

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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The Golden Chain

Essays on William Morris and Pre-Raphaelitism

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THE POETICS OF REPETITION
AND
THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

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Søren Kierkegaard chooses as epigraph for his Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology (1843), "On wild trees the flowers are fragrant; on cultivated trees, the fruits." Walter Pater says in an 1868 review of William Morris' poetry and its indulgence in medievalism, "Like some strange second flowering after date, it renews on a more delicate type the poetry of a past age, but must not be confounded with it."¹ What, both figurative flowerings make us ask, is the relationship between past and present, between culture and nature, between the artful and the artless? The metaphor itself suggests these answers. Temporality's inevitable movement turns flower to fruit as surely as it turns nature to culture, the artless to the artful. Time fulfills and renews precisely because it generates such transformations. Only by virtue of temporality can we make such comparisons; without the past, nature, and the artless, we could make no statements about present, culture, and art. Yet Pater's figurative flowering also implies a dark discontinuity in temporal progression. Although "more delicate" and renewing—"second" and therefore more removed, more beautiful, more aesthetic—Morris' repeated flower is "strange," "after date." In our conjoined reading, Pater's metaphor unsettles Kierkegaard's progress-oriented temporality. Both statements, however, whether alike or different, center implicitly on ideas of repetition and difference, origin and priority, convention and originality.

These two figurative statements about past and present contain the germ of my interest in Morris'

endless ink arguing whether Morris' medieval poems represent escapism or criticism of nineteenth-century industrial society.² Does Morris ignore the present in favor of the past, or does he relate the two? Does art merely repeat its models, or does it transform them and its own milieu? I should like to look at these often-asked questions one more time in order to demonstrate that Morris engaged in neither escapism nor social criticism in his early Pre-Raphaelite poetry. Like my textual conjunction of Kierkegaard and Pater, Morris' poems in The Defence of Guenevere question the temporal tie between past and present by virtue of their relationship to medieval texts, conventions, and thematics: "by repeating them with a difference. These poems generate their artistic tension by balancing past and present, interrogating each by juxtaposing it to its opposite. In this way, Morris' poems create what I will call an "erotics of repetition," an awareness that repetition implies difference as well as similarity.³

I

In his essay, Repetition, Kierkegaard poses a tripartite theory of our urge to repeat. His speaker, Constantine Constantius, first defines repetition as "ironic elasticity" which turns recollection, that unhappy nostalgia, into rejoiced reexperience. Kierkegaard's persona tells us and his young friend struggling first to stay in love, then to get out of it, "Hope is a charming maiden but slips through the fingers, recollection is a beautiful old woman but of no use at the instant, repetition is a beloved wife of whom one never tires" (6). This erotic epigrammatism, however, gives way at the end of Part I to the stern realization, "There is no such thing as repetition." On a visit to Berlin, Constantius finds once-loved activities and friends changed or boring; nothing yields pleasure the second time around. Back home in Denmark,

the order it bears in his memory, then perceives, anticipating Freud, that his obsessive desire to repeat resembles death. What remains? The final and culminating Part II, entitled "Repetition," presents the young lover of Part I, Constantine's nameless friend (and double), discovering repetition as transcendence. His example: the blessing Job receives when God gives him everything doubled. The perfect repetition is eternity.

Kierkegaard's figurative language, however, undercuts his transcendent message. Constantine Constantius admits himself unfit for transcendence, and metaphorically self-conscious or narcissistic: "I can circumnavigate myself, I cannot find the Archimedean point" (94); "I eat lettuce, it is true," he declares, "but I eat only the heart; the leaves, in my opinion, are fit for swine. I prefer with Lessing the rapture of conception to the labor of childbirth" (20). This preference for beginnings and conception, for centers and inner essence, for self-consciousness and narcissism, stands opposed throughout Kierkegaard's essay to his structural drive toward transcendent ends.

