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## **SOUTHEY`S LYRICAL HERO, ROMANTIC HISTORICISM AND SHAKESPEARE`S INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEY`S VERSE**

Nowadays the rise and spread of the reputation of William Shakespeare is often revealed in the context of romanticism. It is emphasised that although Shakespeare is regarded as the epitome of the great writer, his reputation was at first very different. Shakespeare was a popular play-wright who wrote for the commercial theatre in London. He was not college-educated, and although his company had the sponsorship of King James, his work was not entirely "respectable". Academic critics at first scorned his indiscipline, his rejection of their concepts of drama which were derived in part from ancient Roman and Greek patterns. A good play should not mix comedy with tragedy, not proliferate plots and subplots, not ramble through a wide variety of settings or drag out its story over months or years of dramatic time; but Shakespeare's plays did all these things. A proper serious drama should always be divided neatly into five acts, but Shakespeare made no divisions at all. The dramatic architecture we are familiar with was imposed on his plays by editors only after his death.

Because Shakespeare was a popular rather than a courtly writer, the Romantics exaggerated his simple origins, and exalted Shakespeare's works as the greatest of their classics (Romanticism).

W. Wordsworth acquired a reputation for being antipathetic to Shakespeare, Samuel Taylor Coleridge became a prominent Shakespearean scholar, many Shakespearean allusions are found in R. Southey's works. In one of his letters to Joseph Cottle S. T. Coleridge wrote the following:

LETTER 54. TO COTTLE (Stowey,--(February or March 1797)

Me dear Cottle,

[...] Public affairs are in strange confusion. I am afraid that I shall prove, at least, as good a Prophet as Bard. Oh, doom'd to fall, my country! enslaved and vile! But may God make me a foreboder of evils never to come!

I have heard from Sheridan, desiring me to write a tragedy. I have no genius that way; Robert Southey has. I think highly of his "Joan of Arc", and cannot help prophesying that he will be known to posterity, as Shakspeare's great grandson. I think he will write a tragedy or tragedies (Cottle 2004, 108).

Indeed, Shakespeare`s influence on R. Southey`s texts is felt in the first place due to numerous Shakespearean allusions:

**Cf:**

R. Southey:

*Gaze hither, ye who weigh with scrupulous care//The right and prudent; for beyond the grave//There is another world! and call to mind,//Ere your decrees proclaim to all mankind, //Murder is legalized, that there the slave,//Before the Eternal, thunder-tongued shall plead //Against the deep damnation of your deed.*

(Poems On The Slave-Trade, VI)

*Thy hate, thy bloody aim, – //Into what deep damnation wilt thou plunge// Thy miserable soul! – ...*(Southey 1839: 239)

(Thalaba the Destroyer, 1801)

*LOBABA. All things have a double power, //Alike for good and evil. The same fire //That on the comfortable hearth at eve //Warm`d the good man, flames o`er the house at //night; //Should we for this forego //The needful element? // [...]*

*THALABA. What follows hence?*

*LOBABA. That nothing in itself is good or evil, //But only in its use* (Southey 1839: 257-258).

(Thalaba the Destroyer, 1801)

W. Shakespeare:

*Besides, this Duncan //Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been //So clear in his great office, that his virtues // Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against //The deep damnation of his taking-off; //And pity, like a naked newborn babe, //Striding the blast, or heaven`s cherubim, horsed //Upon the sightless couriers of the air, //Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye, //That tears shall drown the wind.*

(Macbeth, Act I, Scene 7)

***There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.***

(William Shakespeare, Hamlet. Act 2. Scene II.)

But what is more, Southey was definitely inspired by W. Shakespeare, who was also keen on history and depicted so many different royalties in his literary works. For the very first time since Shakespeare`s death another “portrait gallery” of monarchs and members of the royal family appeared in the English literature, being skillfully depicted by R. Southey.

The opposition of the absolute power of the monarch and the republican rule had never lost its topicality in the Romantic era. Revolutions brought about changes to the established social hierarchy, and the figure of the monarch as an important player on the political arena becomes the subject of speculations and heated discussions.

