834, Southey decided to keep his ever-changing opinions, when it came to politics and religion, in the text. The character of Daniel Dove can be seen as a self-reflection of Southey who struggled with the established church

and embarked on a journey to overcome his former self-indulgence. He is not moralising in this text, but simply portraying his religious views with the intention of expressing the thoughts that shaped him as a person. The fact that the text can be read in several ways with double meanings mirrors his paradoxical identity, which is the result of his conflicting nature regarding these issues and presents itself throughout the text.

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- ³ Southey, *Letters*, 538.
- ⁴ Southey, *Letters*, 1850.
- ⁵ Southey, *Letters*, 12.
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- ⁷ Ibid.
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- ⁹ Southey, *Letters*, 24.
- ¹⁰ Southey, *Letters*, 3210.
- ¹¹ Southey, *Letters*, 47.
- ¹² Southey, *Letters*, 54.
- ¹³ Southey, *Letters*, 35.
- ¹⁴ Southey, *Letters*, 387.
- ¹⁵ Southey, *Letters*, 62.
- ¹⁶ This letter is held at Yale University and it has not been digitalised by *Romantic Circles*. This quote is from William Arthur Speck's biography *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (it is dated 6 May 1811 and was written from Southey to James Montgomery), 43.
- ¹⁷ Coleridge, *CL*, 85.
- ¹⁸ Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MSS English. Letter c.22. f. 191: Herbert Hill to Robert Southey, Lisbon, 24 January, 1795
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- ⁴² *Ibid*.
- ⁴³ Stuart Andrews, *Robert Southey: History, Politics, Religion* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 36.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁵ Robert Southey, *Sir Thomas More, or Colloquies on the Preface and Prospects of Society* (London: John Murray), xiii-xiv.
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- ⁴⁷ Anthony Wohl, 'Catholic Emancipation', *The Victorian Web*, July 6, 2002, <http://www.victorianweb.org/religion/cath2.html>.
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- ⁵² Speck, *Entire Man of Letters*, 209.
- ⁵³ 'Robert Southey to Henry Taylor, 5 March, 1829', Bodleian Library MSS Eng. Lett. d. f. 263.
- ⁵⁴ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 4.
- ⁵⁵ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 27.
- ⁵⁶ Thomas Carlyle, 'The Doctor, &c', *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 17 (January – June, 1838): 326.
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- ⁵⁹ Southey, *Letters*, 1204.
- ⁶⁰ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 8.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
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- ⁶³ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 41.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁶ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 5.
- ⁶⁷ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 42.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
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- ⁷⁵ Craig, *Robert Southey and Romantic Apostasy*, 202.
- ⁷⁶ Southey, *Colloquies*, 547-548.
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- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 203.
- ⁷⁹ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 188.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 217.
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- ⁸³ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 218.
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- ⁸⁷ Daniel White, *From Little London to Little Bengal: Religion, Print, and Modernity in Early British India 1735-1835* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2013), 89.
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- ¹⁵⁶ Southey, *Letters*, 460.
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Chapter V: The Story of the Three Bears: alternative explanations and the evolution of the tale

This chapter will examine Robert Southey's 'The Story of the Three Bears' and will argue that it was written with anecdotal political insinuations, religious allusions and scientific references. It will first be established that the tale is not a stereotypical literary 'fairy tale' as it has several idiosyncrasies in the plot, characters and themes. The story will be compared to a few classic fairy tales and I will use Vladimir Propp's thirty-one generic functions of a fairy tale to demonstrate that 'The Story of the Three Bears' does not fit this structure. The focus will then turn to the tale and how it has been situated within *The Doctor*, &c before offering three alternative explanations of how to view the tale within a political, religious and scientific frame of reference. Finally, I will examine the evolution of the tale over time, arguing that each transformation of the tale is shaped by the time period in which the changes were made, with the evolution of the tale reflecting the needs of society during each era.

5.1 A Happily Ever-After?

How does one define or distinguish a fairy tale? According to Jack Zipes, 'the literary fairy tale as [a] genre [...] distinguishes itself from the oral folk tale in so far as it is written by a single identifiable author; it is thus synthetic, artificial, and elaborate in comparison to the indigenous formation of the folk tale that emanates from communities and tends to be simple and anonymous'.¹ Marcia Lane expresses a similar view to Zipes on this matter. In her book, *Picturing a Rose: A Way of Looking at Fairy Tales* (1993), she states 'a fairy tale is a story

that has a sense of the numinous, the feeling or sensation of the supernatural or the mysterious. But, and this is crucial, it is a story that happens in the past tense, and a story that is not tied to any specifics'.² The Grimm Brothers' 'Snow White' (1812) embodies the classic elements that are found within fairy tales: the magic mirror, the poisoned apple, the glass coffin and the characters of the evil queen, prince and seven dwarfs. It has a single (in this case double) identifiable author. Thus, the plot is 'thus synthetic' while conveying the 'feeling or sensation of the supernatural or the mysterious'.³

Fairy tales can be considered to be part of folklore, but folk tales are not necessarily fairy tales. The difference between folklore and fairy tales is that the former are traditional stories that passed through generations by word of mouth and are usually myths or legends that were once true. By contrast, fairy tales have their origins in folklore but distinguish themselves from the oral tradition because they include unusual happiness (whether this is a happily ever after or romance) and are often stories that have origins within a European tradition (they can be related to children's literature also). Today, *Cinderella* - one of the most recognised fairy tales around the world - is considered to be a fairy tale because it has a 'single identifiable author' and a 'synthetic, artificial and elaborate' plot. However, the themes of *Cinderella* have appeared in folklore tradition before the first literary publication of the tale, and this is why it one of the few fairy tales that can also be considered to be folklore.

Rhodopis, an Egyptian tale, was first recorded by the Greek historian Strabo in first century BC. Generally considered to be loosely based upon a real person, it is the earliest (or the first) version of *Cinderella*.⁴ Since the publication of 'Ye

Xian' in the ninth century, from the Tang dynasty's collection of *The Miscellaneous Morsels from Youyang*, the story of *Cinderella* has appeared in various forms in many cultures. However, it was not until 1697, when Charles Perrault first published his version of the tale, in his collection of fairy tales titled *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*, that the story became popular in Europe. Influenced by the fairy tale writers of the late seventeenth century, in *Cendrillon* (Cinderella), Perrault's additions to the tale, like a fairy godmother, pumpkin carriage and glass slippers, inspired countless versions of the tale since then – the most popular being the Grimm Brothers' version in 1812 followed by Walt Disney's classic film adaptation in 1950. By modifying his version, Perrault's influence transformed the tale and its popularity rose. The tale evolved from being folklore to a fairy tale and is today considered one of the most popular in the world. *Cinderella's* trajectory from the oral tradition to becoming a fairy tale is similar to *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.

Mary Shamburger and Vera Lachmann have questioned the origins of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and, although they accept Southey wrote the tale (in printed form) within *The Doctor, &c*, under the title of 'The Story of the Three Bears', the tale itself is considered to be folklore. If the tale is regarded as being folklore, then this indicates that the themes of the story - just like *Cinderella* – have been around for many years preceding Southey's version. There are several Norwegian tales with similar themes, although they are from the oral tradition and were not written down. It was only when *The Doctor, &c* was first published - thirty years after the Norwegian tales - that the story became better known amongst the public. Like *Cinderella*, 'The Story of the

Three Bears’ began as an ‘indigenous formation of the folk tale that emanate[d] from communities’.⁵ However, it is now considered to be a fairy tale because, according to the definition by Zipes, it has a ‘single identifiable author’.⁶

While Southey is considered to be the author of this fairy tale, the version that is read today is not Southey’s original story. There have been two key aspects involving the characters that have been altered over time and remain to this day. The first is the age of the protagonist: Southey’s main character was an old woman whom the narrator labels a ‘vagrant’. However, this evolved into a little girl in Joesph Cundall’s 1849 version. Secondly, in Southey’s tale, the three bears were all male bears of different ages, but this was changed to a family of bears. The exact date of this transformation is disputed, Maria Tatar states that it occurred in 1852,⁷ while Katherine Briggs suggests that it was much later in 1878.⁸ *Cinderella* has managed to evolve into a fairy tale quite easily, largely due to Perrault, yet the plot of ‘The Story of the Three Bears’ is not ‘synthetic, artificial, [or] elaborate’.⁹ Therefore, this tale is a perfect example of a folk tale that is not a fairy tale.

5.2 The Functions of a Fairy Tale

It has been established that ‘The Story of the Three Bears’ is considered to be folklore with its origins embedded within the oral tradition. Since the tale’s publication in 1834, few critics have analysed its context and even fewer have focused on Southey’s version. Critics like Maria Tatar, Eugene Hammel, E.D Phillips and Bruno Bettelheim focus their reading of the tale on *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (the origins of which lie in Cundell’s 1849 version), not

Southey's tale. Maria Tatar, in her book *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales* (2002), notes that *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* is viewed as a 'cautionary tale that conveys a lesson to a child about wandering off and exploring unknown territory, and engages their attention by using the repetitive figure of three to reinforce the importance of safety and shelter'.¹⁰ Eugene Hammel's *The Myth of Structural Analysis: Lévi-Strauss and the Three Bears* employed Claude Lévi-Strauss' structural approach by examining the tale as a familiar folk narrative that existed in many versions. Focussing on a particular 1961 version of the tale, Hammel compares the story to the rules of binary opposites such as: Natural versus Cultural (bears and honey versus porridge, furniture and Goldilocks), large versus small (Papa Bear versus Baby Bear) and the active versus the passive (eating versus sleeping). He concludes by stating that the 'moral of the story is that people are not animals, that Culture is not Nature'.¹¹

Alan Elms, in his article 'The Three Bears: Four Interpretations' (1977), reviews Hammel, Bettelheim and Phillips's theories. Although Elms supports Bettelheim's Freudian reading of the story, he points out that 'The Story of the Three Bears' contains few of the typical elements that are found in folktales and does not resemble any tale-types.¹² Arguably, a standard morphological reading of the tale would consider it to be practically meaningless. In fact, as Elms points out, the tale itself can be regarded as so lacking in definition that one might even question its identity as a fairy tale (an uncertainty which reflects the view of many critics of *The Doctor, &c* as a whole). What seems to be lacking in recent years is research into the entire content and context of the original tale. On the one hand, Tatar, Bettelheim and Phillips all focus on the evolved version

of the tale, but do not offer any critical analysis of Southey's version. Elms on the other hand does discuss whether in Southey's version the story can be regarded as a fairy tale, but does not offer any critical analysis of the story.