Yet Kierkegaard aims to transcend this negativity by virtue of temporal reversibility. Recalling an earlier reverie, Constantius recollects and re-creates a quasi-pastoral idyll of beginning and reversibility. The progressive venture out of the narrative present, even outside the narrative past, creates a paradoxical internalizing movement in the text: in a garden within a thicket, approached only by driving the whole night and walking to the left instead of the right to fool the coachman, Constantius hears morning-birds sing, sees foxes sneak out of their holes, peasants and milkmaids begin their morning tasks, and a lovely young girl miraculously appear. Forward suddenly becomes backward, as the causal chain linking events in time no longer holds, and eroticism unwinds temporality:

Who could arise from his bed as if no one had been lying upon it, so that the bed itself was cool and delicious and refreshing to behold, as if the sleeper had not rested upon it but only leaned over to put everything to rights? Who could die in such a way that even one's deathbed the very instant one is lifted from it was more inviting to behold than if a careful mother had beaten the bed and puffed it up so that the child might sleep more soundly? (66-67)

Constantius desires reversibility, desires to deny time's inevitable rush forward from sleep to death, from cause to effect, but his rhetoric and grammar question that desire. Constantius applies his own brand of "ironic elasticity" to this vision of spatial inwardness and temporal unwinding. His recollection repeats a dream, fulfills nothing, yet makes him happy for a moment.

Temporal reversibility and the ability to experience something the second time as fully as one did the first, then, relates, as Kierkegaard's metaphors demonstrate, to eroticism. Kierkegaard's treatise relates time and love as surely as Pater's relates time and beauty. Compared with experience A, experience B appears boring unless more than time connects them. Yet only by virtue of experience B does experience A constitute a precedent, and experience B a repetition. This temporal problematic never can be cured, yet an "erotics of repetition" enables us to live with it. Roland Barthes, himself hooked on "succulent newness," believes repetition can be erotic only if "extravagantly repeated."⁴ Gilles Deleuze, like Barthes and Kierkegaard, attempts to cure the discontinuity of time by positing "intentional repetition," which opposes the laws of nature, is amoral, and rejects both habit and memory. This repetition represents the "logos of the solitary, the singular."⁵ Experience B occurs second to experience A, yet appears no less original

than its predecessor. Rejoiced repetition can imitate transcendent time only by virtue of an erotics of repetition.

II

The categories of Kierkegaard's experiment in psychology--repetition, reversibility, self-consciousness, and eroticism--apply almost exactly to Morris' experiment in medievalism in The Defence of Guenevere. From his schooldays on, Morris loved the medieval world, explored ruins, and enjoyed stained glass windows. These visual examples of the Middle Ages may well have stimulated his later painting of Guenevere and his Oxford Union painting, his interest in medieval books, architecture, and furniture. Throughout his career, Morris imitates medieval literary texts, responding to reading by writing. He says himself about the method he used to make Malory into The Defence of Guenevere: "Read it through . . . then shut the book and write it out again as a new story for yourself" (17,xxxix). Morris' literal and imaginative excursion into Iceland and its Nordic sagas again finds him repeating earlier literature, and coming eventually to translating it--aside from quotation, perhaps the most perfect repetition out of eternity, rewriting texts the same in another language.⁶

Morris' medieval imitation represents several kinds of repetition. In some cases, Morris' poetry virtually repeats medieval conventions; see, for example, his poem, "French Noel" (1860), which might be mistaken in both form and content for the nowells R. T. Davies presents in his collection of medieval lyrics. Morris also imitates medieval narrative, form, and language in Guenevere in abundance: Arthurian tales and Froissartian chronicles, ballads, aubades, blazons, formal rhyme schemes and refrains. Text A apparently equals text B; time appears reversible indeed.

repeats a medieval one. He writes, "To Morris the Middle Ages, out of which he sometimes seemed to have strayed by some accident into the nineteenth century, were his habitual environment: he lived in them as really and as simply as if he had been translated back to them in actual vision."⁷ Present becomes past; Morris' experience and imagination become subject to and initiate reversibility. We know, of course, that lives are not reversible, but can Morris' Pre-Raphaelite and late-Romantic imagination make them so? Can his poetic endeavor not only attempt to assimilate the past to the present, but translate the present into the past? It appears, at first, as Mackail indicates, that Morris' obsession with medievalism does exactly that: repeat the past, or past texts, in order to reverse time and transport the self to an inner room with a window on a blue closet which houses Alices and Louises pining for their lovers gone valiantly armoured and pennoned into battle.

