

1985

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### Recommended Citation

Whyte, Christopher (1985) "Myth and Realism in Gillespie," *Studies in Scottish Literature*: Vol. 20: Iss. 1. Available at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol20/iss1/5>

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*Christopher Whyte*

Myth and Realism in *Gillespie*



The unavailability to a wide public of *Gillespie*, out of print for many decades, deprived it of the sustained critical attention that this novel, like so many modern Scottish texts, cries out for, and made it difficult to evaluate the sometimes lukewarm or reductive estimates given of it. Proust, speaking of Beethoven's late quartets, noted how works of art (in this case, through repeated performances, and a long-term effect on musical sensibility) may create an audience capable of appreciating them. That *Gillespie* had little chance to do so impoverished the Scottish novel-writing tradition, and makes the book come as something of a revelation today.

Variouly characterized as a rewrite of George Douglas Brown's *The House with the Green Shutters*, as an attack on capitalism, private initiative and free enterprise, as a grim vindication of the ineluctability of fate, *Gillespie* is all of these in part, and none completely. A splendid, if unconscious attempt to weld together the broken halves of Scotland's culture (in a way that had not been essayed since *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*), its brand of realism is European in inspiration, specifically Scottish

through being linked constantly to harrowing questions about the nature of choice and freedom. The constant interaction between small town life, the hinterland, and an awesome natural surrounding would be impossible in a novel set in the city, or in a southern English landscape. Its thematic texture is so richly interwoven that the critic who enters this labyrinth clutching the thread of one specific issue, is likely to come out at another point with a quite different problem in hand.

The sea and the forces of nature are both backcloth to the action and protagonists. From the sea comes the plague-ship, "tall, mysterious, dark",<sup>1</sup> as punishment begins to be wreaked on "a tea-drinking generation that bows down the knee to Gillespie Strang" (203). Brieston is dependent for its livelihood on the movements of the herring "eye." When the herring fail to arrive, the result is penury, and the fisherfolk are driven into Gillespie's grasp. The absence of herring is probably due to the excessive use of trawling, only just legalized. The apocalyptic plague could almost be a description of one of the typhoid epidemics which occurred in the west of Scotland in the last century. Yet the treatment in the novel has double value: "A judgement had befallen Brieston. They had suffered heat, plague, and tempest. Food was scarce" (220).

Topsail Janet engages in a dialogue with the sea which is almost metaphysical. Two messengers are sent her. The first is a broken-winged solan goose, which she nurses back to health, and whose loss is an echo of the loss of her plumber husband, and an anticipation of the cruelty with which her nursling Eoghan will later treat her. She meditates drowning herself, whispering "that were it not for the kindly face of the land she would go" (112).

At this point the sea sends a second messenger, a dead man in the water whose corpse she drags ashore. She thinks how her own disfigured body would drift in the water, and "hated death with a great hatred, and the sea, its regent." Plans for suicide are abandoned, and Janet decides to open a toyshop. "Her renunciation was complete. She had triumphed over the sea" (113). The toyshop is a venture into the frivolous doomed to failure, whose comic side does not detract from its significance as a choice of life over death, over the sea.

The episode of the burning of the fleet shows men attempting to harness an elemental force, to give it their own

meaning, but it at once slips the rein. "Some titanic maleficent power was abroad. This was no longer vengeance upon Gillespie but supernatural terror" (253-4). The fire assumes its own terrible life, destroying not only the ships pawned to Gillespie, but the property of the innocent, too.

This inimical sense of Nature, as something foreign to man, rather than a manifestation of God's love for him, is linked to the surprise and dismay at the actuality of physical being which underlie the novel's realism. Nevertheless a sacral relationship to Nature is possible, through the work of the community.

An identical image opens and closes *Gillespie*. At the beginning, Galbraith, "wan, haggard, spent" appears ploughing the lea, yet "at his work of redemption . . . urging his ministry of faith in a pentecost of peace" (11). At the close his widow, "purged and purified" after the enactment of a vengeance so long desired, watches the "ploughman on Muirhead Farm . . . ploughing the lea, ministering to the faith that is imperishable in the breast of man" (446). Both Topsail Janet and Mrs. Galbraith find solace among the harvest workers. Janet remarks that "It's meat an' drink to be wi' folk whiles," and Mrs. Galbraith learns again "the wisdom that is in healthful labour," feeling "the indescribable savour of the soil, sharp almost to an edge of pain" (111, 157).

