



Robert Southey's 'old curiosity-shops': 'Common-placing' and Paratext

Ourania Chatsiou
Swansea University

Common-place books and paratext

This essay sets out to establish the significance of Southey's *Common-place Book* (1849-51) and *The Doctor* (1834-47) in explicating his near obsessive use of paratext, and, by extension, his systematic inclination towards a digressive and fragmentary narrative style. In an attempt to identify Southey's writing practice, especially his methods for annotating his orientalist romantic poems,¹ I will explore the connections between his practices of 'common-placing' and annotating, and introduce aesthetic and stylistic parallels between his common-place books/notebooks and his literary paratext. Finally, I will discuss the theoretical implications of *The Doctor*'s abundance in paratextual material and its peculiarly elusive structure and generic status, demonstrating a 'playful hybridity [and an] ability to be novel and common-place book, everything and nothing'.²

In 1821, Southey confessed: 'I have a dangerous love of detail, and a desire of accuracy, which is much more expensive (both in materials and time) than I ought to afford'.³ Southey's reading was immense and he had a passion for facts. Retaining aspects of the eighteenth-century antiquarian tradition, he was an exponent of the late-enlightenment deification of education and learning. His thirst for knowledge was imperial in the Saidian sense, transcending in scope the familiar European boundaries and embracing and domesticating the exotic Asian and native American cultures. His precious library comprised 14,000 volumes. Thomas De Quincey compared it to that of Wordsworth's:

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 significant 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 this room styled, and not ostentatiously (for it really merited that name), the Library.⁴

The same also recounted that, although 'Wordsworth lived in the open air, Southey [lived] in his library, which Coleridge used to call his wife' (De Quincey, p. 219).

Southey's *Common-place Book*, very much like his literary notes, is testimony to the industry, the perseverance, and the extensive research of the learned author,⁵ the 'only existing entire man of letters'.⁶ It '[gives] us at once an idea of the 'immense quarries' in which the author must have laboured'.⁷ It includes a wealth of details and

curiosities, rather than commonplaces, on a range of subjects varying from civil, religious, literary and natural history, to travel literature, topography, socio-political analysis, miscellaneous anecdotes and gleanings. It was published posthumously, between 1849-51 by Longmans, in four volumes, all of which were edited by his son-in-law, John Wood Warter. Despite the fact that, as we will see further down, Southey wanted his profligate notes to see the light of day, it is important to establish that the four series of his *Common-place Books*, as we have them, do not reflect Southey's own choice of notes. They are in fact the result of Warter's own collations of Southey's notes from his common-place books and notebooks, and therefore do not have the same 'textual' authority as any of the lifetime versions of Southey's poetry or prose. Diego Saglia vigilantly observes the composite nature of Southey's *Common-place Book* due to Warter's editorial interventions, and rightly acknowledges the inherent difficulties in dealing with it from a scholarly/editorial perspective:

When dealing with Robert Southey's *Common-place Book*, one should bear in mind that this was [...] edited by John Wood Warter, 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 intervention.⁸

It is also crucial to clarify at this point that Southey's 'common-place books' and 'notebooks' will be used interchangeably throughout the essay, because they are almost certainly the same thing. Central to the prototypical concept and use of the common-place book was the mimetic practice of transcription. The earliest precedents of the common-place book were the '*florilegia* (flower collections)', or '*flores philosophorum*', which were essentially 'collections of quotations from classical authors, [...] entitled "flowers"'. Analogously, in the early-romantic period and the Renaissance, the common-place books were reference-resources including 'countless [copied] *sententiae* by sacred and secular authors, apophthegmata, similitudes, adages, *exempla*, emblems, hieroglyphs, and fables'.⁹ As Ann Moss observes, however, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the burgeoning printed book industry, the growth and expansion of science and knowledge, the professionalization of knowledge instigated by the formation of an intelligentsia specializing on specific disciplines, the strictures set by the introduction of the copyright law and the consequent hostility against plagiarism, and, finally, the changing concept of authorship brought about the 'redundancy' and 'atrophy' of the earlier concept of the common-place book. The mimetic training of the common-place book 'copiers' and selective readers declined as the individual genius and inventiveness of the 'true authors' demanded 'deep' reading (Moss, pp. 255, 275, 259). Thus, in the Romantic period, the common-place books, especially those used by male authors, were more utilitarian or scholarly and became almost identical to conventional notebooks, while the literary miscellany, consisting of the selection primarily of beautiful passages, or aphorisms, was conventionally associated with women. According to William St Clair, the Romantic period saw a new and gendered resurgence of the common-place book:

The revival might be connected with the eighteenth-century custom of educating young ladies in feminine accomplishments. Although they were compiled and used by both sexes, those kept by men are often in the form of *notebooks* of useful information often with more prose than verse, aids to memory and intensive educational reading.¹⁰

Similarly, Southey's common-place books mark a transition from the prototypical mimetic principle of the Renaissance common-place books towards the creative and personalized Romantic-period masculine miscellanies, which are not simply considered as storehouses of 'flowers' to be used as memory aids, or learning tools, but of 'seeds' which are supposed to generate thought and contribute to the copier's mental 'blooming' (Moss, p. 271). Southey was an active and dynamic transcriber, very often appropriating his sources and responding to them. For instance, in the section of the fourth series, entitled 'Miscellaneous Anecdotes and Gleanings', he transfers an extract on 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'.¹¹ Similarly, he contemplates on John Scott's¹² perception of death in *Christian Life* (1681): 'Scott's Argument (*Christian Life*, vol. 1, p. 297) compared with the savage notion that death is not a natural and necessary thing, – a notion which seems as if it must have been derived from the Fall of Man' (CB, IV, p. 542). Southey's commentary sometimes takes the form of 'queries' as in the following example where he states his ambiguity about J. Hunter's comments about the size of animals in the *Philosophical Transactions* (vol. 16, 1686-92):¹³

'Size, I believe, says J. Hunter, is in those animals who feed, in proportion to the number of the smaller.' ([Phil. Trans], vol. 16, p. 308)

Query? To the number of those on which they prey? – or does he mean that creatures of prey are few in proportion as they are large? (CB, IV, p. 541)