Yet Morris repeats medieval texts and conventions, precisely because they are conventional and therefore repeatable. Medieval convention implies that poetry merely repeats what we already understand about our relationship to human process and heavenly eternity. All medieval contemptus mundi poems, for example, repeat the same rhetorical formulations of human vanity; all hymns to the Virgin Mary stress her five cardinal virtues, yet compare her to the sexual beloved.⁸ Most of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales have antecedents like French fabliaux, or tales from Boccaccio's Decameron; Chrétien de Troyes' knightly tales make use of earlier versions of, for example, Perceval. Medieval writing was often rewriting; knowledge was conventional, and so originality, or anxiety about priority and novelty did not motivate the writer, who repeated human truth--despite the wars and deaths, the ups and downs of fortune contained and conventionalized by his texts and traditions.

versions of Tristan, for example, are identical. Transformation of conventional texts occurs: variants exist, as do complex patterns of transmission, such as the reintroduction of Arthur to England by way of Normandy. Texts changed, but variation was hardly the point of writing--the author was not an originator, a "father" of words. That modern addition, novelty transforming convention, appeared with Romanticism, and the Romantic poets may well have taught Morris to "intentionally repeat" medieval texts, to use Deleuze's term, to extravagantly and joyfully create texts which resemble those of the Middle Ages. Morris called Keats, for example, "one of my masters," and S. C. Cockerell reports that Morris told him Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci" was the "germ from which all the poetry of his group had sprung."⁹ Morris appears influenced by Keats's late experiments with this "reconstitution" of earlier forms. "To Sleep," "On the Sonnet," and "Summer Dawn," for example, all arouse, then frustrate and defeat, our expectation of sonnet architecture.¹⁰ Although clearly a believer in organic unity, Keats tends toward fracture of convention in order to reconstitute, or "intentionally repeat," as does Morris.

As Pater warns us, then, we must not confound Morris' strange flowers with their medieval predecessors. Morris himself advises of Malory's text, "write it out again as a new story for yourself" (my italics). Guenevere is not identical with the Morte d'Arthur, and Morris could not inhabit the world of the Middle Ages directly. As Kierkegaard might point out, we can only recollect the past; we can never know it except as metaphor or artifact. As Morse Peckham writes, history does not interpret events of the past, but the extant documents we have available about that past.¹¹ Text B can never equal text A, and so reversibility appears itself a metaphor. Repetition can never make two events or texts identical, but similar, with differences.

Morris' medieval repetition, then, like all conventional writing-as-rewriting of earlier texts, is "an eccentric order of repetition, not one of sameness."¹² Said's term "eccentric" connotes a peculiar quirkiness, a queer oddity. Applied to most writers we might find the term itself eccentric, but Morris' medieval texts are a bit quirky and peculiar; they do transform or reconstitute their predecessors in unpredictable ways. According to David Staines, Morris' Arthurian poems "dramatize heightened moments of passion which are only remotely suggested by Malory."¹³ Staines also charts the similarities and differences between Morris and Malory or Froissart, and finds the Froissartian and Arthurian poems moving consistently away from their sources, their origins in the Chronicles and Morte d'Arthur: "Guenevere" changes the role of Gawaine, but nevertheless has its roots in Malory; "The Chapel at Lyons," on the other hand, bears little resemblance to Malory's text. As he moves away from his source text, then, Morris reconstitutes his "new story" truly new. In this sense his reconstituted text reinvents Malory's rather than repeats it, becoming truly the "logos of the solitary, the singular."