As a Poet Laureat, R. Southey had written numerous odes to the royals, such as “Ode To His Imperial Majesty, Alexander The First, Emperor Of

All The Russians”; “Ode To His Royal Highness The Prince Regent Of The United Kingdom Of Great Britain And Ireland”; “Ode To His Majesty, Frederick William The Fourth, King Of Prussia”; “Ode On The Death Of Queen Sharlotte”, etc. But at the same time Southey aimed at maximum objectivity while depicting the royalties. This peculiar feature can be traced throughout his works. For instance, R. Southey`s lyrical hero begins the “*Epitaph On King John*” in a way far from being loyal to the monarch described:

JOHN rests below. A man more infamous//Has never held the sceptre of these realms,//And bruised beneath the iron rod of power,//The oppressed men of England. Englishman!//Curse not his memory. Murderer as he was,//Coward and slave, [...] (Southey 1866, 442).

As it is known from history of England, King John made himself unpopular with the three most important groups of people, such as the nobles, the merchants and the Church. As D. McDowall points out, the feudal lords in England had always run their own law courts and profited from the fines paid by those brought to court. But John took many cases out of their courts and tried them in the king`s courts, taking the money for himself. It was normal for a feudal lord to make a payment to the king when his daughter was married, but John asked for more, than was the custom. When a noble died, his son had to pay money before he could inherit his father`s land. In order to enlarge his own income, John increased the amount they had to pay. If there was no heir apparent, John didn`t give the land to another noble family, as it had been done before him. John kept the land for a long time, to benefit from its wealth. He did the same with the bishoprics. In 1204 King John became even more unpopular with his nobles, because he failed to carry out his duties to his nobles as a feudal lord and the Duke of Normandy. The French king invaded Normandy and the English nobles lost their lands there. Thus, the king had taken their money but he had not protected their land. In 1209 John quarreled with the Pope over who should be the archbishop of Canterbury. The pope called on the king of France to invade England, and closed every church in the country. At a time most people believed that without the church they would go to hell, and it was a very serious matter. The merchants strongly disliked King John because he taxed them at a higher level than ever before (McDowall 1989, 28).

And even Charles Dickens in his “History of England for children” wrote the following about King John:

I doubt whether the crown could possibly have been put upon the head of a meaner coward or a more detestable villain if England had been searched from end to end to find him out (Dickens ).

But Southey clearly understood that it was King John who signed a very important document, called Magna Carta, which limited the absolute power of the monarch. Magna Carta was signed unwillingly and had little practical impact, but it was a distinct landmark in the relations of the monarch and his vassals, making any king of the Middle Ages take into account the needs of his subjects. R. Southey writes about that in the following way:

[...] yet he it was who signed//That charter which should make thee, morn and night,//Be thankful for thy birth-place: Englishman!//That holy charter, which, shouldst thou permit//Force to destroy, or fraud to undermine,//Thy children's groans will persecute thy soul,//For they must bear the burthen of thy crime (Southey 1866, 443). (Epitaph On King John)

And the same objectivity is traced in many other poetical works by R. Southey. For instance, in the poem “For a Monument in the New Forest”, Southey`s lyrical hero gives an outline of the crimes of William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, who became King of England in 1066, having won the battle at Hastings:

THIS is the place where William's kingly power//Did from their poor and peaceful homes expel,//Unfriended, desolate, and shelterless,//The habitants of all the fertile tract//Far as these wilds extend. He levelled down//Their little cottages, he bade their fields//Lie barren, so that o'er the forest waste//He might more royally pursue his sports!//If that thine heart be human, passenger!//Sure it will swell within thee, and thy lips//Will mutter curses on him. Think thou, then,//What cities flame, what hosts unsepulchred//Pollute the passing wind, when raging power//Drives on his blood-hounds to the chase of man; //And as thy thoughts anticipate that day//When God shall judge aright, in charity//Pray for the wicked rulers of mankind(Southey 1866, 439-440). (For a Monument in the New Forest)

Henry VI who was noble, smart, pious, but mentally ill, as his granfather, the King of France had been, is described by Southey with symphathy:

Henry, thou of saintly worth,//Thou, to whom thy Windsor gave//Nativity, and name, and grave; //[...]//He, in spirit like a child.//Meek of heart and undefiled.//Patiently his crown resign'd.//And fix'd on heaven his heavenly mind// Blessing, while he kiss'd the rod.//His Redeemer and his God.//Now may he in realms of bliss//Greet a soul as pure as his.