However, despite its presence, Southey's voice is always dominated by that of his numerous antiquarian, authoritative sources. Interestingly enough, Southey deploys a very similar kind of authorial/editorial discourse in his literary paratext. Unlike Byron, whose voice dominates his notes, advertising their eye-witness originality and authenticity, Southey, in his notes, advertises his erudition, instead, by speaking mostly through a wide scholarly circle of travellers, orientalist scholars, historians and philosophers, spanning from the classical period until his current age. Southey's own editorial voice appears in the notes very briefly. It often serves certain typical editorial purposes, such as introducing a text/source, or praising certain authors, or, more importantly, debating and/or establishing the authenticity and credibility of his or others' works. Southey's paratextual authorial/editorial voice is very elusive, but not only as a way of foregrounding his scholarship, but, more importantly, as an ingenious way of controlling his audience's perception of his socio-political and religious ideologies. In his notes to *The Curse of Kehama* (1810) for instance, Southey employs various citational/editorial techniques in order to be either associated with, or dissociated from both evangelicals and Jones' school. He cautiously avoids being pinpointed as either exclusively evangelical, or anti-evangelical, by suppressing any straightforward and explicit commentary on sources belonging to either of the two groups. Moreover, there is an absence of quotation marks in numerous quotations which causes the impression of Southey appropriating, and, therefore, sanctioning both groups. Many authorial 'I's, may be very easily misconstrued as Southey's own authorial/editorial 'I'.¹⁴

We do not know the exact time when Southey started keeping notes while reading, but it is most definite that he sustained this practice for a very long period of his life. The most obvious connection between Southey's common-place books and his paratext is the fact that he transformed a large amount of their content into the

scholarly apparatus surrounding his works, primarily in the form of footnotes, endnotes, and appendices. The notes were commonly copied verbatim or only slightly abridged.

One of the notebooks held at the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery includes extracts and quotations planned for publication in the section of the second series of his *Common-place Book* entitled, 'History, Manners and Literature in England'. The notebook's title, given by Southey himself, is: 'Collections for the History, Manners & Literature in England'.¹⁵ It is obvious, therefore, that Southey was planning to publish the material he copied from various sources not only as annotations to his literary works, but, also, as a main text, in a common-place book. The same notebook is almost in its entirety full of quotations with no added personal comments or appropriations, resembling thus in its style a conventional literary miscellany. The absence of his comments in the notebook suggests perhaps that he re-copied and appropriated the quotations at a later stage. The fact that he used his notebooks to copy extracts for publication is also proved by another notebook, also held at the Keswick Museum, which includes notes that were subsequently published in *The Life of Nelson*, and the 'Ode on Negotiations with Napoleon'.¹⁶

We should consider at this point the amount of time that Southey must have spent copying, re-copying, and commenting on selected quotations. This back-stage but essential process gives us a clear idea of the patience, perseverance, and tedious scholarly labour involved in Southey's efforts to bolster up the authority of his publications through miscellaneous scholarship of the sort his readers would have also enjoyed in the compendious encyclopaedic periodicals of the day. More importantly, however, apart from his intellectual engagement with his sources in a scholarly, methodical way, it proves his desire to reveal his sources/notes to the public as a testament to his 'magpie' scholarship for posterity.

We need to make a few more clarifications regarding the exact point in the sequence of the composition of a literary work that Southey transferred the notes. It seems that in the composition-stage, and up until the fair-copy stage, Southey kept text and notes in complete separation from each other. For instance, *Thalaba's* 1800 manuscript held in the National Library of Wales,¹⁷ which 'comprises the whole poem, [...] transcribed before the final changes to the last book', includes no notes, or even markings within the text that would signal, or remind Southey of the subsequent necessary appendage of a note.¹⁸ Moreover, the poetic extracts he used to circulate among his friends in letter form, such as the extracts from *Kehama*,¹⁹ *Thalaba*,²⁰ and *Madoc*,²¹ for instance, that he sent to C.W. Williams Wynn, are again minus the notes. This suggests that Southey, after having done his extensive reading, and 'saved' it in his common-place book/notebook, composed a draft of the poem first, while constantly referring to his common-place book, and then went back to the poem, with his common-place book at his side, adding the notes. The interesting thing, though, is that he already knew, I think, the notes he was going to add, which is probably one of the reasons he left them to the end. Research and fascination with facts fuelled his writing. He did not feel so confident, though, as a poet, inspired by his personal experience or by flights of imagination. He sounded out his readers which explains perhaps the fact that he was constantly sending very large sections of his poems to his friends, asking for their literary advice, and, also, to an extent, their reassurance.

Southey also quarried his common-place books for retrospective alterations and refinements within drafts of poems in progress, or when republishing poems in different outlets. On October 29, 1808, he wrote to C. W. W. Wynn: 'There are four more sections of *Kehama* to be transcribed – a good deal will be done to it hereafter in

rounding the versification and inlaying it with costume and description'.²² The metaphor 'inlaying' suggests he is a craftsman embellishing a solid article with historically appropriate 'costume' and 'description'. 'Southey's *Common-place Book* shows him habitually thinking in generic terms, often by way of fitting a given subject or story to an existing form'.²³ 'Savage superstitions *will balladize well*' (CB, IV, p. 11); 'A WOMAN-SERVANT of Mrs. Lockyers, about eight years ago, delivered herself of a dead child, – it was supposed and admitted on her trial, – whose body she was discovered burning at night. *This will balladize. A madwoman in the snow.*' (CB, IV, p. 198; my italics).

Of other [topics] he speculates, 'Perhaps a young man departing from home to go for the first time to London, might furnish stuff for an eclogue' and 'What can be made of the story of St. Romuald? Should it be a ballad showing how a man might be too good?'. (Trott, p. 41)²⁴

These examples suggest that one of his central writing practices was to convert facts, or legends and anecdotes into fiction, which was often either set in historically, or geographically, or ideologically remote places. The centrality of research to his writing practice justifies, to an extent, contemporary reviewers, like Jeffrey, who criticized him of using his poetry as an excuse to write his notes.²⁵

To see the poetical possibilities latent in Southey's obsessive and omnivorous note-making we will now consider the short sections entitled 'Images for poetry' that are included in the first chapter of the fourth series, called 'Ideas and Studies for Literary Composition'. They illustrate that his passion for facts, while it could undoubtedly clog the verse, could also generate minutely precise images that inspired him, and how a process of analysis, and note-keeping has to precede literary composition. Here are two examples:

The white foam left by the wave on the shore trembles in the wind with rainbow hues. The clouds spot the sea with purple. The white road trembling on the aching eye. The water spider forms a shadow of six spots at the bottom of the stream, edged with light brown yellow; the legs four, and two from the head. The reflection of the body is a thin line only, uniting the rest. In a hot cloudy day the sea was pale grey, greener at a distance, and bounded by a darker line. Half shadowed by a cloud, beyond the line of shadow light grey, like another sky. The ripe redness of the grass. Sunday, July 16, 1797. I saw the lightning hang in visible duration over the road. Shadows of light roll over the shallow sands of a stream wrinkled by the wind. An overhanging bough reflects this prettily. The flags sword leaves. Up the Stour, the swallows cavern their nests in the sand cliff. I saw a dick-duck-drake leaping fish. The reed-rustling breeze. The sea like burnished silver. Morning. (CB, IV, pp. 44-45)

When we were within half a mile of the sea in a very clear day, it appeared as if the water was flowing rapidly along the shore in the same direction as the wind; a kind of quick dizzy motion, which I should have thought the effect of having dazzled my eyes by looking at the sun, if we had not both observed it at once. The river in a very hot day has the same appearance. The sudden wrinkling of the water when the wind sweeps it, as it were sparkling up a shower. Where the river is visible at its windings, it forms little islands of light. In a day half clear half cloudy, I observe streaks of a rainbow green upon the sea. The cormorant is a large black bird, and flies with his long neck protruded; when full, he stands upon the beach or some sand bank, spreading his wings to dry them, very quaintly. It is

pleasant to see the white-breasted swallows dart under a bridge. The bark of the birch is much striped across with a grey-white moss. (*CB*, IV, p. 44)

There is one more section entitled 'Images for Poetry', and six more entitled 'Images' in 'Ideas and Studies for Literary Composition'. There are not any such sections in the three remaining series of his *Common-place Book*. Southey's language is literal and rationalistic, signalling not so much an admiration for nature itself, but a utilitarian interest in it, and an intention to manipulate it as a resource for poetic creation. It is important to underline the importance of Southey's common-place books in relation to his development as a writer, as well as their function as exercises of his observational powers, or, otherwise, his 'poetic eye'. There is obvious poetical potential in this imagery and such passages can justifiably be seen as work in progress. It would be interesting to examine the extent to which these images instigated the conception, or assisted the embellishment of various poems. In relation to the ones quoted above, an affectionate poem about a spider exists, and cormorants appear in both the *Devil's Walk*²⁶, and *Thalaba* (Book XI)²⁷ but apart from those, I have not yet found any direct literary usage of these two specific 'Images for Poetry'.

There is something paradoxically factual and, yet also, Romantic about Southey's strenuous, yet vain, attempt to pin down and preserve fleeting impressions of the everyday and long-forgotten facts from the past. His common-place books began as repositories of notes to authenticate and supplement the poetry, as well as of ideas for the composition of the main texts themselves. Yet by the time he was Poet Laureate, and, paradoxically, had largely given up writing poetry, the 'common-placing' activity had turned into its own art form: somewhere between a diary, reflective periodical essay and miscellany. Both 'common-placing' and annotating involve the same antiquarian strategy of collecting material from selected sources. In both contexts, Southey acts as a 'bricoleur', who observes, separates, selects, extracts, reorganizes, displays, but, also, as I mentioned earlier, comments.²⁸ His trouble, however, was that his collections were largely perceived by his contemporary reviewers as simply accumulations that wanted discrimination-filters.²⁹

In keeping with the commonplace-paratext structural similarities, is the fragmentary nature of the *Common-place Book*, which both in a structural and thematic sense, exemplifies Southey's strong inclination towards a fragmentary discursive style. The book's pattern is consistently composed of hundreds of separate paragraphs preceded by short subject-headings and is identical to that of the epic-endnotes, underlining, thereby, the structural and stylistic affinities between his *Common-place Book* and his paratext.³⁰

The Doctor

Much of the material from his common-place books, was utilized for the composition of Southey's other miscellany, *The Doctor*; a Shandyan unfinished 'entertaining *jeu d'esprit*',³¹ recording the incongruous mental flights and excursions of the protagonist Dr Daniel Dove. It was published in seven volumes between 1834-47, the final two of which appeared posthumously under Warter's editorship. *The Doctor* occupied more than two whole decades of Southey's life, starting as early as 1813. Sadly though, its fame has been largely superseded by the story of *The Three Bears* which first appeared in *The Doctor*'s fourth volume published in 1837, and it is essentially through this story that most people are aware of *The Doctor*.³²

The first two volumes of *The Doctor* were published anonymously in 1834, although John Gibson Lockhart in the *Quarterly Review* immediately attributed it to 'the Poet Laureate himself' on the basis of its scholarship and ideology:

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 notion.³³

The same review, borrowing Ben Jonson's famous characterization from his play *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599) ridiculed *The Doctor*'s indistinct generic conventions, eccentric structure, and absurd subject matter by describing it as an "apish and fantastic" nondescript [...] two thirds of [which] look as if they might have been penned in the vestibule of Bedlam', and whose '[author's] thin partition that divides great wit from folly would seem to be a moveable one' (Lockhart, p. 390).³⁴

The extraordinary heterogeneity and incongruity of its material has been sarcastically, though fittingly, underlined by an 1878 *New York Times* review 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 time.³⁵

The Doctor's underlined extemporaneity and exaggeratedly fragmented, meta-narrational structure – '[the] division of chapters into ante-initial, initial, and post-initial, [the] inter-chapters, [the] post-fixed preface' (Lockhart, p. 391) – undoubtedly resound *Tristram Shandy*'s nonchalant excursions and misplaced or missing chapters. Southey joked about the two works' transparent similarities: 'There is so much of *Tristram Shandy* about it, that I shall think it will be proper to take the name of Stephen Yorickson Esqre in the title page'.³⁶

Mark Storey, elaborating on this intertextuality has fittingly described *The Doctor* 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. (Storey, pp. 331-2)

If we recall Sterne's mock-declarations in volume one of *Tristram Shandy*, the stylistic connection becomes unambiguously clear:

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 book, for instance, – you might as well take the book along with them.³⁷

The Doctor, though still a rambling miscellany, differs considerably from the *Common-place Book*, in that its digressions are given some sort of continuity by being loosely attached to Doctor Dove's quasi-central personal narrative. In other words, in *The Doctor* Southey takes the daring leap of reversing the parasitical relationship of paratext and main text. Whereas Sterne merely mocked the conventions of prose fiction and print culture, Southey converts his own writerly research practice into a main text which takes on, though remotely, aspects of a conventional literary narrative. Moreover, although the *Common-place Book* displays a shortage of paratextual elements, *The Doctor* generates, instead, as has been briefly indicated earlier, a self-mocking paratext-extravaganza.³⁸

The first volume's pre-textual space constitutes a bizarre, burlesque celebration of the paratext, which is also *The Doctor*'s overall aesthetic objective. Its long epigraph, 'Postscript', 'Prelude of Mottoes', and twenty content-pages not only provide the title of each of the separate sections, but also include their brief summaries, and their appended epigraphs, which are then again repeated in the main text. Southey constantly paratextualizes his narrative through the employment of numerous 'Prefaces', 'Ante-prefaces', 'Initial Chapters', and 'Inter-chapters'. Surprisingly enough, there are, finally, a very small number of footnotes, which are mostly short vocabulary explanations, translations, or source-references. As with Byron's *Don Juan*, which only has 21 footnotes in a total of 15,808 lines, the constant inter-textual digressions obviate the need for footnotes, or other paratextual digressions.