Jack Zipes has noted that classic fairy tales have been re-released, 'earned millions of dollars and entertained millions of viewers'.¹³ Hollywood itself can be viewed 'as an industry and a trademark [that] is inseparable from the fairy tale' if 'we [are to] include live-action films such as *Splash* (1984), *The Princess Bride* (1987), *Pretty Woman* (1990), *Into the West* (1992), and the hundreds of sentimental films that rely on the fairy-tale structure'.¹⁴ Zipes argues that Hollywood is a 'symbol [for] a utopian fairy-tale destination, a place where the good fairy as destiny waits to transform unknown talents into known stars, where fortunes are made, where, like the enchanted forest, something special happens that brings genuine happiness to the true in heart'.¹⁵ This manifests itself within the Disney Princesses' franchise exemplified by classic films such as *Cinderella* (1950), *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). Yet, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* has never been given the privilege of being transformed into a Hollywood animation, nor has it been incorporated within the Disney Princesses' franchise. Arguably, this is due to the fact that the protagonist, Goldilocks, is a little girl and so, unlike older heroines of the fairy tales, it simply would not work.

In the original Brothers Grimm fairy tale 'Sneewittchen' (1813) (now known as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*) the heroine of the tale is seven years old. Yet, over time, the little girl has been transformed into a teenage girl. *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* has never been included in the utopian world of fantasy

that Zipes describes, because it does not – unlike the other fairy tales mentioned – have ‘magical transformation or miraculous event [that] brings about a satisfying, happy ending’.¹⁶ The reason for this is that Southey’s tale cannot be re-worked so that it displays the archetypal features typical of fairy tales. Like Elms, I believe that there are peculiarities within the tale that question the validity of it being recognised as a fairy tale. My argument is based upon two studies carried out by three pivotal folklorists, whose still at the forefront of many discussions today.

Folklorists have classified fairy tales in various ways over the years but the two most notable remain the Aarne-Thompson classification system (first developed and published in 1910 by Antti Aarne and later revised, initially in 1928 but supplemented further in 1961, by Stith Thompson) and the morphological analysis of Vladimir Propp in his pivotal book, *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968), which influenced theorists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes. Aarne’s theories, which were later expanded upon by Thompson, focused on folklore motifs rather than actions. More than 2,500 fairy and folk tales were categorised under this arrangement. However, the Aarne-Thompson system is not without its flaws. Propp criticised the Aarne-Thompson’s classification method on the grounds that it ignored the function of the motifs by which they are classified. He went on to observe that Thompson’s focus on oral tradition can sometimes neglect much older versions of stories that exist.

In essence, Aarne’s work ignored the intention of the motif’s actions. In contrast, Propp, identified and analysed the basic plot or action and recognised thirty-one generic functions that take place in sequence within a fairy tale after

the initial situation is depicted. He concluded that all the characters could be resolved into seven broad character functions in the one hundred fairy tales he analysed. However, Diane Sharon has pointed out that ‘not every function was present in each example’ but when it was ‘the functions that did occur followed a strict, predictable, sequence in each example’.¹⁷ It must also be noted that, although Propp specifically examined a collection of Russian fairy tales, his analysis has proven – over the years - to be applicable to tales from other cultures and countries. The one definitive modification in these cross-cultural tales is gender difference. Propp’s protagonist is a man who fights against the villain with a prize at the end (usually in the form of marrying a princess). This is the direct opposite of many Indo-European tales where the protagonist is female who must face an adversary to, ultimately, be with her prince.

Beauty and the Beast, *Snow White* and *Hansel and Gretel* all fit within the structure of the thirty-one functions and seven characters researched by Propp. These seven characters include: the villain, the dispatcher, the (magical) helper, the princess or prize and her father, the donor, the hero or victim and the false hero. The roles, however, can be distributed amongst several characters. For example, in Perrault’s *Cendrillon*, the fairy godmother acts as the dispatcher (sending Cinderella off to the ball), the magical helper (helping Cinderella get ready for the ball) and the donor (preparing Cinderella for the ball and giving her a magical object - in this case the slipper). Another example is Jeanne Marie Leprince de Beaumont’s *Beauty and the Beast*, published in *Magasin des enfants* in 1756. This tale not only embodies the seven characters but also personifies all of Propp’s thirty-one functions.

‘The Story of the Three Bears’ lacks the feature that define the fairy tale that have been established by Propp, ‘The Story of the Three Bears’ includes none of Propp’s seven characters and includes only two of his functions:

I. One of the members of a family absents himself from home

(Definition: *absentation*. Designation: β .)

1. *The person absenting himself can be a member of the older generation (β^1) [...]*

3. *Sometimes members of the younger generation absent themselves (β^3). They go visiting (101), fishing (108), for a walk (137), out to gather berries¹⁸*

The three male bears in Southey’s tale are from different generations and all walk ‘out into the woods while the porridge was cooling’.¹⁹ The evolution of the tale will be examined towards the end of this chapter but it is interesting to note that in all versions of the tale over time, this function applies. However, unlike other fairy tales, no other function or characters have been added to the tale after Southey’s version.

5.3 The Character Within

As the tale does not fit with the traditional structure of a fairy tale, ‘The Story of the Three Bears’ must be explored further, by a close-reading of the tale, by taking into consideration the political and religious perspectives of the man that wrote it. In doing so, I will argue that the tale is best understood as an experimental allegorical narrative. According to Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch, *The*

Doctor, &c ‘comprises a Gargantuan mass of anecdotes, ruminations, homilies, curious learning, topography, genre sketches, extravagant fancies, chit chat, plain nonsense, and innumerable synopses’.²⁰ For this reason, it has been assumed simply as a children’s story. Consequently, it may be understood independently of the text in which it appears. It is included in Chapter Twenty-Nine - 'Wherein the Author Speaks of a Tragedy For the Ladies, and Introduces one of William Dove's Stories for Children' - where it is introduced towards the end of the chapter as a tale that Uncle William had invented ‘intuitively as an inference from his inbystinctive skill in physiognomy’.²¹ Therefore, the tale is best understood in relation to the entire chapter of which it forms part, which discusses physiognomy, philosophers and Greek tragedy – all elements that are visible within the tale.

At the beginning of the chapter, Southey states

when subjects like [physiognomy] these are treated of, it should be done discreetly. There should be [...] a dispensation, not dissipation; a laying forth; a casting away; a wary sowing, not a heedless scattering [...] by handfulls, not by basket-fulls [...] bearing this in mind I have given a Chapterfull [...] and that Chapter is for physiologists and philosopher; but this Opus is not intended for them alone; they constitute but a part only of that “fit audience” and not “few,” which it will find²²

In this passage, Southey is asserting that the chapter (meaning 'The Story of the Three Bears') is for both 'physiologists' who like to study the appearance of humans and animals and 'philosophers' who generally study fundamental problems that are associated with reality, existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind and language. Peter Hamilton and Roger Hargreaves have noted that 'the idea that the human face carries indelible signs of the real character and attributes of a person is ancient. Referred to as 'physiognomy', it was first systematically discussed in a text [...] believed in the nineteenth century by Aristotle'.²³ Physiognomy became fashionable in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to many academics, especially due to Johann Lavater's work, *Essays on Physiognomy* (1789). As Lucy Hartley has noted, Lavater's work stresses that human beings' natural instinct is to judge one another. This was so long before the science of physiognomy took shape.²⁴ Lavater wrote that a man will

observe, estimate, compare and judge [...], according to appearances, although he might never have heard of the word or thing called physiognomy; [there is] not a man who does not judge of all things which pass through his hands, by their physiognomy; that is, of their internal worth by their external appearance²⁵

Hartley goes on to argue that Lavater's definition of the science of physiognomy 'is concerned with natural knowledge [...] which is instinctive and, as such, distinct from that which is learned or acquired'.²⁶ Therefore, anyone is capable of making an assessment as it does not require any special form of education or

class to determine the internal worth of an individual. As the popularity of physiognomy grew, nineteenth-century novelists such as Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy and Charlotte Brontë, used detailed physiognomic descriptions to depict characters. In Brontë's *The Professor* (1857), William Crimsworth judges everyone based upon the science of physiognomy:

I sought her eye, desirous to read there the intelligence which I could not discern in her face or hear in her conversation; it was merry, rather small; by turns I saw vivacity, vanity, coquetry, look out through its irid, but I watched in vain for a glimpse of a soul [...] Flamands they certainly were, and both had the true Flamand physiognomy, where intellectual inferiority is marked in lines none can mistake; still they were men, and, in the main, honest men; and I could not see why their being aboriginals of the flat, dull soil should serve as a pretext for treating them with perpetual severity and contempt²⁷

Physiognomy is broadly regarded as the physical appearance of a person determining aspects of their personal characteristics. Southey does just this when, in a letter to Barker mentioned in the second chapter of my thesis, he compares the likeness in appearance of the daughter of Mr Horton to 'the hero of the story'.²⁸ Southey was familiar with the work of Lavater. In a letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford in 1794, he writes

You ask me who is the translator of Anacreon. His name is Allen. He is of University College & I introduced myself to him at the Anatomy school because I much liked his physiognomy. You will be much pleased with him upon all subjects but one where he coincides with my heterodox principles. — what — abuse Lavater! My good friend Grosvenor, Mans countenance may be reduced to rule. The use of the muscles determines their character; hence the sneer of the satirist & the corrugated brow of the philosopher. The face is the exact map of the mind. But it is the best way rather to draw theory from practice than practice from theory in this peripatetic branch of philosophy²⁹

The character of Uncle William in *The Doctor, &c* had invented ‘The Story of the Three Bears’ ‘intuitively as an inference from his instinctive skill in physiognomy’³⁰ and ‘knew many of the stories which our children are now receiving as novelties in the selections from Grimm’s *Kinder und Haus-Märchen*’.³¹ Mary Shamburger has acknowledged that the Grimm Brothers’ book, *Kinder und Haus-Märchen* (1812), was in Southey’s large library. She has alluded to the fact that Southey had conceived the notion of ‘The Story of the Three Bears’ from the Grimm Brothers’ story *Schneeweißchen* (*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*), because of the many similarities between the two tales.³² For example, in *Schneeweißchen*, the king’s daughter (who is seven years old) escapes the death ordered by her stepmother and comes to a little house in the woods. The house belongs to seven dwarfs, who are not at home. However,

Schneeweißchen makes herself at home, drinking, eating and, after trying all seven beds, falls asleep on the bed of the seventh dwarf.³³ Similarly, when the bears come home in Southey's tale, they begin questioning each other: 'Who has been eating off my plate?'; 'Who has been sitting on my stool?'; 'Who has been picking at my bread?'; 'Who has been meddling with my spoon?'; 'Who has been handling my fork?'; 'Who has been cutting with my knife?'; 'Who has been drinking my wine?''³⁴ Unlike Southey's tale, upon seeing Schneeweißchen asleep on the bed, the seven dwarfs 'cried out with astonishment [...] and said, "Good heavens! What a lovely child she is!" And they were delighted to see her and were careful not to wake her'.³⁵ Even though Schneeweißchen has eaten their food and fallen asleep on the bed, the seven dwarfs are mesmerised by the appearance of the little girl. Yet, while both tales tell similar stories, 'The Story of the Three Bears' ends in an entirely different manner. When the old woman wakes up, she jumps out the window.