This background of communal work is made completely convincing by Hay's detailed knowledge of the processes and economics of fishing. The herring-gutting is a feast of traditional skill, with a clear reference to the money value of the catch: "The pile of herring smouldered in pools of dull gold. There was a sense of happiness in the atmosphere" (273). Work has both aesthetic and sexual aspects. The fishermen have "that negligent grace which no landsman can wholly attain," each seeming almost to rape the sea as "in a flash the sword of his necessity is buried deep in her wealth" (216).

Gillespie's rise to prosperity comes about through the desecration of human and communal values. With characteristic insensibility, he sets rabbit snares on his neighbour's land the night Galbraith dies, and significantly "stumbled on the furrows which Galbraith had ploughed" (26). He sells trawling equipment to the fishermen when trawling is illegal and at the same time

betrays its hiding place so that it will be confiscated by government officers. He gives no bond or IOU to his father for a loan of £500, which will allow him to move from farming into trade, "callously stripping the slates off the roof which sheltered grey hairs" (102). When he drives Margaret Galbraith from the farm which her husband's people have tenanted for generations, she makes the desecration explicit by abandoning the house, front door wide open, three weeks before the term-day, having first stopped the clocks and extinguished the kitchen fire (what is more sacred than the hearth?) with a pail of water.

No one within the novel may arrogate to him or herself the right to interpret or give a meaning to events. In imagining that "the stars were fighting for him" (26) when he poaches, Gillespie is guilty of blasphemy. After the death of Andy Rogers and Quebec's insanity, Gillespie, who is not entirely free of responsibility for these two events, goes so far as to frown "austerely like a Calvinistic divine," commenting that "It was the Judgement o' Goäd on them" (194). This form of hubris will not go unpunished; yet punishment cannot be planned and executed by any of the book's characters. Margaret Galbraith is driven to a room and impotent vengefulness. In a perfect imitation of tragic peripeteia, the burning of the boats, which should have meant Gillespie's destruction, serves only to make him invulnerable. The authorial comment renders several issues explicit:

Gillespie was punished because he had derided the permanent things in life . . . The precious things of man's soul outraged took their inevitable revenge . . . He imagined he had acquired wisdom from calamity, whereas he had only learned a deeper cunning . . . It was not teaching him contrition or righteousness (255-6).

Mary Bunch underlines the fact that no single individual can take upon himself the task of vengeance: "Dinna you curse him, Nanny, leave that tae the Almighty" (155). In one possible reading, the novel presents the continually delayed enactment of a pattern. The oracle which Mrs. Galbraith finds in the Bible, which she attaches to the door of the abandoned house and which closes both the first and the second books, is an earnest that the balance will finally be redressed: "Be not deceived; God

is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

For all his meanness and pettifogging, Gillespie does not lack a certain splendour. His most heroic moment occurs when at one stroke he saves the fishermen and establishes himself as a buyer. The men are faced with tipping back into the sea an exceptionally large catch with which traditional buying and transportation systems are incapable of dealing. Gillespie appears, and "A subtle change had come into the atmosphere. It was indescribably charged with hope" (139). He has made careful, secret and far-sighted preparations, contacting merchants in Manchester and Glasgow, and buys up the entire catch:

The thing was so astonishing, so tremendous to these men who never bought more than twenty or thirty boxes at a time . . . A dim conception of the bigness of this man and of his audacity began to impregnate their minds . . . He was the man of the town (147, 149).

Gillespie even conquers the fishermen's hearts by providing food for them while they discharge the fish. He is capable of a macabre vernacular humor:

"I'm telt they found Betty Heck standin' against the dike-side at the Holly Bush stone-deid, wi' a bundle o' sticks across her shouters."

"A savin' wumman," answered Gillespie jocularly; "makin' hersel' her ain heidstane" (94).

While at the time of the burning Hay emphasizes the littleness of Gillespie's activities, at the end of the novel, in a passage not dissimilar to the oration at the end of a stage tragedy, he pays tribute to the man's enterprise, his heroic bigness:

He had been great in his activities, and in another sphere would have played a large part, and affected much more than the destinies of a little town . . . he had a certain earnestness and vision, no matter the dark ways that he travelled, and . . . many things depended on him, and if he shook Brieston, it was with single hand . . . Over the

fierce lightnings that play upon his ruin somehow there  
fall the dews of pity (437-8).