The introductory note to the first chapter of volume one – which notably appears after the first seven chapters in reverse order, soliciting attention to the book's materiality in a typically Shandyan manner – begins with the declaration in block capitals: 'No Book Can Be Complete Without A Preface'.³⁹ And ironically this is true, since, if we recall Southey's oeuvre, almost none of his prose works, or lyric collections began without a preface, an advertisement, or, an argument.⁴⁰ The note goes on in a semi-parodic, semi-formal vindication of the preface as a textual component:

Who was the inventor of Prefaces? I shall be obliged to the immortal Mr Urban, (immortal, because like the King in law he never dies,) if he will 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 halfpenny-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 as 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 exhibited. (I, p. 35)

By exposing the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Edward Cave – pen name: 'Sylvanus Urban' – and rejecting his magazine's contents as random and meaningless collections which 'acquired value by mere accumulation', Southey implicitly exults in his own collections of information, and ingeniously counteracts contemporary criticisms, like Jeffrey's, relegating his own antiquarian collections to indiscriminate stockpiles.

In a similar fashion, the subsequent 'Ante-Preface' amusingly criticizes the comments about prefacing by Charles Blount, a 'Whig activist and propagandist' of the late seventeenth century, whose seditious works such as, '*Anima Mundi* (1678) –

an essay on pagan doctrines about the nature of the human soul and its destiny in the afterlife, [...] [arguing] in favour of the immortality of the soul on moral and psychological grounds – alarmed the Church and state of England:⁴¹

'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; and 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 about 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 rest. (I, p. 37)

The sensationalism of the mocking gossip about Blount's infamous attempted suicide over the disallowance of his marriage to his wife's sister; the semi-earnest and semi-jocular political criticism against Blount which constitutes an indirect attestation to Southey's conservatism, and its immediate refutation through a quasi-Whiggish scorn of 'the greedy and corrupt church'; the inconclusive theorization on prefatory stylistics; and, finally, the absence of an ante-preface's *raison d'être*, the introduction to the ensuing narrative; this bizarre stylistic and thematic concoction renders this ante-preface into a paradigm of the *The Doctor's* pervasive, and defining incoherence and disjointedness.

The 'Ante-preface' is followed by the preface, in a surprisingly conventional manner. I would like to focus specifically on it, as it is a particularly significant example with regard to the interpretation not only of Southey's paratext, but of his general poetic theory. This, I believe, is the first and only time that Southey attempts to explicate his paratextual poetics and vindicate his digressive narrative style. Most of the preface is an excessively long and detailed, mock-heroic celebration, or rather fetishization, of Southey's quill:

Oh for a quill plucked from a seraph's wing! – YOUNG⁴²

So the poet exclaimed; and his exclamation may be quoted as one example more of the vanity of human wishes; for in order to get a seraph's quill it would be necessary, according to Mrs. Glasse's⁴³ excellent item in her directions for roasting a hare, to begin by catching a seraph. A quill from a seraph's wing is, I confess, above my ambition; but one from a peacock's tail was within my reach [...].

I have oftentimes had the happiness of seeing due commendation bestowed by gentle critics, unknown admirers, and partial friends upon my pen, which has been married to all amiable epithets: classical, fine, powerful, tender, touching, pathetic, strong, fanciful, daring, elegant, sublime, beautiful. I have read these epithets with that proper satisfaction which when thus applied they could not fail

to impart, and sometimes qualified the pride which they inspired by looking at the faithful old tool of the muses beside me, worn to the stump in their service: the one end mended up to the quick in that spirit of economy which becomes a son of the Lackland family, and shortened at the other by the gradual and alternate processes of burning and biting, till a scant inch only is left above the finger place. Philemon Holland was but a type of me in this respect. Indeed I may be allowed to say that I have improved upon his practice, or at least, that I get more out of a pen than he did, for in the engraved title page to his *Cyropaedia*, where there appears the portrait of the *interpretes* marked by a great D enclosing the Greek letter Φ (which I presume designates Doctor Philemon) *aetatis suae* 80. A. 1632, it may be plainly seen that he used his pen only at one end. Peradventure he delighted not, as I do, in the mitigated ammoniac odour.

[...].

I have drawn up the window blinds (though sunshine at this time acts like snuff upon the mucuous membrane of my nose) in order that the light may fall upon this excellent poet's wand as I wave it to and fro, making cuts five and six of the broadsword exercise. 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 oxyde; and that spot of deepest purple, the pupil of an eye for whose glorious hue neither metals, nor flowers, nor precious stones afford a resemblance: its likeness is only to be found in animated life, in birds and insects whom nature seems to have formed when she was most prodigal of beauty: I have seen it indeed upon the sea, but it has been in some quiet bay, when the reflection of the land combined with the sky and the ocean to produce it. (I, pp. 39-41)

Though humbly denying the seraph's quill, he still goes for the peacock's, and for a peacock's quill, it does its job perfectly well, in complete pride of itself. *The Doctor's* satirical nature allows Southey to leave behind his solemn prefaces where he attempted to justify himself as an accurate and original collector, and relish in a self-mocking manner in the authorial pride he always aspired to. He indulges in his imagined self-portrayal as a powerful author, moving his sword-like quill to and fro, creating polemical works. Maybe, this sword-like quill reflects a hard to admit nostalgia for his long-forsaken political radicalism, or an assertion that there is still a radical vein in him.