Southey does not describe her physiognomic appearance but, after the old woman jumps out the window, Southey offers alternative outcomes: 'whether she broke her neck in the fall; or ran into the wood and was lost there; or found her way out of the wood, and was taken up by constable and sent to the House of Correction for a vagrant as she was'.³⁶ In the nineteenth century, a vagrant was considered to be a person who was able to work but preferred instead to live idly, often as a beggar. The Vagrancy Act of 1824 consolidated earlier vagrancy laws, with the aim of removing undesirables from public view. The Act made it an offence to sleep rough or beg. If a person was found to be 'lodging in any barn or outhouse, or in any deserted or unoccupied building, or

in the open air, or under a tent, or in any cart or waggon' or 'going about as a gatherer or collector of alms' it 'would be lawful for any justice of the peace to commit such offender [...] to the house of correction'.³⁷ Both Schneeweißchen and the old woman are intruders in the homes of the dwarfs and the bears. Their actions are similar, if not the same and, like Schneeweißchen, the old woman only carries out the actions of a hungry, tired human being by eating the porridge, resting in the chair and sleeping in the bed.

The reader can be sure of one thing: the old woman does not steal anything from the house. The character of the old woman can lead many readers to suspect she is the villain of the tale because she has intruded upon the bears' house and helped herself to their belongings. Yet, it could be argued that Schneeweißchen (and her evolved character of Snow White) has also intruded upon the dwarfs' house and helped herself to their belongings. However, she is portrayed as an innocent figure, who the dwarfs judge to be lovely based on her appearance alone. Although it is not known why the old woman chose to enter the bears' house, her actions are no different to Schneeweißchen's actions. Yet the reader feels pity for Schneeweißchen after her banishment and understands her need to eat the dwarfs' food and rest in the bed. This is not the case with the old woman and this can only be due to the fact that, in addition to her appearance, Southey provides her with no backstory (which, incidentally, is one of Propp's thirty-one functions). Southey has deliberately created a character – a vagrant in this case – which society will judge on appearance alone because, as he states, the chapter is 'for physiologists' and 'when subjects like these are treated of, it should be done discreetly'.³⁸

Southey remarks that 'this Opus is not intended for [the physiologists] alone [for] they constitute but a part only of that “fit audience” and not a “few,” which it will find’.³⁹ Milton predicted that *Paradise Lost* would have a fit audience though few. This is another of Southey’s mocking aggrandising references to his own book. His use of scare marks are significant as the scare marks around the words ‘fit audience’ and ‘few’ would indicate Southey’s scepticism concerning the readers of the tale. The scare marks illustrate Southey’s irony regarding which audience this tale will find, as the philosophers and physiologists that he intended it for, will only constitute a small number because the ‘few’ it will find will become the fit audience. However, who are the few? Southey explains this in the chapter that follows.

At the beginning of Chapter Thirty, Southey uses scare marks around ‘fit audience’, but in this context they serve another purpose. He begins the chapter by remarking

O DEAR little children, you who are in the happiest season of human life, how will you delight in the Story of the Three Bears, when Mamma reads it to you out of this nice book, or Papa, or some fond Uncle, kind Aunt, or doting Sister; Papa and Uncle will do the Great, Hugh Bear, best; but Sister, and Aunt, and Mamma, will exel them in the Small, Wee Bear, with his little, small, wee voice. And O Papa and Uncle, if you are like such a Father and such an Uncle as are at this moment in my mind's eye, how will you delight in it, both for the sake

of that small but “fit audience” and because you will perceive
how justly it may be said to be

- a well-writ story,

Where each word stands so well placed that it passes
Inquisitive detraction to correct⁴⁰

Southey writes that the children will 'delight [in] the Story of the Three Bears, when Mamma reads it to [them] out of this nice book'.⁴¹ The scare marks are still around the words 'fit audience', although this now changes its context; a context which indicates that Southey has prophesied his tale's fate. Towards the end of the passage, Southey includes a quote from Davenport to intimate that the fact that the father and uncle will 'perceive how justly it may be said' that the tale is well written, with 'each word placed so well', that it 'passes' the minds of curious ('Inquisitive') people who belittle the worth ('detraction') of a person (Southey) and 'correct' it.

Before introducing the tale in chapter twenty-nine, the “author”, Dr Daniel Dove declares that he

flatters himself that it will be found profitable for old and
young, for men and women, the married and the single, the
idle and the studious, the merry and the sad; that it may
sometimes inspire the thoughtless with thought, and
sometimes beguile the careful of their cares. One thing alone
might hitherto seem wanting to render a catholic, which is to
say, an universal book, and that is, that as there are Chapters

in it for the closet, for the library, for the breakfast room, for
the boudoir [...] for the drawing room, and for the kitchen⁴²

Though, the author ‘flatters himself’ that the tale will be enjoyed by all readers - regardless of gender, age marital status, emotion or education – the narrator does admit that there should also be ‘at least [one chapter] for the nursery’, so ‘for their sakes I will relate one of William Dove’ stories [...] which never fails of effect with that fit audience for which it is designed’.⁴³ In this passage, Southey’s third and last use of the words ‘fit audience’ identifies the proper audience for the tale as children in the nursery rather than philosophers and physiognomists.

5.4 The Storyteller's 'boudoir' Words: explanation I

In Chapter Twenty-Nine, Southey declares that his work is adaptable so ‘that the lamb may wade in it, though the elephant may swim’ and that it will be found “very entertaining to the Ladies”.⁴⁴ Although there is disagreement as to the origin of this expression, it is generally attributed to either Augustine of Hippo (to him Scripture had something for all minds: ‘pools and shallows where a lamb may wade and depths where the elephants may swim’), or Gregory the Great (who described the Scripture as: ‘a stream in which an elephant may swim and the lamb may wade’⁴⁵). The meaning, however, is clear, that the Scripture is equally available to the light-minded (the lamb) and to the most serious (the elephant). Therefore, Southey ‘trusts that his work’⁴⁶ (meaning the tale) will be enjoyed by a similarly diverse audience. As has already been mentioned, Southey includes a quote below each chapter title or anecdote, within the text, to

signify what is to follow. The following is how the tale of the three bears is presented to the readers:

THE STORY OF THE THREE BEARS.

A tale which may content the minds

Of learned men and grave philosophers.

GASCOYNE⁴⁷

Southey cites George Gascoigne's most famous estates-satire poem, *The Steele Glas* [sic], in which Gascoigne criticises the corruption of several classes of society. The beginning of the poem summarises the story of Tereus, King of Thrace, and is significant in understanding Southey's intent for 'The Story of The Three Bears'

The Nightingale, whose happy noble hart,

No dole can daunt, nor fearful force affright.

Whose cheerful voice, doth comfort saddest wights,

When she hir self, hath little cause to sing,

When lovers love, bicause she plaines their greues,

She wraies their woes, and yet relieues their payne,

Whom worthy mindes, always esteemed much,

And grauest yeares, haue not disdainde his notes:

(Only that king proud Tereus by his name
With murdering knife, did carue hir pleasant tong,
To couer so, his owne foule filthy fault)
This worthy bird, hath taught my weary Muze,
To sing a song, in spight of their despight,
Which worke my woe, withouten cause or crime,
And make my backe, a ladder for their feete,
By slaundrous steppes, and stayres of tickle talke,
To clime the throne, wherein my selfe should sitte.
O Philomene, then help me now to chaunt:
And if dead beastes, or living byrdes have ghosts,
Which can conceiue the cause of carefull mone,
When wrong triumphs, and right is ouertrodde,
Then helpe me now, O byrd of gentle bloud,
In barrayne verse, to tell a frutefull tale,
A tale (I meane) which may content the mindes
Of learned men, and graue Philosophers⁴⁸

According to Greek mythology, Tereus seduced his wife's sister, Philomela. However, in order to hide his guilt, he cut out Philomela's tongue: 'Tereus by his name, With murdering knife, did carue hir pleasant tong, To couer so, his owne foule filthy fault'.⁴⁹ When the crime was later revealed, Tereus's wife, Procne, sought revenge by serving up her son, Itys, for Tereus's supper. On learning what Procne had done, Tereus pursued both sisters with an axe but the Olympian Gods took pity on them all and changed them all into birds. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (8AD) Philomela becomes the nightingale ('the nightingale [...] happy noble hart'), and mourns her loss of innocence by singing. Therefore, if Southey has written a tale that 'may content the minds of learned men and philosophers',⁵⁰ 'The Story of the Three Bears' could be viewed in the following manner: the old woman, like Philomela, has been robbed of her innocence and abandoned by society. It may be presumptuous to consider the little old woman to have lost her innocence as Southey writes of no such thing. However, we are told that when such subjects are 'treated of, it should be done discreetly'.⁵¹ Subsequent to this, Southey mentions Andrew Henderson's notion that his tragedy will be 'very entertaining to the Ladies, containing a nice description of the passions and behaviours of the Fair Sex'.⁵² The Doctor 'prefers not so wide a claim on his readers', but wishes his tale may also be 'very entertaining to the Ladies'.⁵³ He then includes a quotation from *The Steele Glas* [sic], from a passage giving the story of Philomela – a woman who has been raped and forgotten.

Southey offers no explanation of why the old woman enters the bears' home. This is evident when Southey, in contrast to *Schneeweißchen* where the reader

is told of her banishment causing the reader to be positively receptive to her character, does not indicate what has caused the old woman to go into the bears' home. By omitting details of the old woman's past, Southey is allowing his readers to form their own conclusions. Ironically, in letting the reader see the old woman however they wish to, Southey is again controlling his audience in directing them to a subjective viewpoint.

Philomela's song, once she has been turned into a nightingale, is one of mourning for the loss of innocence:

hath little cause to sing,

When lovers love, because she plaines their greues,

She wraies their woes, and yet relieues their payne,

Whom worthy mindes, always esteemed much [...]

