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Exile from Eden: Miron Grindea's *ADAM* *International Review*

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ABSTRACT

ADAM International Review was the longest-running literary journal published under a single editor in Europe in the twentieth century. Edited by Miron Grindea from 1936 until his death in 1995, the magazine promoted 'active humanism' and 'comparative' or 'world literature' as the grounds for cultural re-evaluation and international collaboration, following the brutalities of Nazism and faced with the existential threat posed by the Cold War. This article examines Grindea's unique species of 'eclectic' editorship, using *ADAM* as a case study to highlight the significant role played by individual magazine editors in forging and sustaining open, capacious international literary networks. Grindea was idealistic about his editorial mission, but as the twentieth century wore on found himself increasingly out-of-step with the times, instead seeking consolation in the past. This prompts a series of questions. How effective is a magazine when the editor prioritizes archival recovery above the discovery of new work? How useful are international cultural commitments when 'internationalism' has been curated by an individual? And what becomes of a magazine when the personality of its editor dominates?

KEYWORDS

ADAM International Review, Miron Grindea, editorship, internationalism, literary journal, networks

ADAM International Review occupies an obscure place in the annals of literary history, but it deserves greater recognition, if only for this fact alone: to the best of our knowledge, *ADAM* was the longest-running literary journal published under a single editor in Europe in the twentieth century. Founded in 1929 in Bucharest, Romania, the magazine was edited by Miron Grindea from 1936 and ceased publication only with the editor's death in 1995, when he was at work on a celebratory issue No. 500. This long history not only makes the magazine a unique portrait of much of the twentieth century but also of Grindea himself: *ADAM* was a one-man production marked at every turn of the page by the editor's unique fingerprint. More significantly, perhaps, the magazine demands attention for the way in which it exemplifies the important, nodal role played by individual editors in forging and sustaining international networks between writers and artists. As a Jewish émigré who sought refuge in Britain at the outbreak of the Second World War, Grindea relaunched his magazine from London in 1941 as a bilingual 'international review', publishing contributions in both English and French, and focusing attention on how European writers might 'realise the strength of their function' and 'be united' in common purpose.¹ After the brutalities of Nazism, and faced with the existential threat posed by the atomic age, Grindea argued in this first post-war editorial, published in 1946, that '[t]he poet, the artist and the musician can accomplish little in isolation: if Civilisation is to survive, he must play his part'.² As this article will outline, Grindea sought contributions to his magazine that reaffirmed the values he felt underpinned European 'Civilisation'. Moreover, this editorial project of internationalism was furthered by the numerous special issues of *ADAM* Grindea devoted to different national and regional literatures after the war; he frequently published works in translation, and consistently promoted 'comparative' or 'world literature' as a foundation for cultivating greater understanding and sympathy between different cultures.

On paper, Grindea's *ADAM* was hugely successful, not only because of its long print run but also the impressive, extensive list of celebrated international writers and artists who appeared in its pages, including H. G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, André Gide, Bertolt Brecht, Jean Cocteau, Joan Miró, Jean-Paul Sartre, E. M. Forster, W. H. Auden, Anthony Powell, and Graham Greene, to name a handful. Given this astonishing list of contributors, how do we account for the fact that the magazine has so often been relegated to the footnotes of literary history, barely registering in the personal writings of the figures listed above or in the subsequent scholarship on twentieth-century literature? In contrast to the tenor of his early editorials, in which he encouraged his contemporaries to surmount barriers of 'isolation', by the 1980s Grindea was noting with unmistakable sadness and resignation that *ADAM* had become 'conditioned to [its own] isolation' over the years, overlooked and side-lined by the wider literary culture: '*ADAM*, despite its longevity, still feels like a newcomer making its debut — clumsy, unwanted, unrecorded.'³ Grindea was not only an exile from his native Romania; while he received many accolades and awards in later life that confirmed him as an Establishment figure (receiving an MBE in 1977 and OBE in 1986, for example), Grindea always remained, to a marked degree, on the margins of British literary culture and felt his magazine to be unjustly neglected, ignored, and maligned.

1 Miron Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music: An Anthology of Miron Grindea's ADAM Editorials*, ed. by Rachel Lasserson, 2 vols (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006), I, p. 5.

2 Ibid.

3 Miron Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music: An Anthology of Miron Grindea's ADAM Editorials*, ed. by Rachel Lasserson, 2 vols (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006), II, p. 166.

After providing a brief survey of the magazine's early history and its internationalist credentials, this article examines *ADAM* as a case study that highlights the importance of what Matthew Philpotts has termed 'editorial habitus' in determining the traits as well as relative success of any given journal.⁴ *ADAM* was to such a large extent a one-man operation that its publication history is also the personal story of Grindea: indeed, he was the man of whom it was said 'nobody knew him from Adam'.⁵ As this article will show, Grindea's 'eclectic editorship' helped foster the 'active humanism' and internationalism that he felt was needed to rebuild European civilization in the immediate post-war years; but, as the century progressed, this eclecticism increasingly translated into a license for Grindea to pursue his own obsessions, which compromised the quality of the material published in *ADAM* and limited the magazine's capacity to foster meaningful international networks. As such, the history of *ADAM* provides an instructive example of what happens to a magazine when the personality of its editor dominates above other considerations.