That pity is anticipated in a moment of rare tenderness when Eoghan, watching his father stoop over his work in the cold, draughty store, reflects that the eczema on those hands will never heal.

So Gillespie inspires in the reader not just disgust and indignation, but pity and even awe. There is in his evil an impressive naïveté, a complete absence of inner turmoil or reflection. The novel cannot be read as a simple-minded condemnation of private enterprise or commerce. In the long term, Gillespie cannot prosper because his greed and ambition offend the value of community. Hay here focuses directly on one central concern of many novels, the extent to which the relations of men in a stable society can be the incarnation of moral values. He reveals a profoundly democratic faith in the community as eventual, unerring moral judge, in "the solidarity of the human conscience, educated from time immemorial" (174) rather than in public opinion. This is a key passage, a kernel of optimism strange in such a grim book. In no way does it indicate any faith in the acts or decisions of the mob. The account of the conspiracy to burn the fleet is patently unsympathetic, and the sacrilege of destroying "this heritage of associations" (246) is a black mirroring of Mrs. Galbraith's previous desecration of the hearth.

Retribution cannot be the conscious work of any individual. How then does it come about?

Themes of blindness, evil and retribution are linked in a larger pattern which permeates the novel as a whole. Ian Spring has written at length on "Determinism in John MacDougall Hay's *Gillespie*," concluding that "there are two equally valid interpretations, one of which emphasizes that Gillespie himself is ultimately responsible for his own destiny."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the vital point to realize is that the two interpretations reinforce one another rather than being mutually antagonistic: Gillespie is both "eventually responsible for his destiny" and subject to "the operation of an irresistible ancient destiny"<sup>3</sup> whose pattern gives the novel thematic and symbolic depth. The mythical pattern is

antithetical to Gillespie's blindness, while also fulfilling a wider function in the split cultural world of the novel as a whole. The prerogative of destiny and of those in touch with it is to know what will happen. Thus Gillespie's Gaelic mother, the book's first "knower," foresees the operation of the ancestral curse on her family:

She told of her who had slain her son to save her lover, and of the terrible doom that rested on the name ever since . . . that fratricide, parricide, or matricide would yet stain their house and open the ancient scar again before the house and name perished forever (5).

The novel's catastrophe involves neither fratricide, parricide nor matricide. There is suspense towards the end about the eventual outcome, as Eoghan contemplates killing his mother, but in fact he is killed by her, in a re-enactment of the deed which provoked the curse. Moreover, the annihilated house carries Strang's name, and not that of Gillespie's mother. As Spring points out, "legend never expects an utterly rigorous application."<sup>4</sup>

Destiny and responsibility do not exclude one another. An example may be taken from a Celtic narrative still alive in oral tradition in the last century. It has been predicted that Diarmuid will die in an encounter with the boar of Beinn Gulbain, and as he lies in agony, his bowels ripped open by the beast, he begs Finn to bring him a drink of healing water from the nearby well. Finn refuses obstinately, then twice, returning from the well, lets the water slip through his fingers as he remembers the woman Diarmuid robbed him of. When he arrives the third time, with the water, it is too late: Diarmuid is dead.<sup>5</sup>

If the destiny predicted for Diarmuid is understood in an absolute, constrictive sense, this scene, and the terrible conflict Finn suffers, would have no reason for existing. The episode would lack the high dramatic tension it in fact possesses. Therefore we must attain a subtler view of destiny as a foreseeing what will happen yet might have been avoided; something that does not invalidate the working of the individual will and responsibility; a perception of the intricate chain of often accidental causes, half-conscious or blind decisions and factors of time and place that bring about tragedy. Such a perception is typical of Hay's realistic technique, notably in the



scene of Andy Roger's death and at the novel's close, where we feel most keenly the discrepancy between the behavior of objects, the laws of the physical world, and their effects on men. In Hay's work, destiny is expressed through a heightened realism.