Morris loved and imitated, intentionally repeated, the conventional textuality of medievalism, but romance narrative strategy and thematics also attracted the hyper-energetic Topsy. Malory's exaggeration, for example, of the romance's tendency to express narrative event above character, to essentialize action over emotion, makes his text a highly wrought surface in which language and event conspire to create a sense of discontinuity, of obsessive activity implying portentous outcome. The thematics of romance in Malory's Morte d'Arthur must also have enthralled Morris. Any reader of Malory's text must be struck with the juxtaposition of, and variation wrung upon, two narrative activities: courtly loving and battling. Eroticism and death pervade and embody the textures and structures of Malory's tales.

We might say the Morte d'Arthur, in fact, discovers its narrative structure in an erotics of repetition: the extravagance with which Malory repeats incidents of love and death makes them continually novel.

Eroticism and narrative discontinuity certainly pervade the poems in The Defence of Guenevere. In his 1868 review of Morris' poetry, parts of which later became "Aesthetic Poetry" and the "Conclusion" to The Renaissance, Pater discusses the "great primary passions" of Morris' poetry, and its relationship to the "wild, convulsed sensuousness" of medieval romance (84, 83). If intentional repetition finds its motivation in beauty, rejoicing, extravagance, and eroticism, its thematics discover its subject matter in the erotics of repetition as well. Morris' medieval characters all seek love, yet few find it. Eroticism becomes obsessive, as speakers speak only their loss. They experience intense loneliness: Rapunzel in her tower, Ladies Alice and Louise in their closet--all three singing and dreaming alone on holiday eves. Betrayed lovers and beloveds people the poems, from the speaker of "Spellbound" to the forlorn knights of "Near Avalon." Morris recreates his medieval sources into fragments of narrative--fragments of their own stories, which are in turn fragments of earlier stories. These heightened moments become fractured fables of Morris' modern consciousness read into, yet supported by, the eccentric violence of Malory and Froissart. As Staines notes, the speakers of Morris' dramatic monologues and soliloquies engage in "personal introspection, inconceivable to Malory" ("Guenevere"), in "self-examination that would never be found in the pages of Malory" ("Sir Galahad: A Christmas Mystery").¹⁴ Whereas Malory's text privileges narrative event, Morris' privileges the narrative moment of self-consciousness. Perhaps understanding the leap he has made beyond medieval consciousness, Morris told Mackail the poems in Guenevere were "more like Browning than anyone else";¹⁵ they combine a

repetition of medieval convention with a complex Browningsque awareness of self-conscious guilt and lonely self-explanation, -examination, and -manipulation. Morris' characters discover self-consciousness and the inevitable loneliness of human experience while questing after erotic love.

This combined sense of the fragmentary, the discontinuity between setting and consciousness, between narrative text and context, brings us back to Said's term, "eccentric repetition." In mathematics and astronomy, "eccentric" means decentered: two circles one of which contains the centers of both, or an orbit which deviates from circular form. In a strange way, Morris discovers that lack of center in repeating medieval texts. The vision implied by the whole of Guenevere is one of a world without center, of characters discovering their isolation from one another and from any sustaining and meaningful eroticism. The self in Morris' poetry provides no center; as in "Summer Dawn," the lover's yearning self is empty, a void without relation outward. Only in the vague and hollow "Two Red Roses Across the Moon" and "Welland River" do we find unqualified fulfillment; only in the fairy-tale "Rapunzel" and Arthurian "Guenevere" do we find heavily attenuated fulfillment. The strange intensity of The Defence of Guenevere springs from Morris' modern exploration of the discontinuous narrative moment in his source texts, his understanding that eroticism is obsessive, even narcissistic, that the self and world lack center.