Southey refers to King Henry VIII as “hateful Henry” and blasts him for killing his wives, two of whom were cousins and belonged to the Norfolks:

Henry, too, hath here his part; //At the gentle Seymour's side.//With his best beloved bride, //Cold and quiet, here are laid //The ashes of that fiery heart. //Not with his tyrannic spirit, //Shall our Charlotte's soul inherit; //No, by Fisher's hoary head. //By More, the learned and the good, //By Katharine's wrongs and Boleyn's blood, //By the life so basely shed //Of the pride of Norlolk's line. //By the axe so often red, //By the fire with martyrs fed. // **Hateful Henry**, not with thee. //May her happy spirit be! (Southey 1866, 455)

In “Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte of Wales” R. Southey reflects tremendous mourning of the big imperial family for their beloved Princess Charlotte of Wales (1796-1817). This royalty was much admired by the British, who had seen her as a bud of hope, making stark contrast both to her unpopular father George, Prince of Wales (later king George IV), and grandfather, king George III, whom the people deemed insane. Had Princess Charlotte outlived her father and grandfather, she would have become the Sovereign of the United Kingdom. But Princess Charlotte died aged 21, after giving birth to a stillborn child

In its summer pride arrayed //Low **our Tree of Hope** is laid; Windsor, in thy sacred shade //Is the **Flower of Brunswick** laid; Late with youth and splendour crown'd, //Late in beauty's vernal bloom, //Late with love and joyaunce blest; //Never more lamented guest //Was in Windsor laid to rest).

Describing St. George`s Chapel, Winsor, where Princess Charlotte was buried, R. Southey gives brief characteristics to the rulers of England, who had been buried there prior to Princess Charlotte:

And here lies one whose tragic name //A reverential thought may claim; //The murdered monarch, whom the grave, //Revealing its long secret, gave //Again to sight, that we may spy //This comely face, and waking eye; //There, thrice fifty years it lay, //Exempt from natural decay, //Unclosed and bright, as if to say, //A plague, of bloodier, baser birth //Than that beneath whose rage he bled, //Was loose upon our guilty earth; //Such awful warning from the dead //Was given by that portentous eye; //Then it closed eternally (Southey, Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte of Wales 1866, 456).

In the given extract R. Southey mentions king Charles I of England from the Stuart dynasty, who was murdered upon the command of Oliver Cromwell.

Southey had always been an outspoken champion of the poor, the humiliated, the oppressed. The poet had never hesitated to condemn

cruelty in its every form. And in this context the relation between the mighty ruler and the God Almighty becomes central.

In “The death of Wallace” one may find the lines which are very characteristic of Southey`s writings when he reflects upon the destiny and mission of every monarch:

Unrivalled, unopposed,//Go, Edward, full of glory, to thy grave!//The weight of patriot blood upon thy soul,//Go, Edward, to thy God! (Southey 1866, 365)

Henry V was one of the most admired monarchs in the history of England. Nevertheless, in Southey`s “Joan of Arc” Henry V is depicted **as a valiant soldier:**

"There are those," old Bertram cried,/" Who for his deedswill honour Henry's name.//That honour that a conqueror may deserve//He merits, for right valiantly he fought//On that disastrous day (Southey 1866, 17);

Skilful as brave, [...] (Southey 1866, 17)

Henry, as wise as brave (Southey 1866, 18)

In battle bold,//Savage in conquest, their victorious king//Swept like the desolating tempest round (Southey 1866, 19)

**a merciless conqueror:**

I stood and mark'd the miserable outcasts,//And every moment thought that Henry's heart,//Hard as it was, must feel (Southey 1866, 21),

**a monarch subject to suggestion:**

Oh! that the sepulchre had closed its jaws//On that foul priest,that bad bloodguilty man,//Who, trembling for the church's ill-got wealth,//Bade Henry look on France, ere he had drawn//The desolating sword, and sent him forth//To slaughter! (Southey 1866, 109)

and a **personality not only adored but also detested:**

Henry of Azincourt, this conqueror-king,//Go to his grave. The long procession past//Slowly from town to town, and when I heard//The deep-toned dirge, and saw the banners wave//A pompous shade, and the high torches glare//In the mid-day sun a dim and gloomy light,//I thought what he had been on earth who now//Was gone to his account, and blest my God//I was not such as he! (Southey 1866, 22).