As Storey notes, 'The quill pen [...] [was] the tool of [Southey's] trade as a writer', so it is very understandable that it not only becomes the absolute 'focal point' at the beginning of his work, but, is also idolized (Storey, p. 332). The worshipped quill, however, is not only portrayed as a symbol of his professional literary career, but, more importantly, as a symbol of his works' structural aesthetics:

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 nature. (I, p. 40)

The chameleonic quill 'from a peacock's tail', which is 'soft', 'versatile as the wildest wit', and 'flexible as the most monkeylike talent', is emblematic of his versatile and fragmented narratives.

Southey goes on to vindicate his fragmentary narrative style, and explicitly establish the literary significance of his digressions through the ingenious combination of the metaphor of the quill and Coleridge's organicist 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 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 terminate (I, p. 40)

His 'episodes' and 'digressions' are paralleled with the quill's 'featherlets' hanging off from the story that is 'running through like the stem or backbone', very much like the digressions in this particular narrative that are more or less related to the doctor's framing personal story. More importantly, however, they are presented as indispensable parts of the 'whole' narrative; as the '[terminal]', the ultimate purpose of the narrative.⁴⁴

Coleridge's organicist theory is also the subject of the largest motto included in the second volume's 'Prelude of Mottoes', which is an appropriation of John Whitaker's Preface to the *History of Manchester* (1771-75).⁴⁵ It becomes, thus, a theoretical frame for the interpretation and justification of *The Doctor'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 individual. (II, p. viii)

What is crucial, however, for the purposes of this essay, is that the textual device and space which Southey refers to as 'digressions', also implies the paratextual digressions. Both of the aforementioned references to digressions and their association to the organicist theory occur in paratextual spaces: the 'Prelude of Mottoes', and the 'Preface'. Moreover, throughout the preface, the quill, which has been used as an emblem of this holistic approach to a narrative structure, is constantly being related to the preface itself, thereby identifying the preface or the paratext as an integral part of a narrative's structure and interpretation:

and 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 the 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 forms[.]

[...].

And what can be more emblematical of the work I am beginning than the *splendid instrument* wherewith the *preface* is traced? (I, pp. 39, 40; my italics)

Thus, in this widely neglected, though very significant piece from *The Doctor*, the authorial digressions, as well as, by implication, the paratexts themselves, are explicitly related to the romantic narrative and poetics, and identified as ‘parts of one harmonious whole’, rather than as mere supplementary and extraneous, or intrusive frames. In other words, the paratext becomes an integral aspect of the discourse of the inherent tension between part and whole, which ‘lay at the base of the Romantic theory of hermeneutics’.⁴⁶

However, we should consider the fact that in comparison to *The Doctor*’s pervasive arabesque structure, Southey’s repeated prefatory claims to narrative unity seem totally pointless and insincere. We could well argue that Southey simply wishes to mock Coleridge’s organicist theory as a vacuous theoretical backdrop, and celebrate instead the Shandyan chaos and proliferation. Though this is true to an extent, Southey also had an earnest authorial interest in narrative coherence, and, I believe he also expects his readers to take his claims to paratext-and main-text-unity at face value. Apart from his deployment of Doctor Dove’s unifying narrative in *The Doctor*, his sensitivity to narrative coherence is also illustrated by the fact that he was generally very conscious of his notes’ possible disturbance of the reading process, and that he initially tried to avoid it. Although he never laid down any absolute specific rules on the exclusive choice of either footnotes or endnotes depending on the various genres, his general practice was to use the footnote for prose and the endnote for poetry, a choice indicative of his judgment that the prosaic factual footnote causes less interruption to a prosaic text, than to a sublime romantic poetic text. Southey’s preference for the endnote in poetic texts is explicated in his letter to C. W. W. Wynn illustrating his thoughts on his preferred annotational mode for *Thalaba*’s first edition: ‘My notes are too numerous and too entertaining to print at the bottom of the page’.⁴⁷ To his dismay, *Thalaba*’s first edition eventually did have his notes printed as footnotes causing in many cases the main text’s textual and aesthetic subordination. Of course, despite Southey’s proclaimed sensitivity to the notes’ intrusion into the main text, and his claims to narrative unity, both his footnotes and endnotes often extend to extreme lengths, upsetting thereby the conventional power-dynamics between the main text and its paratext, or, otherwise, challenging the main text’s assumed supremacy. Thus, the voluminous endnotes to his epic narrative verses, for instance, which rival the dimensions of the actual verses themselves, constitute a hard-to-miss parallel discursive narrative, complementing but also clashing with the main poetic narrative. Similarly, the footnotes to many of his prose works, such as those to his *Life of Wesley* (c. 1820), constantly haunt the main text, threatening to consume it completely.

The preface finishes with Southey choosing birds for the quills of contemporary professionals, authors, and critics, something that gives him the opportunity to expose two of his avowed enemies: Lord Byron and Francis Jeffrey. It is, I think, a significant testament to Southey’s very amusing sarcastic humour, which unfolds almost exclusively in his paratext. It becomes even more important if we consider the facts that Southey is not usually known for his humour and that it is always assumed that Byron had a monopoly on it:

They who are versed in the doctrine of sympathies and the arcana of correspondences, as revealed to the Swedish Emanuel, will doubtless admire the instinct or inspiration which directed my choice to the Pavonian pen. The example should be followed by all consumers of ink and quill. Then would the lover borrow a feather from the turtle dove. The lawyer would have a large assortment of kite, hawk, buzzard, and vulture: his clients may use pigeon or gull. Poets according to their varieties. Mr. ---, the tomtit. Mr. ---, the water wagtail. Mr. ---, the crow. Mr. ---, the mocking bird. Mr.---, the magpie. Mr.---, the skylark. Mr.---, the eagle. Mr. ---, the swan. Lord.---, the black swan! Critics, some the owl, others the butcher bird. Your challenger must endite [sic.] with one from the wing of a game cock: 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 panders of a profligate press, should use none but duck feathers, and those of the dirtiest that can be found in the purlieu of Pimlico or St. George's Fields. But for the editor of the Edinburgh Review, whether he dictates in morals or in taste, or displays his peculiar talent in political prophecy, he must continue to use goose quills. Stick to the goose, Mr. Jeffrey; while you live stick to the goose! (I, pp. 40-41)