III

Morris' erotic thematics, however, go beyond discontinuity and narcissism. Like Malory, Morris represents sexuality, as I have already implied, as intimately linked with death. Necrophilia appears often in Guenevere: John of Castel Neuf's remembered revery of kissing a skeleton in "Concerning Geoffray Teste Noire"; the dream of the bloody beloved and the fragile keeping of everyday order in "The Wind"; the return of the ghost-lover in "The

Blue Closet"; the sexualizing of death in "The Haystack in the Floods"; the thought or dream of love and death in "The Gilliflower of Gold" and "Sir Peter Harpdon's End." Morris' obsession with death, and his linking it with sexual experience or desire, demonstrates a dark side of his medieval repetitions. That death-obsessed link exists in medieval romance, of course, and in a sense Morris merely repeats it; yet its privileged and ultimate place in his narratives makes it appear more than purely conventional. Morris' erotic thematics, his poetics of repetition, focus on the moment of despair, obsession, and death. Kierkegaard anxiously desires to transcend, to elide, to repress in his experiment in psychology. The exaggerated tone of death anxiety in Guenevere, in fact, indicates that repetition may function for Morris unconsciously as a way to tap repressed material. According to Freud, repression transforms any repressed emotional affect, regardless of its original quality, into fear of death; the primal act of repression occurs during the Oedipal stage when the boy or girl child must renounce primal love for the mother. For a son, this repression also entails fear of death or castration at the hands of the father.¹⁶

If we look at Guenevere again with this in mind, we recognize the pattern of eroticism and death as the outcome of primal, Oedipal repression. This sexual betrayal, portrayed from both the male and female perspectives, goes hand in hand with anxieties about death and time: the victimized knight or lady dies, or fears death, or causes death. The repetition of this motif demonstrates the return of the repressed, and is a structural part of the repressed material being displaced and so allowed to pass the censor and become conscious. This sexual betrayal also appears in the Guenevere poems as a triangular motif: Jehane, Robert, and Godmar in "The Haystack in the Floods"; Guenevere, Arthur, and Launcelot in the Arthurian poems. Here the underlying Oedipal drama becomes apparent. In the

Arthurian triangle, the son's quest for the mother creates Guenevere's punishment by vengeful men of the court (who replace an unwilling and powerless Arthur in the larger narrative context). The son, however, pays dearly for his rescue of Guenevere, for apparent victory: Morris dramatizes both that victory ("The Defence of Guenevere") and the inevitable defeat ("King Arthur's Tomb"). In the Froisartian poem, "The Haystacks in the Floods," the entire drama unfolds in one poem: the ogre Godmar kills the son--destroying his head is a symbolic castration--and Jehane, whose refusal to have sex with Godmar causes Robert's death, goes off to be tried and judged guilty in Paris. Interestingly enough, both poems focus sympathetically on the female, doomed by her position between two demanding males to play the ambiguous role of the mother-figure. Morris also portrays, however, some less revenge-ridden Oedipal dramas: in "Rapunzel," the Prince wins Rapunzel, supplants and then becomes the father, and transforms Rapunzel into the queen of his young dreams, Guendolen.¹⁷

Morris' continual attraction to the motif of triangular love strikes any reader familiar with his biography as uncanny. It would be irresponsible for any critic to speculate about the sources of his interest in the disguised Oedipal situation; we simply do not know enough about Morris' childhood to argue a causal link. But the truly uncanny ways both the Guenevere poems and the Oxford Union painting ("How Sir Palomydes loved La Belle Iseult with exceeding great love out of measure, and how she loved not him but rather Sir Tristram") anticipate Morris' triangular relationship with Jane Burden and Dante Gabriel Rossetti indicates this pattern as essential in Morris' experience. Philip Henderson calls the Oxford painting "curiously prophetic." Mackail says the subject had for Morris a "singular and almost a morbid attraction"; he had, in fact, the previous year treated the same topic in prose for The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, for which he

selected details directly from his own life.¹⁸

The appearance of this pattern in Morris' life and art, then, plus his repeated use of it in his visual and written texts, is indeed uncanny. In his essay "The Uncanny," Freud associates the uncanny with repetition and obsession as well as with repression. The uncanny experience occurs when infantile complexes are revived by some impression, when involuntary repetition of a repressed experience occurs. This repetition compulsion exists in the unconscious, and is "probably inherent in the very nature of the instincts."¹⁹ Whether Morris understood his need to repeat this structure, he is clearly compelled to deal with it again and again, and so to subject himself and it to repetition. Morris' repetition of medieval convention, then, contains within it this repeated structure: the unconscious patterning of eroticism, death, and revenge as Oedipal triangulation.