There is a kind of Puritanical surprise at body, at corporeal nature, at the way we are chained to the petty and ineluctable causalities of matter. This realism is often accompanied by an activation of Biblical parallels, as when Gillespie pays "blood money" for the headless corpse, remarking "Eh! what was the minister on last Sunday . . . Ou ay! I mind noo. Judas sellin' his Master" (180-1). A black eel trapped within the trunk sets it moving. In the resultant panic Gillespie is struck down, and in a pell-mell escape via the sea (Gillespie has locked the door of the stores) Andy Rogers dies, unable to swim or to hold on any longer to the rope which keeps his head above water. "He was like a man being hung" (185). The parallel with Judas is clear. The eel is a physical accident of the same order as Desdemona's handkerchief.

Not for nothing did we turn to the Celtic cycles for an example of predestination. Brieston is closely modelled on Tarbert Loch Fyne<sup>6</sup> and Gaelic is still spoken in Kintyre. The novel is set in the 1860's, when Knapdale was a predominantly Gaelic-speaking area. The alcoholic Barnacles in fact "passed his life tramping about the country in which he had become a proficient Gaelic scholar" (238).

The Gaelic world is in reality vitally present all through the book in Gillespie's mother and in the doom she passes on. "She had fed on oral romance and was its herald, proclaiming to him the deeds of her ancestors of Knapdale" (4). Her husband, Gillespie's father, "untainted with the supernatural of the West Highlands," (3) comes from the opposite coast of the Firth of Clyde, which has "no leisure and little inspiration for romance in its pale flat lands" (4). Tom Scott gives this union a symbolic value which he extends to the book as a whole, a "true marriage . . . between the Celtic imagination and Teutonic realism, those twin roots of the tree of Scottish literature."<sup>7</sup> While Hay is unlikely to have entertained this project consciously, the Scotland in which he wrote was undoubtedly culturally fragmented, with a consequent difficulty for any one fragment in achieving on its own an adequate account of reality.<sup>8</sup>

The Lowland Scots language world inhabited by Gillespie and his family was cut off both from the Gaelic world and from the Anglicizing middle classes of the central area. Eoghan's failure to complete the Bursary examination is a failure not only to escape from home, but also to enter a world of different knowledge which could have equipped him to cope with home circumstances.

The Gaelic world, then, is present as a possibility of knowledge of causality and of the future, almost of genetic predetermination, which comes to no fruition in the novel and is vitally linked with another principal theme already touched on, Gillespie's and man's blindness. Hay is explicit from the start:

Man is the blindest of God's creatures. We concert measures and cast the most sanguine of plans, and all the time are weaving a mesh for ourselves . . . All the time we are trotting down a road that has been prepared for us (9).

Mrs. Strang has just finished her tale when the wild geese are heard crying high in the sky, "passing as the arrow of God through the heavens to *their decreed place*" (5) [my italics].

Gillespie's upbringing would be sufficient to explain his subsequent behavior even without the doom on his house. He is trained to be "a worshipper of things," fearing only "loss of gear in a gale." His parents think that in this way they can save him from the effects of the curse. In reality, they are creating precisely the character through whom the doom can work itself out. Hay writes of Gillespie's father that "Purblind, he was but fashioning the dynamite that was yet to ruin his house" (9-10). Heredity and environment cooperate, myth and realism are integrated, and myth is perceived as the emerging shape of events linked by their own internal causality.

The curse is twofold, tied to family and place. It comes to be symbolized by the sign hanging outside Strang's house, on which a murder is depicted and whose creaking is "as the rattling of Death's skeleton keys" (2). The murder occurred when the house was still an inn, whose keeper subsequently roved the rooms in search of "a concealed left-handed devil" (2)—note Hay's characteristic predilection for meticulous physical detail. The

novelist, by reminding us at focal points in the story of how the sign creaks in the wind, can indicate that these events are not disparate, but linked in a pattern dictated by the driving forces behind the novel. When Gillespie is born, "The sign rasped above the door; and mingling with its harsh noise was that feeble whimper" [of the infant] (8). At long last abandoning his skepticism, Gillespie's father climbs a ladder and takes a hammer to the sign:

He was hewing, not at brass, but at some sombre fatality as he gnashed his teeth and muttered between the short pants of his breathing (388).

The attempt of course fails. The exasperated symbolism of this episode may mean that old Strang's fury should be directed, not at the sign, but at the forces it represents, and which work through the son he refuses to take action against.

As a "knower," Gillespie's mother is associated with the sign. When she dies, her awareness dies with her, and the link with the sign is emphasized:

She was choking now. At every gust of the wind, when the signboard without groaned and creaked, he felt her eyes following him in dumb dread through the room (108).