R. Southey focuses on the encounter of Henry V and the unknown holy hermit who warned the monarch against the murder, which followed the English claim for the throne of France and foretold Henry`s death in case of disobedience:

[...] Sure he spake the will of God, // That holy hermit, who in his career // Of conquest met the king and bade him cease // The work of death, before the wrath divine // Fell heavy on his head; and soon it fell, // And sunk him to the grave; and soon that wrath // On us, alike in sin, alike shall fall: [...] (Southey, *Joan Of Arc*, 1866, 109-110)

And what is more, in his notes to the poem “Joan of Arc” R. Southey cites the very source from which the information about the encounter was taken:

While Henry V lay at the siege of Dreux, an honest hermit unknown to him, came and told him the great evils he brought upon Christendom by his unjust ambition, who usurped the kingdom of France against all manner of right, and contrary to the will of God; wherefore in his holy name he threatened him with a severe and sudden punishment, if he desisted not from his enterprise. Henry took this exhortation either as an idle whimsy, or a suggestion of the Dauphin's, and was but the more confirmed in his design. But the blow soon followed the threatening; for within some few months after, he was smitten in the fundament with a strange and incurable disease. – Mezeray. (Note 42 to page 109).

King Henry V`s fate had never lost its topicality with R. Southey and in the poem “King Henry V and the Hermit of Dreux” *the poet gave the detailed version of the same story once again: *Thou conqueror King, repent in time, // Or dread the coming woe; // For, Henry, thou hast heard the threat, // And soon shalt feel the blow (Southey 1866, 297).**

In England of those days the hermits were held in great esteem, even by the representatives of upper classes of society. Because of that the word “*reverence*” is repeated in the text several times, and the speech of the hermit is really daring:

HE past unquestioned through the camp, // Their heads the soldiers bent // In <b>silent reverence</b> , or begg'd // A blessing as he went; // And so the hermit past along, // And reach'd the royal tent.	King Henry lifted up his eyes // The intruder to behold, // With <b>reverence</b> he the hermit saw, // For he was very old; // His look was gentle as a saint's, // And yet his eye was bold (Southey 1866, 295).
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In the last quatrain R. Southey emphasises the fact that the prophecy of the holy hermit came true, and one of the most illustrious English royalties died early without a known reason: *King Henry forced a careless smile, // As the hermit went his way; // But Henry soon remembered him, // Upon his dying day (Southey 1866, 297).*

In “*The Battle of Pultowa*” Southey mentions sympathetically Johann Reinhold Patkul, who was a Livonian nobleman: ***Patkul thou art avenged! // Long years of idleness // That restless soul must bear, // Patkul thou art avenged! (Southey 1866, 350)***

Patkul's political activity against Charles XI of Sweden made him an enemy of the monarch. J. Patkul managed to escape the capital punishment, having fled from the Swedish empire. He took efforts to ally Peter the Great of Russia, Augustus the Strong of Saxony and Polish-Lithuania as well as Christian V and then Frederick IV of Denmark-Norway against Charles XII of Sweden. At the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century Patkul fell from king Augustus' favour, being even charged with high treason (ПАТКУЛЬ). After more than one year of detention in Saxony Patkul was brought to Sweden, where, in a year, he was broken on the wheel and decapitated: *The despot's savage anger took thy life, // Thy death has stabb'd his fame.*

In the poem "For a Monument at Taunton" R. Southey's lyrical hero condemns the minion of king James II and his appalling acts of lawlessness and arbitrary rule. King James II is often contemptuously referred to as "that king", making a parallel construction with "that judge", used to denote Jefferies (*The bloody judge, the minion of his king*), widely known for his Bloody Assize:

THEY perish'd here whom Jefferies doom'd to death // In mockery of all justice,  
when he came // The bloody judge, the minion of his king, // Commission'd to  
destroy. // They perish'd here, // The victims of that judge and of that king, // In  
mockery of all justice perish'd here, // Unheard! but not unpitied, nor of God //  
Unseen, the innocent suffered! not in vain // The widow and the orphan, not in  
vain // The innocent blood cried vengeance! (Southey, For a Monument at Taunton 1866, 443).

Many English romantics were at first fascinated by the genius of Napoleon, his courage, and his will, but then changed their opinion to the opposite. Southey had also gradually crystallised into the open adversary of Napoleon, condemning him in his poetical works. R. Southey even coined a new word – "autocrat", to describe the person, possessing absolute power:

**autocrat** – n

1803, from Fr. autocrate, from Gk. autokrates "ruling by oneself," from autos-"self" (comb. form) + kratia "rule," from kratos "strength, power" (see -cracy).