This worthy bird, hath taught my weary Muze,

To sing a song, in spight of their despight⁵⁴

Therefore, Southey includes the quotation from Gascoigne to suggest a similarity between his old woman and Philomela, a woman who has lost her innocence. The portrayal of the old Woman is unfavourable as she is referred to as being 'bad' and helps herself to other people's personal belongings. Yet, as mentioned before, if her character is likened to Snowdrop's, then surely Snowdrop too should be considered a bad child who steals from others? The

words that Southey uses to introduce the old woman are crucial in understanding her character. He writes

and while [the bears] were walking, a little old Woman came to the house. She could not have been a good, honest old Woman ; for first she looked in at the window, and then she peeped in at the keyhole ; and seeing nobody in the house, she lifted the latch⁵⁵

It is clear that Southey has chosen his words carefully. This is evident in the following sentence: '[s]he could not have been a good, honest old Woman; for first she looked in at the window'.⁵⁶ The words 'could not' indicate the ambiguity in Southey's meaning. If Southey had intended to portray the old woman in a bad manner then surely Southey would have written 'she was not a good, honest old Woman; for first she looked in at the window'.⁵⁷ The significance of words – and the correct manner in which they should be used - is an important factor within *The Doctor, &c*, and one that Southey mentions within the very first chapter between an exchange with the Bhow Begum

[t]he Bhow Begum laid down her snuff-box and replied, entering into the feeling, as well as echoing the words, "It ought to be written in a book, - certainly it ought." They may talk as they will of the dead languages. Our auxiliary verbs give us a power which the ancients, with all their varieties of mood, and inflections of tense, never could attain. "It must be written in a book," said I, encouraged by her manner. The

mood was the same, the tense was the same; but the gradation of meaning was marked in a way which a Greek or Latin grammarian might have envied as well as admired⁵⁸

From this passage, it is clear that Southey understands grammar and would know exactly what he was doing by choosing the tense he does. Compare the careful distinctions between the tenses used to describe Mrs. Dove pouring tea that I pointed out in my third chapter. The old woman finds that it is only the Little, Small Wee Bear's belongings that are 'just right' for her: the porridge 'was neither too hot, nor too cold, but just right'; the chair that she sits on 'was neither too hard, nor too soft, but just right'; the bed that she sleeps on 'was neither too high at the head, nor at the foot, but just right'⁵⁹. Therefore, the old woman is drawn to the Little, Small Wee Bear's belongings, for they are a reminder of innocence - an innocence which she yearns to regain again. However, Southey ensures that, each time she is reminded that her innocence is lost forever. Each object of the Little, Small Wee Bear's is a constant reminder that – once taken from her – she cannot get her purity back: 'the little porridge-pot [...] did not hold enough for her'; 'and there she sate till the bottom of the chair came out, and down came her's, plump upon the ground'; 'when she heard the Little, Small Wee voice of the Little, Small Wee Bear, it was so shrill, that it awakened her at once'⁶⁰

5.5 The Drawing Room of Political Religion: alternative explanation II

When Southey accepted his position of Poet Laureate in 1813, he was severely criticised by his Romantic counterparts – in particular Lord Byron and William

Hazlitt – who accused him of betraying his political principles for money. Hazlitt, in his collection of essays *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), considered Southey to be ‘ever in extremes, and ever in the wrong’.⁶¹ Often torn between his sense of national responsibility and duty, critics have identified the tensions within Southey's poems to be the result of a man who suffered ‘the bafflement at the heart of a poet persona’⁶², who was conflicted and concerned with the social problems that arose during his time. However, by the time he had become Poet Laureate, Southey did not regard poetry to be his single literary vocation.

In 1813, he wrote a letter to his wife explaining that ‘yesterday after dinner I told the story of the Three Bears with universal applause’.⁶³ His wife, it seems was already familiar with the story. It was during this time that Southey was working on several essays regarding the social problems of the time. For instance, his essay - ‘On the State of the Poor’ - was written in 1812, where he noted the extent of poor relief and expressed his wish for national education to be the first thing that was necessary. Although he was attacked by several of his peers for expressing views that were unlike those he held as a youth, it is clear that Southey was genuinely concerned with the social problems of the time. This is evident in Southey’s poems ‘The Poet’s Pilgrimage to Waterloo’ (1816) and ‘The Lay of the Laureate’ (1816) in which Southey demonstrates and identifies the tensions that he faced between his position as Poet Laureate and his personal beliefs. In fact, in 1817, in a letter written to William Smith (MP), Southey ‘proposed a great programme of public works in order to stimulate employment’⁶⁴ – one century before John Maynard Keynes. The tale of the three bears can also be understood as reflecting Southey’s social concerns.

The most prominent feature within the tale is the importance attached to the number three. In many religions and mythologies, the number three is a special holy number. In the Christian faith, the Trinity consists of one God who is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. In Islam the number three is equally important. For example, a Muslim must wash their body in three motions during Wudū' (which is a representation of religious purity and must be done before formal prayers, handling and reading the Quran or after engaging in sexual intercourse). In ancient Greece and Rome, the Three Graces were three mythological Charites who were the daughters of Zeus. Thalia represented youth and beauty, Euphrosyne was portrayed as exhibiting mirth and Aglaea was the epitome of elegance. In similar fashion, in Norse mythology, the Three Norns represent the past, present and future (although they are also considered to embody destiny). They are typically associated with the notion that all three Norns represent the past, present and future (although they are also considered to portray destiny). Within a political and social spectrum, the number three reflects the estates of the realm. The estates of the realm are the social orders of the hierarchically conceived society which was established in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period in Christian Europe. The three estates consist of the Lords Spiritual (made up by the clergy, bishops and abbots), Lords Temporal (made up by the government, dukes, earls and parliamentary peers) and Commoners (everyone else). It could be argued that, within the tale, each of the estates is represented by one of the three bears. The Great, Huge Bear signifies the Lords Spiritual; the Middle Bear symbolises the Lords Temporal and the Little, Small, Wee Bear embodies the Commoners. The old Woman can be likened to one class that

characterises wealth and power: capitalists. In the case of the old woman, this represents the Bank of England and is similar to James Gillray's 'Old Lady of Threadneedle Street' (1797).

Each realm can be seen to mirror each bear and both share common features. The Lords Spiritual, who are made up of religious leaders, and can be viewed as the Great, Huge Bear, have a tongue that constantly scolds individuals (the porridge 'was too hot for her'); their demeanour is challenging and difficult to handle (the chair 'was too hard for her') and their minds are egotistical and conceited (the bed 'was too high at the head for her').⁶⁵ It is with a mind that considers itself to be high and above all else that the 'greedy church'⁶⁶ tells you what is morally right and wrong; making the decisions for you. The Lords Temporal, who consist of government, and can be reflected through the actions of the Middle Bear, have a speech that is cold and dispassionate (the porridge 'was too cold for her'); their views and opinions in parliament are interchangeable to suit their own requirements (the chair 'was too soft for her') and, unlike the Lords Spiritual, it is the Lords Temporals' feet that are egotistical and conceited (the bed 'was too high at the foot for her')⁶⁷ as they make the decisions for the country and lead society in a particular direction of life with their governmental decisions. The Commoners, who is the Little, Small, Wee Bear, have a voice that is correct in their meaning (the porridge 'was neither too hot for her, nor too cold for her, but just right'); their views are simple and accurate according to the necessity of life (the chair 'was neither too hard for her, not too soft for her, but just right') and since the bed 'is neither too high at the head for her, nor too high at the foot for her, but just right',⁶⁸ the old woman

rests her whole body down on it. The human body equals the Commoners as it represents the majority. However, what good is the body without the use of the head or feet? It is unmoving, attacking blindly without the use of the eyes or direction. Therefore, the body is controlled by the head (the church) and is directed by the feet (the government), leaving the commoners to be powerless.

It is in my opinion that the old woman represents the Bank of England. In order to establish this, it must be noted that behind most fairy tales, folklore or even nursery rhymes, there appears to be a political and/or religious connotation. For instance, the nursery rhyme *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* (1761) originally refers to the medieval wool tax that had been imposed in the thirteenth-century by King Edward I. *Rock-a-bye-Baby* (1765) alludes to the events preceding the Glorious Revolution. The baby in question in the rhyme is supposedly the son of King James II of England but it was generally understood to be another man's child (smuggled into the birthing room) so that there would be a guaranteed Roman Catholic heir, and there is an argument to be made that 'when the wind blows' is referring to Protestant forces 'blowing' in from the Netherlands. Peter Opie points out that the earliest recorded version of the words in print contained the footnote 'this may serve as a warning to the Proud and Ambitious, who climb so high that they generally fall at last'.⁶⁹ Donald Haasse and Anne Duggan have remarked upon the ways writers 'profit from the fact fairy tales are well-known narrative forms and play with them, using them to question artistic media, the resolution of high art and mass cultures, general roles, and political issues'.⁷⁰ In many ways, 'The Story of the Three Bears' is similar to nursely rhymes such as *Baa Baa Black Sheep* and *Rock-a-bye-Baby* as its meaning is not what it appears

to be on the surface. A famous nursery rhyme that has been altered to make a political point is William Hone's radical pamphlet 'The Political House that Jack Built' (1819), which was based on the nursery rhyme 'This is the House that Jack Built' (1755). Hone has adapted the nursery rhyme and used it to attack the authorities, the nature of the British government and to satirise lawyers, the church, the monarchy and the army.

Hone and Southey had a complicated relationship throughout their lifetime. In an article published in the 1816 edition of the *Quarterly Review*, Southey severely chastised radicals and reformers. In describing the reformist press, he writes 'the opinions of profligate and of mistaken men may be thought to reflect disgrace upon the nation, of which they constitute a part, it might verily be said, that England was never so much disgraced as at this time'.⁷¹ Hone, in an effort to embarrass Southey, published Southey's early radical drama, *Wat Tyler* in 1816 with an extended Preface criticising him for his intolerance and apostasy. However, in 1829, Hone, having heard Southey was writing a biography of John Bunyan, drafted a letter to Southey offering 'a packet of scarce material that might be of use'.⁷² He did not send the letter though. It was not until Southey published his work on Bunyan in 1830 that he included a warm and appreciative reference to Hone's works: 'I observe the name of W. Hone, and notice it that I may take the opportunity of recommending his Every Day Book, and Table book, to those who are interested in the preservation of our national and local customs'.⁷³

Hone recognised Southey's acknowledgement by writing to him to thank him. This led to the beginning of an exchange of friendly letters between the two,

discussing literary works as well as social and political events of the time like the ‘Captain Swing’ arsons. In a letter to Southey dated 24 November 1830, Hone remarked on the socio-economic breakdown, ‘the whole country must reform. We must all go back – give up our goods & trappings, make our homes homely, & live honestly’.⁷⁴ The next day, Hone wrote to Southey again but this time calling his attention to an article printed in *The Times* where one landowner (Lord Gage of Ringmer in East Sussex) agrees to meet with his discontented labourers but is ignorant of how frequently they are paid. Hone found ‘this sort of managerial negligence intolerable, particularly when coupled with a life of relative luxury’.⁷⁵ He concluded the letter asking what Southey’s views on ‘Fox-hunting landlords in farming districts’⁷⁶ were. Southey responded by stating that

in feeling, there is I believe very little difference (if any) between us. Certainly none about machinery & manufactures, nor the condition of the poor, nor the moral state of society in all its parts. Our difference would be upon very inferior things, tho as remedial means, of great importance⁷⁷