Such atavistic, almost magical knowledge animates the spey-wife, the fulfillment of whose prophecy is the chief matter of the third book (a kind of miniature of the novel as a whole):

Ay! while there's water to droon, or fire to burn, or poison to mak' an' end, a Strang 'ill no' die easy in bed . . . One o' ye 'ill mind my words when ye're liftin' the other oot o' the water (279).

Eoghan is quick to link the spey-wife to a more general fatality: "The blatter o' her cans made me think o' the sign at the 'Ghost on windy nights" (280). At the novel's end the sign is still in place, significantly at last "at peace in the windless air" (446).

Eoghan is the third "knower" in the novel, his grandmother's child. After his death, Gillespie gazes at a photograph of the

boy, smiling as his father had never seen him in life, and realizes, "as by a dagger struck home" (the dagger on the sign?) that this same smile "had shone on his own mother's face" (438). Both when he is out with the fishermen trailing for Iain's body, and when he declares his love to Barbara, Eoghan has the sensation of another voice speaking through him, out of a dreamland. He had in fact foreseen Iain's death in a dream, where his own wrists were manacled by the spey-wife.

The passivity and staticity of his major characters represented a danger for Hay in the writing of this novel. We cannot sympathize with Gillespie's aims, and his achievements are neither exhilarating nor truly heroic. The activity which packs much of the novel is peculiarly inconclusive. Lonend, Mrs. Galbraith and Topsail, present throughout most of the book, remain on the whole passive, and the greatest act of malice, the burning of the boats, merely leaves Gillespie stronger than before. Active throughout the novel, evolving, shaping, giving momentum and suspense is one single element: fate.

The sense of something immanent at work, taking form in human lives, is particularly strong in the scene where Eoghan's conception is decided. With a frankness uncommon, to say the least, for his time and place, Hay makes it clear that Gillespie's sexual neglect of his wife is among his greatest cruelties to her. The imagery is ironically financial: "But once the debt of matrimony was paid coldly enough, and the treasury, she then discovered, empty, the light perished in her eyes" (87). At five in the morning, Morag begs him for sex, for love, for a girl child:

Fate was listening with bated breath. Worlds for them were in the making. The ancient doom upon the house was spinning its thread in the silence.

Gillespie's reaction is described in an image of acute physical precision which both conveys his rigidity and fear and makes us pity him:

He seemed to be standing up to the neck in cold water that was rapidly freezing about him (88).

His fate is in fact materializing about him, and soon he will have no possibility of maneuver or escape. The illness which kills him repeats this rigidity, this inability to move. If Gillespie yields to Morag's request through pity, then it is ironically this pity that helps to seal his fate.

Book 3 marks a radical change of tone. Eoghan becomes the novel's feeling center. The previous two books, showing Gillespie in conflict with the surrounding community, have achieved rich choral effects with a wide variety of points of view. Gillespie, a character notable for his blindness and his lack of normal feeling, could hardly serve as a center. The central position of Eoghan creates problems of tone, and his religious crisis, philosophical speculations and love for Barbara show Hay's writing at perhaps its least secure. The blatant authorial interventions have a jarring, almost censorious effect, and a flatness which contradicts the much more complex messages emanating from the novel as a whole. Here Eoghan takes his mother, chased from Gillespie's bed, into his own, and is filled with indignation:

And then he thought fiercely of his father. "He is the cause. Is there justice anywhere existing on earth?" Being young he was not sure . . . "Does God permit him to live to torture her?" and the ghastly thought came to him—"P'raps there is no God."

Is this Hay the minister attempting to reassert himself in a very unministerial book? The drama of Eoghan's position is central to this part of the novel, and the choice of him as center means there is a very real danger of falling into self-dramatization, or even self-indulgence:

"Where does that sorrow go? Does it escape me like an unfulfilled wish, and melt away in the air? . . . What is the use of it all? God"—he cried aloud—"I am going mad!" (285).

More convincing is his near-hysteria about his mother's sexuality when, as he helps her on to the bed, his left hand brushes against her breast, and he "hastily withdrew it, as if it had been burned"

(283). Eoghan's function as feeling center is also imperilled by his being, like his mother, an increasingly pathological figure. This condition, amply motivated within the novel, produces abnormal behavior and reactions. There is a crazed logic in Morag when, having tried to poison the family, she is not surprised to find them still alive next day, and reflects "that poison could not destroy them" (405).