**First used by Robert Southey, with reference to Napoleon.** An earlier form was autocrator (1789), used in ref. to the Russian Czars. Earliest form in Eng. is the fem. autocratress (1762) (Autocrat).

In Southey's "The curse of Kehama" Napoleon became a prototype of the tyrant Kehama. In "The March To Moscow" Southey's lyrical hero depicts Napoleon as an excessively self-confident ruler, using a contemptuous contraction "Emperor Nap". Southey clearly shows how wrong a mortal can be, when the supreme power of God is despised. R. Southey portrays



Napoleon being tamed by the elements and wonders what the Emperor was thinking about at the given moment of his defeat:

And then came on the frost and snow//All on the road from Moscow.// **The wind and the weather he found in that hour//Cared nothing for him nor for all his power;//For him who, while Europe crouch'd under his rod,//Put his trust in his Fortune, and not in his God.**//Worse and worse every day the elements grew// The fields were so white and the sky so blue.// Sacrebleu! Ventrebleu!// What a horrible journey from Moscow. What then thought the Emperor Nap// Upon the road from Moscow? (Southey 1839, 484)

One should mention that it is very typical of Southey to choose a dramatic spot of time and then stop it for a while in order to think over what a monarch might be feeling at that very moment.

Thus, for instance, in “Destruction of Jerusalem” Southey depicts a miserable monarch, who was severely punished for his deeds:

And thou – thou miserable king – //Where is thy trusted flock,//Thy flock so beautiful,//Thy father's throne, the temple of thy God?(Southey, Destruction of Jerusalem 1866, 268)

Zedekiah (originally named as Mattaniah), was the king of Judah (597-587/586 BC), who witnessed the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and further deportation of most of the Jews to Babylon. Zedekiah was not loyal to king Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, who had previously deported Jehoiachin, the reigning king of Judah, to Babylon and made Mattaniah regent under the name of Zedekiah. The rebellious vassal started plotting against the mighty king of Babylon, and in the ninth year of Zedekiah`s rule, Nebuchadrezzar laid siege to Jerusalem. During the siege Zedekiah denounced the prophet Jeremiah who insisted on immediate submission to the dominion of the Babylonians, regarded by him, as the God`s will. In the sixth month of the seige the Babylonians entered Jerusalem, and the king, who had fled toward the Jordan River, was soon captured. Zedekiah`s sons were slain in his presence and the unfortunate king of Judah was blinded and carried in chains to Babylon, where he was kept prisoner until his death (2 Ki 25: 4-7):

Repentance calls not back the past; //It will not wake again//Thy murdered sons to life,//Or bring back vision to thy blasted sight! (Southey 1866, 268),

Thou wretched, childless, blind, old man – //Heavy thy punishment!//Dreadfully present woes – //Alas, more dreadful thy remember'd guilt! (Southey 1866, 268)

In “St. Bartholomew`s day” Southey recollects the events that took place

on 23-24 August 1572, when the St. Bartholomew`s Day Massacre between the French Catholics and the Huguenots took place. And again the moment of time is deliberately stopped by R. Southey in order to understand what the king of France might be feeling:

The monarch from the window leans, // He listens to the night, // And with a horrible and eager hope // Awaits the midnight bell. // Oh, he has hell within him now! // God, always art thou just! // For innocence can never know such pangs // As pierce successful guilt.

Thy hand is on him, righteous God! // He hears the frantic shriek, // He hears the glorying yells of massacre, // And he repents too late. // [...] // Righteous and just art thou, O God! // For at his dying hour // Those shrieks and groans re-echoed in his ear // He heard that murderous yell! (Southey 1866, 350-351)

King Ramiro II (931–951), the monarch of Leon was also punished by the God, as R. Southey relates, for all the crimes he had done, especially for the murder of his wife:

They carried the wicked Queen aboard, // And they took counsel what to do to her; // They tied a millstone round her neck, // And overboard in the sea they threw her. // But a heavier weight than that millstone lay // On Ramiro's soul at his dying day (Southey, King Ramiro 1841, 134).