Continuing, Southey explained that, in contrast to Hone’s ‘austerity measures’, he

would have all persons paid liberally, from the highest ministers down to the lowest labourer;- justly and largely paid;- they would then each in his degree, spend in proportion;- & perhaps I might not regard some degree of

profusion on the higher ranks as an evil, because it affords
employment to industry & means of honest [gain] to thrift⁷⁸

Southey is not concerned by the 'Fox-hunting landlords in farming districts'⁷⁹ as long as their way of life has the effect of re-distributing resources down to the labouring classes. Both Hone and Southey agreed on several matters but their methods in approaching them were different. They did, however, concur on what would be the most desirable outcome. For Hone, the landowners' standard of living and style of management must be adjusted for the preservation of the class of landowners, which was a class that was facing an existential threat in the early 1830s. Southey, on the other hand, showed a great sympathy for the conditions of the impoverished labourers. Although Southey was considered a Tory with conservative views by many, the correspondence with Hone demonstrates that he had not entirely jettisoned the views of his more liberal younger self. In *The Doctor, &c* Southey maintains the view that he had expressed in a letter to his brother, Thomas, on 16 March 1797:

the Bank of England notes in circulation amount to 13
millions. their property to 17. so far well. but of that 17
millions 11 are due from government — & are in fact ~~more~~
worth nothing more than their annual interest. but where is
cash to answer these notes? because they had not cash to
answer the notes already in circulation, they issued these
pound notes. this is remedying the evil for the present⁸⁰

Max Beer has stated that Southey possessed an ‘anti-capitalist’ spirit and his *Letters from England* ‘might have been written by a communist’.⁸¹ It is with this in mind that I argue that the character of the old woman can be read as representing the Bank of England.

In February 1797, three years after France had declared war on England, rumours of a French invasion sparked panic and caused the Bank of England to be ‘inundated by holders of notes wanting to exchange them for gold [...] its reserves were reduced within a fortnight from £16 million to less than £2 million’.⁸² An order was passed to release the Bank from its obligation to pay its notes in gold – this was known as the ‘Restriction of Cash Payments’. Subsequently, ‘this action was seen by the Government’s detractors as outrageous’.⁸³ Richard Brinsley Sheridan, representing the Whig opposition, described the bank as ‘an elderly lady in the City of great credit and long standing, who had unfortunately fallen into bad company’.⁸⁴ On 22 May 1797, James Gillray published a cartoon entitled ‘The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street’



Figure 1

James Gillray, 'Political Ravishment or The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street in danger', 1797

Bank of England, *Quarterly Bulletin*

The cartoon depicted the Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger, 'pretending to woo an old lady, the personification of the Bank, but what he is really after is the reserves represented by the gold coin in her pocket, and the money-chest on which she is firmly seated'⁸⁵. She is dressed in a gown that is made of the new £1 and £2 notes that had been 'issued to supplant the gold coin in circulation'⁸⁶. As the old lady sits protecting the chest, she is fighting off the unwanted attention of the 'skeletal, freckle-faced, pointy-nosed Pitt'.⁸⁷

In the same year Southey's tale was published, George Nicol acknowledged the anonymous author of *The Doctor, &c* as 'the great, original concocter'⁸⁸ of the tale. He wrote 'The Story of the Three Bears' in verse, much to Southey's

delight and with his blessing. In Nicol's version, illustrations (with engravings) by Robert Hart accompanied the tale. One illustration (Figure 2, below) seems to bear similarities with James Gillray's 'The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street'

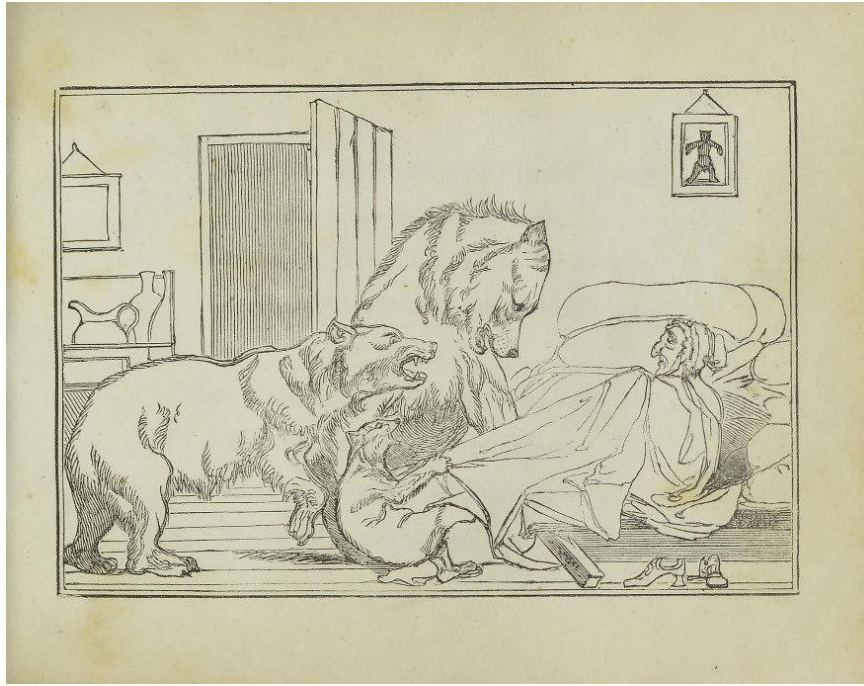


Figure 2

George Nicol and Robert Hart, *The Story of the Three Bears*, 1837

The illustration in Figure 2 depicts the final scene of the tale where the old woman is in bed and discovered by the three bears. The Little, Small, Wee Bear is trying to pull the bedsheets off the old woman with considerable force while the Middle Bear is growling at her. Both Figure 1 and Figure 2 can be viewed as reversing the role of the characters. On the one hand, Gillray's 'Old Lady' is fighting off the advances of the government, protecting England's money and gold, while on the contrary, Southey's old woman (representing the Bank of England) has been caught by the three bears after she has eaten their food, broken the Little, Small, Wee Bear's chair and discovered sleeping in his bed. In

Figure 2, out of all the bears, the Little Small, Wee Bear (the commoners) looks the most outraged and is the only one trying to pull the bedsheets off the intruder in an attempt to take back what he considers to be his.

Southey used the term ‘wooden spoon’ throughout his publications to describe someone born into a life that was considered less fortunate to someone who was born with a ‘silver spoon’. However, the wooden spoon could also be a reference to the Wooden Spoon Award at Cambridge University. From 1803, a wooden spoon was presented by students to a student who received the lowest marks in exams. In a letter sent to Reverend Herbert Hill in 1819, Southey described Walter Scott as ‘warm-hearted, friendly, generous creature’ whose ‘Fortune for once did well when she gave him the golden pap-spoon at his birth’, while he referred to himself as ‘of the wooden spoon’⁸⁹. In his text, *Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society, Volume II* (1831), Southey believes those who are ‘born to the possession of such wealth as might enable them to indulge their genius [...] are the rarest of God’s creatures’ (48). Yet, ‘for those who, with the same natural endowments, are born to the wooden spoon, and have to make their own way into the world, they soon are made to feel that the care of providing for immediate wants leaves them with little leisure’.⁹⁰ While in *Southey’s Commonplace Book*, he writes

As little is it to be expected, as experience has shown in all times, that the Frenchman will be tired of the fatigues and dangers of campaigning [...] war seems to be his element, and he cares not for what he fights: now he dies for the sake of crowning kings, now for the sake of dethroning them; to-day

for liberty, to-morrow for despotism. He goes to war like the horse, - the trumpet inspires him, and he runs with the Christians lancier against the Moor; the lancier falls, the Moor mounts him, and off he sets with the new master against the Christians. In the leaders the cause is different. Yesterday they ate with a wooden spoon, and to-day they turn up their noses at the silver in which their host serves them. Yesterday they were so low that they could not be seen in the dust; and to-morrow they are mounted up upon the shoulders of fortune to the height of honours and oriental pomp of riches, - fruits of the rapines and convulsions which call to Heaven for vengeance⁹¹

It is significant that Southey specifically mentions that the spoons in the house of the three bears were wooden.

The Bank of England (represented by the old woman) take what they want ('set about helping herself'⁹²). The most affected are the commoners ('the porridge of the Small, Little, Wee Bear [was] just right; and she liked it so well that she ate it all up), yet the Bank is not satisfied ('old Woman said a bad word about the little porridge-pot,'⁹³) and is greedy with a desire for more ('because it did not hold enough for her'). The only time Southey mentions that the spoons are wooden is when the three bears return to their home and find that someone 'has been at [their] porridge'⁹⁴. It is how the old woman has left the spoon within each bear's porridge-pot that is significant. The 'little old Woman had left the spoon of the Great, Huge Bear, standing in his porridge'⁹⁵ and when 'the Little,

Small, Wee Bear looked at his [...] there was the spoon in the porridge-pot, but the porridge was all gone'⁹⁶. Therefore, the old woman (Bank of England) has left the Great, Huge Bear's (Lord Spiritual) wooden spoon 'standing in his porridge'⁹⁷. The fact that it is standing indicates that the porridge is untouched and remains full. Arguably, the Bank's actions does not affect the church so the wooden spoon remains upright and is still in the same position in the porridge (which represents their wealth) as it is full. The old woman (Bank of England) has eaten all the porridge (wealth) of the Little, Small, Wee Bear (commoners) and left the wooden spoon within the pot. With no porridge left to hold the spoon upright, the spoon must lying towards the side of the empty pot. However, it is what Southey writes about the Middle Bear's spoon which is intriguing, '[a]nd when the Middle Bear looked at his, he saw that the spoon was standing in it too. They were wooden spoons; if they had been silver ones, the naughty old Woman would have put them in her pockets'.⁹⁸ It is this passage that indicates that the old woman represents the Bank of England for if the spoons 'had been silver ones, the naughty old Woman would have put them in her pockets'⁹⁹ symbolising the Suspension of Cash Payments between 1797 – 1821.