But what does this repetition achieve in Morris' work? Narrative and repetition do not simply occur by metonymic expansion; something must be at stake, an exchange must happen, a transformation occur--both within the text and for the writer, who discovers in the structures he writes an aspect of his unconscious process. Here again, Freud offers a suggestive reason for repetition, one we can apply to the creative process. Freud's analysis of repetition in Beyond the Pleasure Principle assigns a pleasurable reason for repetition compulsion. Not only is it pleasurable simply to repeat experiences because this protects us against the threat of novelty and high excitation, it also provides the pleasure of mastering unpleasant experiences to repeat them, but with a difference. In his discussion of his grandson's fort-da game, Freud noted that the child reenacted his mother's disappearance while playing with a wooden reel. The disappearance was initially painful, but the child made it pleasurable because, through the game, he mastered the experience: he became active rather than passive, and at

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the same time, by making the toy "gone" (fort), he revenged himself on his mother for going away.²⁰ No longer the victim, he became the victimizer, avenging himself and punishing his mother, through a symbolic substitute.

The ever-present elements of punishment, trial, and guilt in Morris' triangular love poems serve this same symbolic function. The son-lover is often betrayed or killed, but the mother pays. Although we sympathize strongly with Guenevere and Jehane, we feel no doubt about the guilt of one and the future suffering of the other. Morris' repetition of this modified Oedipal drama, his examination of the betrayed and of betrayal, of the triangular structure of family desire, attempt to reach a sense of mastery which can never fully be achieved. At stake in Morris' Pre-Raphaelite poetry is the desire for mastery at war with the compulsion to repeat.

Whereas form represents conventional medieval repetition in Guenevere, language represents a repetition compulsion and the desire to master: the doubled Alices, Lamberts, and Sir Johns; the obsessive rhyme--the aaa, refrain, bba, refrain of "Praise of My Lady," for example; the refrains which repeat themselves quatrain after quatrain--"Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée," or Beata mea Domina!, or "Two red roses across the moon," or "Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite," to repeat only the one-line refrains. Morris' obsessive rhymes, his ballad incantations, certainly embody his love-and-death erotic, and happily feed into his interest in medieval convention. The language of extravagant repetition weds Morris' erotic to the self-consciousness of dramatic monologue and soliloquy, and, with the language of narrative, to discontinuity and decentering and death.

Morris' aesthetic, incidentally, is not as eccentric--perhaps I should say perverse--as I may have made it appear. Love-and-death eroticism and medieval repetition appealed in various forms and guises to many nineteenth-century British writers,

including Tennyson, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Carlyle, Ruskin, Pater, Christina Rossetti, and Hardy. Morris is not unique, nor is he pathological. He taps both personal and structural patterns present in the unconscious and present in Victorian culture. Yet Morris' strange and intense Pre-Raphaelite versions of this love-and-death aesthetic, his second flowerings of medievalism, depend for their tension on the poetics of repetition. Morris, like Kierkegaard, rejoices in intentional repetition--although he rejects the theory of repetition as eternity, as transcendent. Like Freud, who eventually defines repetition as a compulsion which satisfies the death instinct as well as the erotic instinct--just as the heimlich becomes the unheimlich through repetition--Morris creates a poetics of repetition which serves a double function. The structure which represents this double bind, the Oedipal triangle, perfectly expresses the language of desire and prohibition, love and death. Morris' reinvention of medieval textuality repeats its conventions, yet somehow appears totally original.