Conclusion

The pervasive nineteenth-century practice of 'common-placing' is very illuminating in regards to the synchronous, equally popular, literary use of paratext. What is equally important, though, is that these two practices are perhaps the most significant manifestations of the prominence of the notion and use of fragment in the long eighteenth century. The supposed use of disconnected or fragmented manuscripts was a popular antiquarian device throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Following Swift's and Pope's combination of authorial and editorial roles, Percy and other eighteenth-century ballad-collectors and/or forgers, also made selections of poems included in 'original' folio-manuscripts, or published remnants of ancient literature in fragmented form because manuscripts were incomplete. In their turn, S. T. Coleridge and Lord Byron wrote their own fragmented poems, respectively *Kubla Khan* (1816) and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-18), *The Giaour* (1813), and *Don Juan* (1819-24) exploiting through their paratext the duality of the author/editor role. Similarly, in *The Last Man* (1826), Mary Shelley continued the 'edited manuscript' discourse of the two previous centuries claiming that the text she presented to the public was a collation of scattered 'leaves' she discovered with her companion during their tour in Sibyl's cave in Naples in 1818.⁴⁸

By the mid-nineteenth century, when Britain became a 'reading nation', and the massive growth of periodicals, annuals, anthologies and the printed-book industry allowed 'extensive reading' to replace 'the ancient practice of intensive reading', readers became used to reading literature in extracts and fragments (St Clair, p. 11). Romantic-period men and women 'read in fits and starts and jumped from book to book. They broke texts in fragments and assembled them into new patterns by transcribing them in different sections of their [own] notebooks'.⁴⁹ 'The world was full of signs' for both readers and writers. People were used to reading literature in selected/collected fragments and extracts. Moreover, the use of newspapers on a daily or weekly basis, at least among the middle and upper-classes, meant that readers were also very accustomed to the fusion of *fabula* and *historia*, of fiction and fact, since sublime poetic extracts always appeared alongside trite, factual information.⁵⁰ This

should make us reconsider our commonplace assumptions that the factual literary notes and paratexts were necessarily seen as annoyingly disruptive, or dispensable. Fragments, or paratexts, though commonly considered as an aberration and an eccentricity, were indeed a standard, indispensable part of the Romantic-period literary discourse.

Endnotes

¹ Tim Fulford has defined Southey as the instigator of the orientalist romantic annotated poem. He suggests that Southey was influenced by Beckford's orientalist notes to *Vathek*, and transplanted them from prose to poetry:

Southey valued Beckford's Oriental tale for the variety of new motifs it contained, and it is certainly true that *Thalaba* matches it in gruesome Gothic details, often derived, like Beckford's, from the author's research into the folk customs of Eastern Europe and the Orient. Many of these customs are described in the copious notes that Southey affixed to his text, in conscious emulation of the notes appended to *Vathek* by Henley. *Thalaba* became [...] the first of a new, Romantic, genre, an updated Oriental tale, now in verse and with a weighty apparatus of factual footnotes to convince the reader of its historical veracity. (Tim Fulford, 'Introduction', in *Robert Southey: Poetical Works 1793-1810*, ed. by Lynda Pratt, Tim Fulford and Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, 5 vols. [London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004], III, pp. vii-xxxvi [pp. viii-ix])

It is not sufficiently recognized how innovative Southey's annotated verse-tales were. They were imitated and appropriated by the younger generation of romantics: Byron, Shelley, and Moore – despite their Whiggish satire at the elder poet's turn to conservatism.

² Lynda Pratt, 'Introduction', in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, ed. by Lynda Pratt (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), pp. xvii-xxix (p. xxii).

³ Robert Southey, 'To C.W.W. Wynn, Nov. 5, 1821', in *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey*, ed. by John Wood Warter, 4 vols (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1856), III, p. 282.

⁴ Thomas de Quincey, *Recollections of the Lakes and the Lake Poets: Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1863), pp. 236, 237. Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

⁵ *Literary Panorama*, IX (June, 1811), 1044-1059 (p. 1058).

⁶ Southey was famously depicted by Byron as 'the only existing entire man of letters', a characterization borrowed for the title of Southey's latest biography by William Speck (W. A. Speck, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006]):

His appearance is Epic; and he is the only existing entire man of letters. All the others have some pursuit annexed to their authorship. [...] His prose is perfect. Of his poetry there are various opinions: there is, perhaps, too much of it for the present generation; posterity will probably select. He has passages equal to any thing. (Lord George Gordon, Byron, *The Life, Letters and Journals of Lord Byron by Thomas Moore, Collected and arranged with notes by Sir Walter Scott and others* [London: John Murray, 1820], p. 203)

This appraisal, which when compared to the infamously combative relationship of the two poets sounds surprisingly judicious, rightly singles out Southey's breadth of erudition, variety of genres and immense productivity.

⁷ *The Quarterly Review*, V (February & May, 1811), 43-62 (p. 61).

⁸ Diego Saglia, 'Words and Things: Southey's East and the Materiality of Oriental Discourse', in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 167-86 (p. 173).

⁹ Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 24, 206-07. Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

For further information on the common-place books and printed miscellanies during the early-modern period and the late seventeenth century, see respectively: Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 167-72, Adam Smyth, *Profit and Delight: Printed Miscellanies in England, 1640-1682* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), and Ann Blair, 'Humanist Methods in Natural Philosophy: the Commonplace Book', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 53:4 (1992), 541-551 (p. 541).

¹⁰ William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 224-25; my italics. Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

¹¹ Robert Southey, *Southey's Commonplace Book*, ed. John Wood Warter, Fourth Series (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1850), p. 541. Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

¹² Richard J. Ginn, 'Scott, John (1638/9–1695), *Church of England clergyman*', *DNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24889?docPos=10>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

¹³ Martin Booth, 'Hunter, John Alexander (1882–1963), *hunter*', *DNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39753?docPos=7>> [accessed 19 March 2008].

¹⁴ For instance, in the notes to *The Curse of Kehama*, Southey quotes from the *Memoir in the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India* (1805), by the strictly evangelical East India Company chaplain, Claudius Buchanan (1766–1815). In the extract, Buchanan condemns the practice of sati :

From a late investigation it appears, that the number of women who sacrifice themselves within thirty miles round Calcutta every year, is, on an average, upwards of two hundred. The Pundits have already been called on to produce the sanction of their Shasters for this custom. The passages exhibited are vague and general in their meaning, and differently interpreted by the same casts. Some sacred verses commend the practice, but none command it; and the Pundits refer once more to *custom*. They have, however, intimated, that if government will pass a regulation, amercing by fine every Brahmin who attends a burning, or every Zemindar who permits him to attend it, the practice cannot possibly long continue; for that the ceremony, unsanctified by the presence of the priests, will lose its dignity and consequence in the eyes of the people. The civilized world may expect soon to hear of the abolition of this opprobrium of a Christian administration, the female sacrifice; which has subsisted, to our certain knowledge, since the time of Alexander the Great. – CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN. (Robert Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*, in *Robert Southey: Poetical Works 1793–1810*, IV, p. 197)

Although, Southey cites Buchanan's name at the end of the quotation, the fact that he does not use quotation marks or any other separating marks suggests his intention, conscious or unconscious, to present Buchanan's criticism as his own. In a similar fashion, Southey also appropriates quotations by anti-evangelicals, such as Edward Moor or Jones (for example, see pp. 236, 238, 241, e.t.c.). By lifting the quotation marks, Southey undermines the quotations' distinct authorship. This allows him the freedom to attach his editorial voice to any quotation, either of evangelical/imperialist or anti-evangelical/anti-imperialist dispositions.