The old woman (Bank of England) has helped herself to everything in the house but most of all to the belongings of the Little, Small, Wee Bear (commoners). It is his porridge that has been eaten, his chair that she has broken and his bed that she sleeps in. When found in the bed by the three bears, it is the voice of the Little, Small, Wee Bear that is described by Southey as being 'so sharp, and so shrill, that it awakened her at once'.¹⁰⁰ Although the Little, Small, Wee Bear's

voice may be ‘little [and] small’,¹⁰¹ it is this bear (the commoners) that wakes up the old Woman, not the voice of the ‘great, rough, gruff’ Great, Huge Bear (Lords Spiritual) or the ‘middle voice’ of the Middle Bear (Lords Temporal). This indicates that even though the commoners may think they have a small voice, if any, or consider their views and opinions to be meaningless (illustrated visually by the little, small font written every time the Little, Small, Wee bears speaks), they do have the power to send the old woman tumbling out of the bed and running to the window, causing her to jump, if they should wish to.

5.6 The Library’s Natural Philosophy: alternative explanation III

Southey quotes Andrew Henderson’s extraordinary claim that his tragedy ‘Arsinoe’ in which Southey offers ‘the most convincing argument against incest and self-murder, interspersed with an inestimable treasure of ancient and modern learning, and the substance of the principles of the illustrious Sir Isaac Newton, adapted to the meanest capacity’.¹⁰² He subsequently claims that the ‘author’ of this work, Dr Daniel Dove, ‘prefers not so wide a claim upon the gratitude of his readers’ but (as mentioned previously) ‘he trusts that his work is “adapted to the meanest capacity” [...] like the author of “Arsinoe”’.¹⁰³ Therefore, it could be argued that Southey wishes to also adapt the ‘substance of the principles of the illustrious Sir Isaac Newton [...] to the meanest capacity’¹⁰⁴ or wishes his readers to do so. It is an argument that may not be agreeable to some as it would seem improbable to have Isaac Newton’s principles in mind when writing a story thought to be targeted towards children. Yet the actions of the old woman perfectly demonstrate Newton’s three laws of motion.

Sir Isaac Newton was a scientist, mathematician and natural philosopher. A key figure of the scientific revolution, he is widely considered as the most influential scientist of all time. Margaret Jean Anderson states that Newton not only discovered that sunlight is made up of light rays of different colours using a prism but, by formulating the laws of motion and universal gravitation, he is 'the greatest scientist of all time'.¹⁰⁵ The three laws of motion described in his *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) are three physical laws that together laid the foundation for classical mechanics. They describe the relationship between a body and the forces that are acting upon it, and its motion in response to these said forces. It is my argument that in the story, the old woman represents the 'body' while the 'forces' that are upon her are portrayed by the three bears. Firstly, it is important to describe these laws before explaining how they can be viewed within the tale. The following are Newton's descriptions of the three laws of motion (translated from Latin):

- 1) every body persists in its state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed on it (the law of inertia)
- 2) force is equal to change in momentum (mV) per change in time. For a constant mass, force equals mass times acceleration: $F=ma$
- 3) for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction: or the forces of two bodies on each other are always equal and are directed in opposite directions¹⁰⁶

The first law states that if the force acting upon an object is balanced then the acceleration of that object will be 0m/s/s ; objects at equilibrium (the condition in which all forces balance) will not accelerate. How does this relate to Southey's story? In the tale, the old woman tastes the porridge and decides that she likes the Little, Small Wee Bear's porridge because it 'was neither too hot, nor too cold, but just right'.¹⁰⁷ When the three bears arrive home they find that 'the little old Woman had left the spoon of the Great, Huge Bear, standing in his porridge [...] and when the Middle, Bear looked at his, he saw that the spoon was standing in his too'.¹⁰⁸ However, when 'the Little, Small, Wee Bear looked at his [...] there was the spoon in the porridge-pot, but the porridge was all gone'.¹⁰⁹ Although Southey does not state where the spoons are when the three bears go for a walk so that their porridge cools down, it is fair to assume that the spoons will be either in the pots, by the pots or in a drawer. According to Newton, an object will only accelerate if there is a net or unbalanced force acting upon it. The presence of an unbalanced force will accelerate an object – changing its speed, direction or both. Thus, on the one hand, if an object is at rest then it will tend to stay at rest. On the other hand, if an object is in motion it tends to stay in motion. This motion cannot change without the presence of an unbalanced force. The old woman acts as the presence of the unbalanced force, which cause the spoons (the objects) to change from being in a state of rest (resting in the pot, lying next to the pot or in a drawer) to ending up in the porridge pots. If the unbalanced force had not been there, then the objects will have continued in its state of rest and the porridge would not have been eaten. Therefore, this was the first indicator to the three bears that someone had been

in their house as they found two of the spoons sitting upright in the porridge pots, while the third spoon was lying in an empty pot.

Newton's second law of motion relates to the notion that objects of all existing forces are not balanced. It states that the acceleration of an object is dependent upon two variables – the net force acting upon the object and the mass of the object. The acceleration of an object depends directly upon the net force acting on the object and inversely on the mass of the object. Therefore, in terms of the tale, the object is the chair and the old woman is the net force acting upon it. Southey writes that the old woman 'sate down in the chair of the Little, Small Wee Bear, [...] till the bottom of the chair came out',¹¹⁰ which illustrates Newton's statement that, as the force upon an object is increased, the acceleration of the object is increased in the direction the force is moving it. Consequently, when the old woman's weight upon the chair is increased, the small chair breaks (as the mass of it is less than the woman's weight) and falls to the ground because that is the direction in which the weight of the old woman's bottom sent it. Moreover, Newton explained that as the mass of an object is increased the acceleration upon the object is decreased, so the greater the mass, the greater the amount of force needed. This is evident when Southey writes that 'the little old Woman sate down in the chair of the Great, Huge Bear, and that was too hard for her. And then she sate down in the chair of the Middle Bear, and that was too soft for her'.¹¹¹ Hence, the old woman cannot exert the same force upon these chairs as they hold a greater mass and she simply does not have the force that is required. As a result, all three chairs demonstrate that existing forces are not balanced.

Newton's third motion states that a force pushes or pulls upon an object, which results from its interaction with another object: forces result from interactions. Some forces result from contact (normal, frictional, tensional and applied forces), while other forces are the result of action from distance interactions (gravitational, electrical and magnetic forces). According to Newton, whenever objects A and B interact with each other, they exert forces upon each other and for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction: the direction of the force of object A is opposite to the direction of the force on object B. Moreover, forces always come in pairs. Southey exhibits the third law of motion in the bedchamber.

The scientific (true) meaning of the third law of motion: consider the flying motion of birds. A bird flies by the use of its wings. The wings of a bird push air downwards. Since forces result from mutual interactions, the air must also be pushing the bird upwards. The size of the force on the air equals the size of the force on the bird; the direction of the force on the air (downwards) is opposite to the direction of the force on the bird (upwards). For every action, there is an equal (in size) and opposite (in direction) reaction. Action-reaction force pairs make it possible for birds to fly.

The literary (tale) meaning of the third law of motion: consider the actions of the old woman and her interaction with the Small, Little Wee Bear. After deciding that 'the bed of the Great, Huge, Bear [...] was too high at the head for her' and 'the bed of the Middle Bear [...] was too high at the foot for her' she settles to sleep on the bed of the Little, Small Wee Bear, whose bed is 'neither too high at the head, nor at the foot, but just right'.¹¹² The old woman wants to

sleep. In order to sleep she requires a comfortable bed. Since forces result from mutual interactions, she is pulled towards the Little, Small Wee Bear's bed by a magnetic force (distance interactions); the size of the bed equals to her size. However, when the bears find the old woman in bed, it is only the sound of the Little, Small Wee Bear's voice – a voice 'so sharp and shrill'¹¹³ - even though it is a 'little, small wee voice'¹¹⁴ in comparison to the other bears – that wakes her (her equal). Upon hearing it, and seeing the bears, 'she tumbled herself out of the other, and ran to the window' (opposite direction). For every action, there is an equal (size) and opposite (in direction) reaction. Action-reaction force pairs made it possible for the old woman to sleep and escape.

Although it is not known for certain whether Southey intended for Newton's three laws of motions to be presented within 'The Story of the Three Bears', it is clear to see that an argument can be made for its existence in the tale as the actions of the old woman demonstrate each law of motion perfectly.

5.7 The Evolution of the Tale

For as long as fairy tales have existed, they have been written with the mind to teach and guide children through the difficult process of growing up. A fairy tale may be told to children to make them behave, help them learn valuable lessons or simply just to keep them occupied. However, in saying this, fairy tales have changed in form and content from culture to culture and from one period to another. They have changed ownership and, although each fairy tale may continue to keep a single core theme, it will be told differently, fulfilling different purposes, teaching different lessons and achieving different outcomes.

To put this simply: fairy tales have constantly evolved to reflect the needs of society. This process of evolution can be seen in the contrast between Southey's version and the first-known altered account of the tale by Joseph Cundall in 1849. I believe that by comparing the two versions it is possible to establish the changing values of the societies for which they were written.

The only aspect truly common to both Southey and Cundall's stories are the sequence of events: eating porridge, resting on a chair and sleeping in the bed. Although in both tales there are three bears and a protagonist, the age of the character has evolved over time. In Southey's version there are three male bears and an old woman the narrator calls a 'vagrant'. In Cundall's tale, the old woman has become a young girl because he found the old woman to be an unsatisfactory element within the tale. He explained his reasons for doing so in a letter dedicated to his children, dated November 1849, in which he claimed

The "Story of the Three Bears" is a very old Nursery Tale, but it was never so well told as by the great poet Southey, whose version I have (with permission) given you, only I have made the intruder a little girl instead of an old woman. This I did because I found that the tale is better known with Silver-Hair, and because there are so many other stories of old women.¹¹⁵

A new shift of attitude was beginning to develop, creating an expectation that a child's life should be one that ensured innocence and dependence, not experience and conformity. Philanthropists and social reformers who were motivated by their Christian values and their middle class ideals played a

significant role in bringing about change. Therefore, by changing the age of the protagonist, this tale could now be viewed as the Victorians' manner of promoting and implementing their middle class values to children in doing the 'right' thing. The tale now imparts a new meaning: a greedy little child is an intruder in a house and helps herself to the owners' belongings without their permission.

During its evolution, the name of the young protagonist's name changed several times: Silver Hair in the pantomime *Harlequin and The Three Bears*; or, *Little Silver Hair and the Fairies* by John Baldwin Buckstone in 1853; *Silver-Locks in Aunt Mayor's Nursery Tales* in 1858; Silverhair in George MacDonald's 'The Golden Key' in 1867; Golden Hair in *Aunt Friendly's Nursery Book* in (ca.) 1868¹¹⁶; Silver-Hair and Goldenlocks at various times; Little Golden-Hair in 1889¹¹⁷ and finally Goldilocks in *Old Nursery Stories and Rhymes* (1904). The significant aspect in all of these tales is the colour of her hair; notice as the years go by the colour of her hair begins to change from silver to gold. Bruno Bettelheim notes that the tale does not describe the young girl positively.¹¹⁸ While acknowledging that she is portrayed as being 'poor, beautiful [and] charming', he goes on to note that her hair is the only positive characteristic about her.¹¹⁹ This clearly demonstrates a typically aesthetic view that having blonde hair represents innocence, virtue and sweetness.