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Notes

1. Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology, Walter Lowrie, trans. (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1941), p. 2; "Poems by William Morris," Westminster Review, 90 (October, 1868), 300, rpt. in William Morris: The Critical Heritage, ed. Peter Faulkner (London: Routledge, 1973), pp. 79-92. Page references to both texts hereafter appear in my text.
2. Believers in Morris as escapist include Graham Hough, The Last Romantics (London: Duckworth, 1949), p. 120; and Oscar Maurer, Jr., "William Morris and the Poetry of Escape," in Nineteenth Century Studies, ed. Herbert Davis et al. (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 247-76. Believers in Morris as socially relevant include John Goode,

- "William Morris and the Dream of Revolution," in Literature and Politics in the Nineteenth Century, ed. John Lucas (London: Methuen, 1971), pp. 221-80; Ralph Berry, "A Defense of Guenevere," Victorian Poetry, 9 (1971), 277-86; and Margaret Gent, "'To Flinch from Modern Varnish': The Appeal of the Past to the Victorian Imagination," in Victorian Poetry, gen. ed. Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (London: Arnold, 1972), pp. 11-35. Hartley S. Spatt, "William Morris and the Uses of the Past," Victorian Poetry, 13, Nos. 3-4 (Fall-Winter 1975), 1-9, develops an aesthetic argument about this controversy: Morris, he believes, used medievalism in order to fuse the past's stasis with its continuity with the present; using this temporal paradox, art creates memory and therefore eternity out of change.
3. This essay will not attempt to trace specific paternal "anxieties of influence," to borrow Harold Bloom's term, nor will it attempt to catalogue the differences and similarities between Morris and his sources for Guenevere, Malory and Froissart, which other critics have done admirably. The most useful and informative of such studies is David Staines, "Morris' Treatment of his Medieval Sources in The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems," Studies in Philology, 70 (1973), 439-64; see also John M. Patrick, "Morris and Froissart: 'Geoffroy Teste Noire' and 'The Haystack in the Floods,'" Notes and Queries, 103 (1958), 425-27, and "Morris and Froissart Again: 'Sir Peter Harpdon's End,'" Notes and Queries, 104 (1959), 331-33.
4. The Pleasure of the Text, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill, 1975), p. 42.
5. Différence et répétition (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), p. 14. The translation is Edward Said's in Beginnings: Intention and Method (New York: Basic, 1975), p. 53. I am indebted to Said's discussion of Deleuze in my own.
6. Said believes quotation represents the most perfect repetition of texts, see pp. 197-223, and he is,

of course, right. But I am speaking of creative repetition and literary convention; quotation does not fit that category.

7. J. W. Mackail, The Life of William Morris (London: Longmans, 1920), I, 132.
8. See, for example, in R. T. Davies, ed., Medieval English Lyrics: A Critical Anthology (London: Faber, 1966), "Contempt of the World," "The World and Illusion," "Despise the World," "A Hymn to Mary," "In Praise of Mary," and "The Five Joys of Mary."
9. Mackail, I, 200; George H. Ford, Keats and the Victorians (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1944), p. 152.
10. I borrow John Hollander's term, "reconstitution," from "Romantic Verse Form and the Metrical Contract," in Romanticism and Consciousness: Essays in Criticism, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Norton, 1970), p. 191.
11. Beyond the Tragic Vision (New York: Braziller, 1962), pp. 13-25.
12. Said, p. 12.
13. Staines, p. 462.
14. Staines, pp. 443, 449.
15. Mackail, I, 132.
16. John T. Irwin develops this "model" for repetition in literature as a vehicle for the return of the repressed; see Doubling and Incest/Repetition and Revenge: A Speculative Reading of Faulkner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1975), pp. 88-92.
17. See Michael D. Reed, "Morris' 'Rapunzel' as an Oedipal Fantasy," American Imago, 30 (1974), 313-22.
18. Philip Henderson, William Morris: His Life, Work and Friends (London: Thames, 1967), p. 44; Mackail, I, 119.
19. Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," in On Creativity and the Unconscious, ed. Benjamin Nelson (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), pp. 144-46, 157.
20. Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle (New York: Norton, 1967), 33-38.