Here it should be noted that R. Southey held all women in great esteem and taught other men to revere womankind. For instance, in the poem “For A Tablet At Godstow Nunnery”, dedicated to a beauty Rosamund of Clifford, seduced by the English king, R. Southey`s lyrical hero says the following:

HERE, stranger, rest thee! from the neighbouring towers // Of Oxford, haply thou hast forced thy bark // Up this strong stream, whose broken waters here // Send pleasant murmurs to the listening sense: // Rest thee beneath this hazel; its green boughs // Afford a grateful shade, and to the eye // Fair is its fruit: stranger! the seemly fruit // Is worthless, all is hollowness within, // For on the grave of Rosamund it grows! // Young, lovely, and beloved, she fell seduced, // And here retired to wear her wretched age // In earnest prayer and bitter penitence, // Despised and self-despising: think of her, // Young man, and learn to reverence woman-kind! (Southey 1866, 445)

But even when R. Southey didn`t blast the monarch for his crimes, he would inevitably stress the power of God over a human being, even a royal one. In “Queen Mary`s Christening” R. Southey described helplessness of Queen Mary of Aragon in the face of God. In her thoughts the Queen addressed the twelve apostles so that they could help her choose the best Christian name for her newly-born son. Her favourite name “James” was mentioned twice among the apostles, and the Queen believed that with a bit of luck her son would bear the name she was dreaming of. Indeed, there

were two apostles, named “James” – James the Elder, and James the Lesser or Younger. There was no “Judas” already, but there still remained the name “Jude”, the Queen did not want. Nevertheless, Queen Mary of Aragon decided to watch twelve flickering candles with the names of the apostles, and share her precious experience with the court. The queen organized the event with great pomp, and as a self-assured person, vested with broad powers, was almost sure of the positive result.

Having seen the quenched sparks of the candles with the names of St. Peter, St. John, St. Matthias, St. Matthew, St. Andrew, St. Philip, St. Bartholomew, St. Simon, St. Thomas, the Queen still hoped for St. James, because there remained the two St. James and St. Jude. But with the passage of time the Queen realized that there is little chance for her son to be called James, and the only remaining option is Jude. She started praying to St. Mary, desperately asking for help, and everyone present witnessed a miracle:

Holy Mother preserve us!//The Queen her prayer renew'd; //When in came  
a moth at the window//And flutter'd about St. Jude.//St. James hath fallen in  
the socket//But as yet the flame is not out,//And St. Jude hath singed the silly  
moth//That flutters so blindly about.//And before the flame and the molten  
wax//That silly moth could kill,//It hath beat out St. Jude with its wings,//And  
St. James is burning still!//Oh, that was a joy for Queen Mary's heart; //The  
babe is christened James;//The Prince of Aragon hath got//The best of all good  
names! (Southey, Queen Mary`s Christening 1839, 488)

Thus, the God`s providence is always in the center of Southey`s writings, especially when the lyrical hero reflects upon the nature of the royal power and the power of God over any mortal, including the monarch. R. Southey often depicts the monarchs true to life, and cannot be regarded as a smoothed-tongued Poet-laureat, always loyal even to the worst of the monarchs.

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### Abstract

William Shakespeare is traditionally regarded as the greatest writer of the English-speaking world. But many scholars emphasize the fact that his reputation on the international arena grew enormously during the Romantic period. Romantics exaggerated humble origin of William Shakespeare, widely admired his nature poetry and Shakespeare's keen interest in folk culture, history in general, and the history of the Middle Ages in particular. Shakespeare's zeal in ruination of the existing standards and conventions made him close and understandable to the Romantics.

R. Southey often used Shakespearean allusions in his works, and made romantic historicism a characteristic feature of his verse. R. Southey wrote about the monarchs as often as W. Shakespeare had done before him. In Southey's poetry we come across a lot of images of kings and queens from Judah, Babylon, Persia, Leon, England, France, Sweden, Prussia, Russia, etc. As W. Shakespeare before him, Southey revealed royal aspirations, vices, miseries, heroic deeds. By doing this Southey tried to answer the most topical questions of his time, because both the American Revolution and the revolution in France brought about different systems of government.

Because of that a monarch as a person chosen by the God and traditional monarchy as it is are given close attention in Southey's works.

**Keywords:** R. Southey, W. Shakespeare, Romantics, monarch, monarchy, historicism.