According to Elisabeth Gitter, golden hair has always been a 'Western preoccupation [but] for the Victorians it became an obsession'.¹²⁰ In literature, art and popular culture the image of a woman's hair had several different meanings and during these times, the Victorians considered hair colour to be

significant. On the one hand, it represented wealth, sexuality and power,¹²¹ while on the other hand, golden hair became ‘the crowning glory of the mythologized Victorian grand woman’¹²² and represented innocence and sweetness. Like Gitter, Galia Ofek argues the significance of golden hair within Victorian literature. She believes that the Victorians considered ‘the motif of golden hair [to be] attributed to materiality, unwomanly ambition, licentiousness and greed, all of which threatened the conjugal establishment’.¹²³ In *Middlemarch* (1874), for example, Tertius Lydgate assumes that the ‘infantine blondness’ of Rosamund Vincy’s ‘wondrous’ hair plaits are a sign of her ingenuousness. However, she entraps Lydgate by promising to be ‘that perfect piece of womanhood who would reverence her husband’s mind after the fashion of an accomplished mermaid, using her comb and looking-glass’.¹²⁴ Yet, on the contrary, Lewis Carroll described the character of Alice in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) as being ‘loving and gentle’, ‘courteous to all’, ‘trustful’, ‘wildly curious, and with the eager enjoyment of life that comes only in the happy hours of childhood, when all is fair and new’.¹²⁵ Alice is often characterised as being innocent, well-mannered and imaginative. So when John Tenniel was tasked with illustrating *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), Carroll oversaw his work and it was at Carroll’s request that Alice was given long, light-coloured hair.¹²⁶ Golden hair is also a motif in many fairy tales - a symbolisation for something precious and sacred - and a mark of special virtue. Interestingly, if you glance over the dates of when the tale’s title changes again, you may notice that the little girl is known as ‘silver-locks’, or ‘silver hair’ until 1868 (the predominant Victorian Era) when she becomes known ‘Little Golden-

Hair'. Therefore, arguably, during this time the girl's hair colour changed to symbolise her greed and materialistic nature for entering a house she should not have.

The transformation of the protagonist is not the only significant change to the tale. Southey's all male trio of bears became a family of bears: a father, mother and a baby. However, the date of this change is disputed. Maria Tatar indicates that this first occurred in 1852¹²⁷ but for Katherine Briggs this change took place in *Mother Goose's Fairy Tales* in 1878.¹²⁸ Ann Alston has suggested that 'the constant promotion of the ideology of family within society ensures the continued idealisation of, devotion to and reliance on the family unit'.¹²⁹ Alston argues that 'one of the ways in which this ideology is promulgated is through literature'.¹³⁰ However, while 'adult literature tends to celebrate the individual, children's literature is steeped in family matters'.¹³¹ This is particularly seen within fairy tales, so that the child can 'foster both the Darwinian and cultural concepts of family [and] to introduce children to and immerse them in a set of adult constructs and ideals'.¹³² With the Victorian period being 'one in which the ideology of family was at its height',¹³³ the tale of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* can be viewed as a moralistic story that advocates the importance of family demonstrated through the characters of the father, mother and baby bear.

Southey's words might confuse some but his tale, as well as the text as a whole, demonstrates what a writer ought to achieve: he has presented the words, information and facts and left it open to interpretation so that a reader may deduce from it what they like. He acknowledges this when he writes that his work may be "adapted to the meanest capacity;" that the lamb may wade in it,

though the elephant may swim'.¹³⁴ As argued in this chapter, the textual context that surrounds 'The Story of the Three Bears' prominently highlights what Southey meant; however, it is still considered to be filled with nonsense by critics like Bernhardt-Kabisch. In fact, according to critics, 'The Story of the Three Bears' has developed a meaning that promotes morals in doing the 'right' thing and it simply cannot or will not be viewed in any other manner. Arguably, it was during the Victorian Era that this thought had been implemented. As mentioned, many academics consider the tale to promote morals amongst children and show them the 'right' way to live life. Yet, what they are really doing is promoting a fake fad; they are promoting a tale that had been forcefully changed by the Victorians to better suit their circumstances and needs. In doing so, they have taken away Southey's original concept, and his meaning has been lost in the shadows.

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- ¹ Jack Zipes, 'Introduction: Towards the Definition of the Literary Fairy Tale' in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), 2.
- ² Marcia Lane, *Picturing a Rose: A Way of Looking at Fairy Tales* (New Jersey: HW Wilson, 1993), 5.
- ³ Lane, *Picturing a Rose*, 5.
- ⁴ Heidi-Anne Heiner, 'Introduction: Searching For Cinderella' in *Cinderella Taken from Around the World*, ed. Heide-Anne Heiner (SurLaLune Press, 2012).
- ⁵ Lane, *Picturing a Rose*, 5.
- ⁶ Zipes, 'Towards the Definition', 2.
- ⁷ Maria Tatar, *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales* (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 2002), 246.
- ⁸ Katharine Briggs, *British Folk Tales and Legends* (Abington: Routledge, 2002), 128-129.
- ⁹ Zipes, 'Towards the Definition', 2.
- ¹⁰ Tatar, *Annotated Classic Fairy Tales*, 248.
- ¹¹ Eugene Hammel, *The Myth of Structural Analysis: Lévi-Strauss and the Three Bears* (Boston: Addison-Wesley, 1972), 14.
- ¹² Alan Elms, 'The Three Bears': Four Interpretations', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 90, no. 357 (July – September 1977), 257, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/539519>.
- ¹³ Jack Zipes, *Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales, Children, and the Culture Industry* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 1.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Zipes, *Happily Ever After*, 2.
- ¹⁶ Zipes, *Happily Ever After*, 1.
- ¹⁷ Diane Sharon, *Patterns of Destiny: Narrative Structures of Foundation and Doom in the Hebrew Bible* (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 22.
- ¹⁸ Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin: University Texas Press 1968), 26. The use of italics is as exactly presented in Propp's original work.
- ¹⁹ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 328.
- ²⁰ Bernhardt-Kabisch, *Robert Southey*, 171.
- ²¹ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 326.
- ²² Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 326-327.
- ²³ Roger Hargreaves and Peter Hamilton, *The Beautiful and the Damned: the creation of identity in nineteenth century photography* (Hampshire: Lund Humphries, 2001), 63.
- ²⁴ Lucy Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2.

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- ²⁵ Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy* (London: B Blake, 1840), 17.
- ²⁶ Hartley, *Physiognomy*, 2.
- ²⁷ Charlotte Brontë, *The Professor* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994), 43.
- ²⁸ Southey, *Letters*, 1512.
- ²⁹ Southey, *Letters*, 89.
- ³⁰ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 326.
- ³¹ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 28.
- ³² Mary Shamburger and Vera Lachmann, 'Southey and 'The Three Bears'', *The Journal of American Folklore* 59, no. 234 (October – December, 1946), 401.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Grimm Brothers, *Fairy Tales, Brothers Grimm* (Kent: Hodder & Stoughton. 1979), 13.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 329.
- ³⁷ Richard Burn, *The Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer* (London: S. Sweet, 1837), 121-122.
- ³⁸ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 326-327.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 330.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 327.
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 327.
- ⁴⁵ Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1927), 80.
- ⁴⁶ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 327.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ George Gascoigne, *The Steel Glass*.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 327.
- ⁵¹ Ibid, 326.
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴ Gascoigne, *The Steel Glass*.
- ⁵⁵ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 328.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 1.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid, 328.
- ⁶⁰ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 329.

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- ⁶¹ Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age*, 79.
- ⁶² Storey, *Robert Southey*, 94.
- ⁶³ Southey, *Letters*, 2299.
- ⁶⁴ Ronald Walter Harris, *Romanticism and the social order 1780-1830* (Devon: Blandford Publishing, 1969), 268.
- ⁶⁵ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 328.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 8.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid*.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁶⁹ Peter Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 61.
- ⁷⁰ Anne Duggan and Donald Hasse, *Folktales and Fairy Tales: traditions and texts from around the world* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2016), 250.
- ⁷¹ Robert Southey, 'Cobbett's Political Register', *The Quarterly Review*, 16 (October. 2016 – January, 1817): 225.
- ⁷² William Hone, 'William Hone to Robert Southey, 23 April, 1829', *The William Hone Correspondence*:
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- ⁷³ Robert Southey, *The Pilgrim's Progress: With a Life of John Bunyan* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1837), 72.
- ⁷⁴ William Hone, 'William Hone to Robert Southey, 24 November, 1830', *The William Hone Correspondence*:
<http://honearchive.org/biographical/correspondence-home.html>.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid*.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid*.
- ⁷⁷ Robert Southey, 'Robert Southey to William Hone, 26 November, 1830', *The William Hone Correspondence*,
<http://honearchive.org/biographical/correspondence-home.html>.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁷⁹ Hone, 'William Hone to Robert Southey, 24 November, 1830'.
- ⁸⁰ Southey, *Letters*, 206.
- ⁸¹ Max Beer, *A History of British Socialism* (London: Routledge, 2002), 123.
- ⁸² John Keyworth, 'The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street' in *The Quarterly Bulletin* (Accessed: April 2016): 138,
<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Documents/quarterlybulletin/2013/qb130205.pdf>.
- ⁸³ *Ibid*.
- ⁸⁴ Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The New Annual Register: Or General Repository of History, Politics, and Literature for the year 1797* (London: G. G and J. Robinson), 172.

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- ⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸⁸ Iona and Peter Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Non Basic Stock Line, 1980), 199.
- ⁸⁹ Southey, *Letters*, 3273.
- ⁹⁰ Robert Southey, *Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society, Volume II* (London, John Murray, 1831), 49.
- ⁹¹ Robert Southey, *Southey's Common-place Book* (London: Longmans, Greens & Co, 1876), 287.
- ⁹² Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 327
- ⁹³ Ibid.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid, 328.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid, 328.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 329.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰² Ibid, 327.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁵ Margaret Anderson, *Issac Newton: the greatest scientist of all time* (New Jersey: Enslow Publishers, 2008), 1.
- ¹⁰⁶ NASA. *Newton's Laws of Motion*, 2010. Accessible URL: <http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/K-12/airplane/newton.html>.
- ¹⁰⁷ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 328.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 329.
- ¹¹⁰ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 328.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹¹² Ibid.
- ¹¹³ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid, 329.
- ¹¹⁵ Iona and Peter Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales*, 200.
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁷ Katharine Briggs, *British Folk Tales and Legends* (London: Routledge, 2002), 128-29.