The phantasmagorical world which invades these two final books acquires notable power in the hallucinatory, visionary writing of the dreams Eoghan has on the last night of his life:

A vast shutter opened on a gulf; an ebon wall rolled out of this gulf on silent wheels; and as it was about to overwhelm him, with a crest of jet foam it suddenly contracted into a cone-shape which, entering his body, spread fan-wise over his soul, smothering him in an inky cloud. He began to weep softly (409).

Hay's method here is radically different from the choral realism of earlier pages. His success in both directions is an indication of his stature as a prose writer.

The catastrophe is marked by a return to earlier methods, to realism and the use of Christian parallels for not specifically Christian effects. It is prepared for by the chronicle of Morag's insanity, and the crescendo of violence in the last book. In a way typical of time patterns in the novel, where Hay often runs forward a little, then turns back to explain, the catastrophe is first overheard, and then narrated. Gillespie, in the store below, hears two thuds. He is being blackmailed and cheated by his erstwhile accomplice MacAskill, but his empire crumbles from within before exterior malice can destroy it. Morag, despised and passive throughout the novel, has become fate's agent through an appropriate transformation, which Eoghan had already perceived:

She, sordid and derelict, was become the arbiter of his fate and he the puppet. Pitiably ignorant of her debauchery, she was Olympian over him in menace, her dishevelled head towering among lightnings (373).

A last impulse to save his mother leads Eoghan to his death, and at the moment of his entering the house, the text makes explicit the view of destiny proposed in this article:

Had he turned then and gone to the "Ghost" . . . the course of this history would have been changed, and Eoghan Strang would probably have emerged from the conflict with his soul welded in its fires, as into a sword sharper than Fate, and able to withstand Destiny . . . (421).

Eoghan advances towards the unexpected blow like Jesus Christ taking upon himself the weight of sins not his, as if nailed on a cross.

The throat-cutting is described with a grim anatomical precision. This love of physical detail is also manifest in the chain of events which leads to Gillespie's death. Returning to an unlit house, he treads on a shard of the whisky bottle his wife had kept concealed in the refuse heap, contracts tetanus, and will die two days after his father. Lockjaw is a symbolically apt punishment inflicted via an accident which has the impeccable logic of causality. Become physical reality, Gillespie's rigidity breaks him.

Our approach to a novel is conditioned by the way it has sedimented into our culture. Vital texts fertilize the tradition, and may be present more or less explicitly in much of the literature that follows. We approach *Gillespie* in different circumstances. So far it has had little opportunity to shape subsequent writing, and the tradition it might find a place in has yet to be clearly formulated. As with the vast corpus of MacDiarmid's work, a principal merit of Hay's novel may lie in its non-assimilability to English literature, its unmistakably belonging to a different, inchoate, tradition, at once more specifically national and more European.

One way across the "dead years" of Scottish literature passes via *Weir of Hermiston*, *The House with the Green Shutters*, and *Gillespie*. These have a common element in what might be christened the Cronus syndrome, whereby the younger generation, unable to free itself from the oppression of its begetters and their vices, is, as it were, consumed by them. The serious tracing of Scottish archetypes is as yet at an early stage.

Should these eventually emerge, they ought to be seen as only one possible expression, in a particular social and psychological context, of that dubious entity, in continued and unpredictable evolution, which must nonetheless be posited: the Scottish soul.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>John MacDougall Hay, *Gillespie* (Edinburgh, 1979), p. 209. Subsequent page references will appear in the text.

<sup>2</sup>Ian Spring, "Determinism in John MacDougall Hay's *Gillespie*," *Scottish Literary Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Dec. 1979), p. 65.

<sup>3</sup>Spring, pp. 67, 65.

<sup>4</sup>Spring, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup>English version in Lady Isabella Augusta Gregory, *Gods and Fighting Men* (London, 1904), pp. 392-4.

<sup>6</sup>See the intro. by Bob Tait and Isobel Murray to the 1979 edn. of *Gillespie*, pp. vii-viii.

<sup>7</sup>Tom Scott, "A Note on John MacDougall Hay," *Scotia Review*, No. 7 (Aug. 1974), pp. 35-9.

<sup>8</sup>If the union between Gillespie's parents is to be interpreted on a macrocosmic level, then the bringing together of Gaelic and Lowland Scotland is abortive.