¹⁵ Keswick Museum and Art Gallery, Ms. 218, 'Notebook. Red Cover. Extracts and quotations for common-place books. 2nd series. Manners and Literature in England'. (undated).

¹⁶ Keswick Museum and Art Gallery, Ms. 206, 'Notes for publication including *The Life of Nelson*, and 'Ode on Negotiations with Napoleon'', Jan. 1814, about 350 pp, Mss both sides'.

¹⁷ National Library of Wales, Ms. 1487A, '*Thalaba the Destroyer*. The original manuscript of the text of Robert Southey (London, 1801)'.

¹⁸ Tim Fulford, 'Introduction', in *Robert Southey: Poetical Works 1793–1810*, ed. by Lynda Pratt, Tim Fulford and Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, 5 vols. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004), III, pp. vii–xxxvi (p. xxxiii).

¹⁹ National Library of Wales, Ms. 4819D, 'Southey and Williams Wynn. Southey – Poems and Letters & c. Original Poems by Robert Southey': a) Thursday, Oct. 10, 1800, b) Oct. 29, 1808.

²⁰ National Library of Wales, Ms. 4819D, 'Southey and Williams Wynn. Southey – Poems and Letters & c. Original Poems by Robert Southey': a) Feb. 15, 1801, or 1807, b) Dec. 29, 1800.

²¹ National Library of Wales, Ms. 4819D, 'Southey and Williams Wynn. Southey – Poems and Letters & c. Original Poems by Robert Southey': two undated letters.

²² Robert Southey, 'To C. W. W. Wynn, Oct. 29, 1808', in *New Letters of Robert Southey*, ed. by Kenneth Curry, 2 vols (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965), I, p. 487.

²³ Nicola Trott, 'Poemets and Poemlings: Robert Southey's Minority Interest', in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, ed. by Lynda Pratt (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 69–86 (p. 75). Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

²⁴ For further evidence Trott suggests looking up the following sections from the Fourth Series: 'Subjects for Idylls'; 'Ballads'; 'Pastoral Poetry'; 'The Kalendar' (pp. 95, 95–6, 215, 210–12).

²⁵ Francis Jeffrey, in his famously scathing review of *Thalaba* in the *Edinburgh Review*, mocks Southey's antiquarian imperatives for scrupulous research and accurate scholarly citations by defining *Thalaba* as a pointless imitation of oriental fables, and a random, miscellaneous and non-creative compilation of stories; a scrapbook whose main poetic text has no significant independent literary value, but is instead a mere pre-determined justification for the inclusion of his notes and the promotion of his scholarly profile:

There is not a prodigy, accordingly, or a description, for which he does not fairly produce his vouchers, and generally lays before his readers the whole original passage from which his imitation has been taken. In this way, it turns out, that the book is entirely composed of scraps, borrowed from the oriental books, and travels into the Mahometan countries [...]. The composition and harmony of the work, accordingly, is much like the pattern of that patchwork drapery [...]. The author has the merit merely of cutting out each of his figures from the piece where its inventor had placed it, and stitching them down together in these judicious combinations. It is impossible to peruse the poem with the notes, without feeling that it is the fruit of much reading, undertaken for the express purpose of fabricating some such performance. The author has set out with a resolution to make an oriental story, and a determination to find the materials of it in the books to which he had access. Every incident, therefore, and description, - every superstitious usage, or singular tradition, that appeared to him susceptible of poetical embellishment, or capable of picturesque representation, he has set down for this purpose, and adopted such a fable and plan of composition, as might enable him to work up all his materials, and interweave every one of his quotations, without any extraordinary violation of unity or order. When he had filled his commonplace book, he began to write; and his poem is little else than his commonplace book versified. (Francis Jeffrey, 'unsigned review, *Edinburgh Review*, I [1802] 63-83', in *Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Lionel Madden, The Critical Heritage Series [London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972], pp. 68-90 [pp. 83-84])

²⁶ Robert Southey, *The Poetical Works of Robert Southey* (London: Longmans, 1845), pp. 127 & 167.

²⁷ Robert Southey, *Thalaba the Destroyer*, in *Robert Southey: Poetical Works 1793-1810*, III, p. 175.

²⁸ Alex Watson, 'Romantic Marginality: Annotation in British Literature, 1794-1818', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2006), pp. 95-96.

²⁹ See note 24.

³⁰ It is useful to mention the fact that the book's headings are not all Southey's own, but some of them have also been appended by Warter: 'The headings of such passages as are not bracketed are the lamented Collector's; for the rest [...] "my own meanness" is responsible' [John Wood Warter, 'Preface', in *Southey's Common-Place Book*, I, pp. vii-viii (p. vii)].

³¹ Mark Storey, *Robert Southey: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 331. Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

³² There is also a third miscellany published a few years earlier, during Southey's prolific decade of the 1810s. In 1812 Longman's published two volumes of miscellaneous notes entitled *Omniana, or Horae Otiosiores*, 'selections of which were originally published in John Aikin's Athenaeum in 1807-08'. (Diego Saglia, 'Words and Things: Southey's East and the Materiality of Oriental Discourse', in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, pp. 167-86 [p. 180]).

The work, a joint effort of Southey and Coleridge – although the majority of the material was provided by Southey (see quote below) – was 'anonymous and had not a word of preface. In the table of contents many of the articles were marked with an asterisk, which the following note explained: –'The articles marked thus are by a different writer' (T. Ashe, B.A., 'Introductory Note', in *The Table Talk and Omniana*, ed. by T. Ashe, B.A. [London: George Bell & Sons, 1888; repr. London: Kessinger Publishing, 2005], pp. 343-45 [p. 343]).