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- ¹¹⁸ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1976), 215.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid.
- ¹²⁰ Elisabeth Gitter, 'The Power of Women's Hair in the Victorian Imagination'. *PMLA*, 99, no. 5 (October 1984): 936.
- ¹²¹ Ibid.
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- ¹²³ Galia Ofek, *Representations of hair in Victorian literature and culture* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 190.
- ¹²⁴ George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 435.
- ¹²⁵ Martin Gardner, *The Annotated Alice* (New York: Random Penguin House), 25-6.
- ¹²⁶ Jenny Woolf, *The Mystery of Lewis Carroll* (New York, St Martin's Press, 2010), 169.
- ¹²⁷ Tatar, *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales*, 246.
- ¹²⁸ Briggs, *British Folk Tales*, 128-29.
- ¹²⁹ Ann Alston, *The Family in English Children's Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 8.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid.
- ¹³¹ Ibid.
- ¹³² Ibid.
- ¹³³ Ibid, 9.
- ¹³⁴ Southey, *The Doctor, &c*, 327.

Conclusion: ‘Everything and Nothing’

In this thesis, I have argued that *The Doctor, &c* was written with early postmodern traits and includes autobiographical elements reflecting Southey’s opinions during his life. As I have demonstrated, the text can be considered to be an experimental composition and, exploring this idea, I have shown that links can be formed between the text and Southey’s views. The central argument throughout my thesis explores the idea that Southey’s digressions within the text constitute a self-portrait of Southey as he was from the time when he began writing *The Doctor, &c* until his death, while the plot that feeds into the narrative demonstrates postmodern characteristics.

Furthermore, this thesis has shown that despite Southey’s religious and political views becoming progressively conservative as he aged, he still continued to be a radical experimental writer in his literary endeavours. William Hazlitt famously remarked that Southey ‘wooed Liberty as a youthful lover, but it was perhaps more as a mistress than a bride; and he has since wedded with an elderly and not very reputable lady called Legitimacy’.¹ It is this notion that is typically associated with Southey – the radical youth who became a conservative traitor. Southey, as argued in my fourth chapter, was already showing signs of personal restraint and conservative qualities during his years at Oxford under the guidance of Seward. Likewise, Southey was still continuing to write as a radical experimental writer as he aged even as his political thinking became even more conservative.

The Doctor, &c has never been allowed the stature of Wordsworth's *Prelude* or Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*. One reason for this is that it had been viewed as a fictional narrative rather than a disguised autobiography. Another, is that its eccentricities have been explained as a symptom of Southey's deteriorating mental health. Southey's health began to decline in 1837 although he had sunk into a state of depression long before this after his wife, Edith, became clinically depressed and violent. Writing to Grosvenor Bedford on 2 October 1834, Southey explained 'I have been parted from my wife by something worse than death. Forty years has she been the light of my life; and I have left her this day in a lunatic asylum'.² In the years that followed, Southey looked after Edith until her death on 16 November 1837. During this time, in addition to tending to his wife, Southey's work schedule was demanding. He not only published the first three volumes of *The Doctor, &c* (while editing the fourth) but also the first two volumes of *The Life and Works of William Cowper* (1835-1836), edited *Lives of the British Admirals* (1833-1840) and undertook the task of revising all his poetry for a new edition to be published by Longman.

Even though Southey fully anticipated Edith's death, it affected him more than he had expected. During her illness, Southey showed signs of physical decline (he suffered from irritable rashes on his arms and thighs) with his brother, Henry, urging him to take a break from attending Edith for his own health's sake. In the years after her death, Southey 'engaged in walking than at any other time and therefore [spent] more time out of doors'³ than he normally would. As a result, he felt less inclined to write and began to neglect his literary labours.

He remarked to Henry: 'I take never less than four miles for my daily dose, and twice a week make a morning's walk of from ten to twelve or fourteen without any fatigue. But my spirits give way under a perpetual sense of loneliness'.⁴ His loneliness and despair led him to Caroline Bowles. In his letters to her in 1837, Southey referred to the period in which Edith became clinically depressed as being 'miserable' but told her that 'it is not too late. If you do not take me I shall assuredly break down'.⁵ Surprisingly, Caroline did not notice a deterioration in Southey's mental or physical condition. Yet, he was aware that his memory was not the same.

Writing to Henry on 26 August 1838, Southey asked him to 'discharge a commission which I forgot to discharge myself, my wits having taken of late to the unprofitable practice of wool-gathering'.⁶ His friends had also noticed signs of senility. Crabb Robinson wrote in his diary, '[n]one of us in setting out were aware to how great a degree the mind of the Laureate was departed. He had lost all power of conversation and seldom spoke'.⁷ His son, Cuthbert, observed a difference too

I could not fail to perceive a considerable change in him from the time we last travelled together – all his movements were slower, he was subject to frequent fits of absence, and there was an indecision in his manner, and an unsteadiness in his step, which was wholly unusual with him. The point in which he seemed to me to fail most was, that he continually lost his way, even in the hotels we stopped at; and [...] although he himself affected to make light of it, and laughed at his own

mistakes, he was evidently sometimes painfully conscious of his failing memory in this respect⁸

Despite the concerns of loved ones, the journal Southey kept did not show any signs of failing mental capabilities. The confusion that his companions had witnessed did not, at this point in time at least, 'extend to his ability to express coherent thoughts on paper, either in the journal or in letters that he wrote while on his travels'.⁹ However, after 6 September 1839 his life can no longer be documented from his own words, instead inferences must be drawn from the accounts of his family and friends. It is not known whether Southey succumbed to Alzheimer's, or another form of dementia. He died on 21 March 1843, apparently of typhoid.¹⁰

Contrary to Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch's belief that Southey's dementia explains why *The Doctor, &c* is 'plain nonsense',¹¹ he was still actively engaging in editing and writing his work in the years 1834-1838, and doing so while expressing coherent thoughts. What can be determined from Southey's ill-health is the strong conviction that his depression and dementia has no relevance for the text and how it should be viewed especially since, as my study has shown, Southey began work on the text as early as 1807. However, even if his mental illness did 'affect' it, the text is a representation of Southey's mind and life. So if he was writing *The Doctor, &c* during the height of his dementia, it would be written in the true likeness of what his mind was experiencing during that time, thus underlining my view that there are autobiographical elements to the text.

Why should a text be disregarded and considered nonsense because reviews suggesting that the work was a symptom of mental illness? When the text was first published anonymously, with the exception of Lockhart's review in 1836, there were no other reviews suggesting that the author had to have had a mental illness in order to produce such a work. On the contrary, as my first chapter states, it was thought of as a work of 'eccentricity'¹² that 'excited great attention in America as well as England'.¹³ Even after the author was revealed to be Southey, the text was still seen as a series of 'miscellaneous articles' that he had put together 'in his old curiosity-shop'.¹⁴ It is only with Southey's revival in recent years that his failing health is considered to impact the text, but it would be illogical to dismiss the text as being nonsensical simply because it is not understood.

My thesis has established two fundamental features to Southey's text. Firstly, the text does contain autobiographical elements with postmodern characteristics. Secondly, the plot of Doctor Daniel Dove, however infrequently it may seem to appear in the text, was not the creation of Southey, or even Coleridge. It should be acknowledged that this story was first seen in Christopher Smart's *Midwife* – a point that is often unnoticed. By tracing the story's origins back to Smart, comparisons between the two texts can begin to be made. In both texts, Southey and Smart use the narrative as a platform to publicise their political views whether this is through Nobs's skinless corpse in regards to wool policy or the representation of each character in 'The Story of the Three Bears'. As I have shown, the only direct link between both texts comes through Coleridge. Given

their collaborative history, and by examining Coleridge's and Southey's personal correspondence, there is undoubtedly no question that *The Doctor, &c* is the end product of several collapsed projects that the two friends had formulated.

The neglect that Southey's text has suffered is due to three contributing factors. Firstly, the way Warter published the text after Southey's death. For the few, it is celebrated but, for the majority, combining all seven volumes into a single collected volume has made the text seem inaccessible. Secondly, because the text was published during Southey's 'mad' years it has been dismissed as 'nonsense'.¹⁵ Thirdly, Southey's reputation as a political conservative has distracted attention from his radical experimental writing. Fourthly, the text is considered to be an assortment of unrelated elements and topics that appear to make no sense. Yet, as my thesis has proved, this is not the case. *The Doctor, &c* is the text that most fully reveals Southey as, in Speck's own words, a 'complete man of letters'.¹⁶ Its kaleidoscopic structure gives him the opportunity to express himself in every form and on every topic; poetry, music, history, biography, autobiography, theology, religion and politics. Simply put, in Southey's own words, it is the experiment of an 'old man with a boy's heart'.¹⁷

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- ¹ William Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age* (Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 173.
- ² Charles Cuthbert Southey, *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, ed. Charles Cuthbert Southey (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans: 1849-1850), vi, 244.
- ³ Robert Southey, *The Letters of Robert Southey to John May 1797 to 1838*, ed. Charles Ramos (Austen: Jenkins Publishing Company, 1976): 288 Robert Southey to John May 22 May 1838.
- ⁴ Bodleian Library, MS Don. d.s.f.359: RS to Henry Southey, 4 June 1838.
- ⁵ Charles Cuthbert Southey, *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, ed. Charles Cuthbert Southey (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1849-1850), vi. 373-4.
- ⁶ Keswick Museum, RS to Henry Southey, 26 Aug 1838.
- ⁷ *Henry Crabb Robinson on Books and their Writers*, ed. Edith J. Morley (3 vols, London, 1938), ii, 554, 556.
- ⁸ Cuthbert Charles Southey *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1855), 373.
- ⁹ William Arthur Speck, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 244.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, 253.
- ¹¹ Ernest Bernhardst-Kabisch, *Robert Southey* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co, 1977), 171.
- ¹² Ralph Griffiths and George Edward Griffiths, 'The Doctor'. *The Monthly Review*. 1, no.3 (March, 1834): 353-369.
- ¹³ Edgar Allen Poe, 'The Doctor': *Southern Literary Messenger* 2 (December, 1835): 506.
- ¹⁴ *New York Times*, December 8, 1878.
- ¹⁵ Bernhardst-Kabish, *Robert Southey*, 171.
- ¹⁶ Speck, *Entire Man of Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), xvi.
- ¹⁷ This letter is currently held at Yale University in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. I have cited the source of this letter from: William Arthur Speck, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 222.

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