In Jan. 21, 1810, we read, - 'From the overflowing of my notes and notanda I am putting together some volumes of *Omniana*.' On Feb. 5, 1811, he writes: - 'I urged Coleridge to double the intended number of *Omniana* volumes, merely for the sake of making him do something for his family: this requiring, literally, no other trouble than either cutting out of his commonplace book what has for years been accumulating there, or marking the passage off for a transcriber. He promised to add two volumes, and has contributed one sheet, which, I dare say, unless he soon returns to Cumberland, will be all'. Then two volumes were published. The same year, on Nov. 5, 1812, Southey writes again: –'I have desired Longman to send you a book of shreds and patches, the work of many idle hours – of that sort of laborious idleness which is to me the most delightful of all dissipation. You will find some things to smile at, and some curious facts, affording matter for speculation, from which it is not impossible that scientific men may draw conclusions of some importance. I inserted some articles of Coleridge in this book, merely in the hope of getting something from him in this way; he had literally only to cut them out of his common-place book. It was my intention to make four volumes instead of two, in this manner; but he kept the press waiting fifteen months for an unfinished article, so that at last I ordered the sheet on which it was begun to be

cancelled, in despair. I have marked whatever is his and you will wish that it were more.
(Ibid., pp. 343-44)]

³³ John Gibson Lockhart, 'unsigned review, *Quarterly Review*, March 1834, li, 68-96', in *Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Lionel Madden, The Critical Heritage Series (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 390-93 (p. 393). Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

³⁴ 'He speaks pure truth. Now if an idiot/ Have but an apish or fantastic strain,/ It is his humour.' (Ben Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour: Ben Jonson*, ed. by Helen Ostovich [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001], p. 119).

³⁵ *The New York Times*, December 8, 1878; my italics.

³⁶ Robert Southey, 'To Grosvenor Charles Bedford, Dec. 19, 1815', in *New Letters of Robert Southey*, ed. by Kenneth Curry, 2 vols (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965), II, p. 130.

³⁷ Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, Collection of Ancient and Modern British Novels, ed. by Sir Walter Scott, Vol. XXXVIII (Paris: Baudry's Foreign Library, 1832), p. 55.

³⁸ The *Common-place Book's* only significant paratextual elements are an epigraph appended by Warter, from Daniel's 'Funeral Poem Upon the Death of the Late Noble Earl of Devonshire', Warter's preface, and some scarce, short explanatory footnotes, some of them written by Southey himself, and some added subsequently by Warter.

³⁹ Robert Southey, *The Doctor*, 2 vols (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1836), I, p. 35. Subsequent references will be given in parentheses.

⁴⁰ With the exception of the notes, the preface is Southey's most widely used paratextual element. Every single prose work by Southey begins with a preface, or a prefatory piece. All his epic verses, as well as three of his longer narrative verses – *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, *The Devil's Walk*, and *A Vision of Judgement* – begin with a preface, an argument, or an advertisement. Four of his major short lyric- and ballad-collections – *Juvenile and Minor Poems*, volumes I and II (1794-99), and *Ballads and Metrical Tales*, volumes I and II (1805) – begin with a preface or an advertisement. With regards to the forelast collection particularly – *Ballads and Metrical Tales*, volume I – apart from four poems which begin without a preface – 'Jaspar', 'The Battle of Blenheim', 'Henry the Hermit', and 'The March to Moscow' – three of them – 'King Henry V and the Hermit of Dreux', 'The Lover's Rock', and 'Bishop Bruno' – begin with an epigraph, the *Lay of the Laureate* with a proem, and all the rest with a preface. With regards to the latter – *Ballads and Metrical Tales*, volume II – *A Tale of Paraguay* starts with a preface, and *The Pilgrim to Compostella* with a prelude and an introduction.

⁴¹ Dario Pfanter, 'Blount, Charles (1654–1693), freethinker and author', *DNB*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2684?docPos=3>> [accessed 2 November 2007].

⁴² James E. May, 'Young, Edward (bap. 1683, d. 1765), writer', *DNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30260?docPos=2>> [accessed 13 March 2008].

⁴³ A. H. T. Robb-Smith, 'Glasse [*née* Allgood], Hannah (bap. 1708, d. 1770), writer on cookery and costumier', *DNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10804>> [accessed 14 March 2008].

⁴⁴ It is important to note that, although Coleridge did write a few marginalia on the 1834 edition of *The Doctor's* first two volumes, he has not written anything specifically on Southey's comical appropriation of his poetic theory, something of a missed opportunity. The volumes appeared in early 1834, so he certainly had sufficient time to finish reading both of them before his death on the 25th of July. See S.T. Coleridge, 'The Doctor', in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Marginalia*, ed. by H. J. Jackson and George Whally, Bollingen Series LXXXV, 6 vols (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), V, pp. 96-100.

⁴⁵ See Whitaker's original preface in *ECCO* <<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO?dd=0&k=A1&locID=uows&d1=0085700301&srcthp=rt&c=1&SU=All&df=f&d2=2&docNum=CW3304153745&h2=1&vrsn=1.0&m=Whitaker%2C+John&d6=2&d3=2&ste=10&stp=Author&d4=0.33&d5=d6>> [accessed 19 March 2008]. Its comparison to Southey's 'Prelude of Mottoes' proves rather comically Southey's exceptional skill for textual bricolage, which was integral to the composition of both his common-place books and his literary paratext.

⁴⁶ Thomas McFarland, 'Synecdochic Structure in Blake's Marginalia', *European Romantic Review*, I (1990), 75-90 (p. 77). See also, Thomas McFarland, *Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin: Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Modalities of Fragmentation* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981).

⁴⁷ Robert Southey, *Journals of a Residence in Portugal 1800-1801 and a Visit to France 1838, Supplemented by Extracts from his Correspondence*, ed. by Adolfo Cabral (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), pp. 97-98.

⁴⁸ Mary Shelley, *The Last Man*, 3 vols (Paris: A. and W. Galignani, 1826) I, pp. v-xi.

⁴⁹ Robert Darnton, 'Extraordinary Commonplaces', *The New York Review of Books*, 47:20 (December 21, 2000), 82-87.

⁵⁰ For information on the controversies of the stylistic implications of the binary truth-fiction see: Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), John R. Searle, 'The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse', *New Literary History* 6 (1974-75), 319-32, (p. 325), and Robert Mayer, 'The Illogical Status of Novelistic Discourse: Scott's Footnotes for the Waverley Novels', *ELH* 66:4 (1999), 911-938.

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