The European Mind

In the years following the First World War, Romania was still a fledgling democracy susceptible to the political extremes of fascism and communism. As political options diversified, interest in public life increased considerably and the press became ever more important as a means of raising popular cultural and social awareness: according to Luminița Machedon and Ernie Schoffham, the number of periodicals grew from a mere sixteen in 1918 to a massive 2351 in 1935, making Romania one of the leading publishing countries in Europe during the interwar period, behind France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia but ahead of Austria, Hungary, and Poland.⁶ It was against this context of the increasing proliferation and politicization of periodicals in Romania that *ADAM* was founded in 1929 by Isaac Ludo as a left-wing socio-cultural Jewish review. Ludo hoped the magazine might help counter the endemic antisemitism of Romanian society, and his magazine attracted contributions from prominent Jewish writers (such as Felix Aderca and Benjamin Fondane) and members of the Jewish spiritual community, as well as figureheads of the Romanian literary and artistic avant-garde (such as Marcel Janco and Max Maxy). As the fascist Iron Guard grew stronger in Romania throughout the 1930s, *ADAM* provided a space of resistance in which both Jewish cultural identity and avant-garde aesthetic commitments could be articulated.

In 1936, at the age of twenty-seven and having made a name for himself as a music critic, Grindea became co-editor of *ADAM* together with the journalist Idov Cohn. In an editorial note to issue No. 90, Grindea and Cohn reiterated the review's commitment to fostering greater integration between different sections of the Romanian population, facilitating collaboration and connection between European writers ('colaborarea catorva mari scriitori europeni'), and documenting political events. As a correspondent for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Grindea was particularly well aware of international events affecting Europe's Jewish population. After assuming sole editorship of *ADAM* from the beginning of 1938, across that year Grindea documented in *ADAM* the *Anschluss*, the Munich agreements, and *Kristallnacht*, as well as the local antisemitic measures and decrees of Romania's dictatorship. It was Grindea's emphasis on European collaboration

4 Matthew Philpotts, 'The Role of the Periodical Editor: Literary Journals and Editorial Habitus', *The Modern Language Review*, 107.1 (January 2012), 39–64.

5 Anthony Rudolf, 'Obituary: Miron Grindea', *Independent*, 20 November 1995 [accessed 14 April 2023].

6 Luminița Machedon and Ernie Schoffham, *Romanian Modernism: The Architecture of Bucharest, 1920–1940* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 1999), p. 19.

in his editorials, though, that would become the hallmark of his magazine when it was relaunched in Britain.

Travelling on a grand tour with his wife Carola through Yugoslavia, Italy, Switzerland, and France in August 1939, Grindea sailed to Britain just two days before the outbreak of the Second World War and was granted a five-day visa. By an incredible stroke of luck, he immediately found work in the BBC European Intelligence Section, directed by Jonathan Griffin at Bush House, was granted permission to remain in Britain, and set about learning English in six weeks. In his new role at Bush House, Grindea was tasked with translating press articles from Romanian into English and broadcasting 'fireside chats' to his native land about cultural activity in London, propagated as the centre of the free world. 'By October 1941', as Marie Gillespie has observed, 'nearly 250 bulletins in thirty languages were being monitored daily by 500 foreign language specialists [at Bush House], who listened to the war unfold and translated its intrigues, surprises and tragedies.'⁷ Grindea was part of this army of translators, journalists, and propagandists.

Grindea continued to edit the Bucharest *ADAM* until 1940, sending copy from London. After the XVII International Congress of the PEN Club was held under the auspices of the English Centre in September 1941, however, Grindea decided to offer *ADAM* as a forum for European writers in exile and he renamed the magazine *ADAM International Review*. Thinking that he was dodging a wartime paper rationing ban on all new publications, Grindea continued the old numbering system — beginning the London magazine at No. 152 — and retained the original title typeface. Ironically, he was in fact in contravention of the paper rationing ban, which allowed the publication of one-off pamphlets but not periodicals. In his editorial to this issue, Grindea wrote:

ADAM was driven out last year from the Eden of its readers at its 151st issue. It was a remote country of the Continent, in Roumania, and the banisher was the Hitlerite ideology, which has spread almost everywhere. But even had it been allowed to remain there, 'Adam' would have banished itself. For what kind of Paradise is it in which God has a rectangular moustache and shouts like a fool! So we left our subscribers — 5000 people, assuredly a considerable number for a purely literary review — and we walked through Europe until we found this ultimate corner where one can breathe freely.⁸

PEN offered an established network of international contributors that Grindea, as one of only two Romanian delegates at the congress, was quick to exploit. As well as publishing short articles he had acquired while still in Bucharest by Thomas Mann and Stefan Zweig, Grindea also printed work by writers from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Poland, Austria, and France. The PEN Congress also introduced him to a range of prominent British writers: the issue contains a short note by George Bernard Shaw (urging Grindea, if he desires success for his magazine, not to 'pad it with messages from superannuated Victorians'), an article by H. G. Wells (the former President of the International PEN), a poem by Cecil Day Lewis, and translations by David Gascoyne, as well as a cover note from Storm Jameson imploring writers not to 'lose faith': 'The agony of this war must give birth to a new and better Europe, and it is up to writers to create the vision of this better Europe.' (Fig. 1)

After publishing a 'tribute' issue to Wells in 1941, the paper rationing ban caught up with Grindea and *ADAM* ceased publication until 1946. In the intervening years,

7 Marie Gillespie, 'Writers at Bush House', *Wasafiri*, 26.4 (2011), 1–3 (p. 2).

8 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, 1, p. 2.

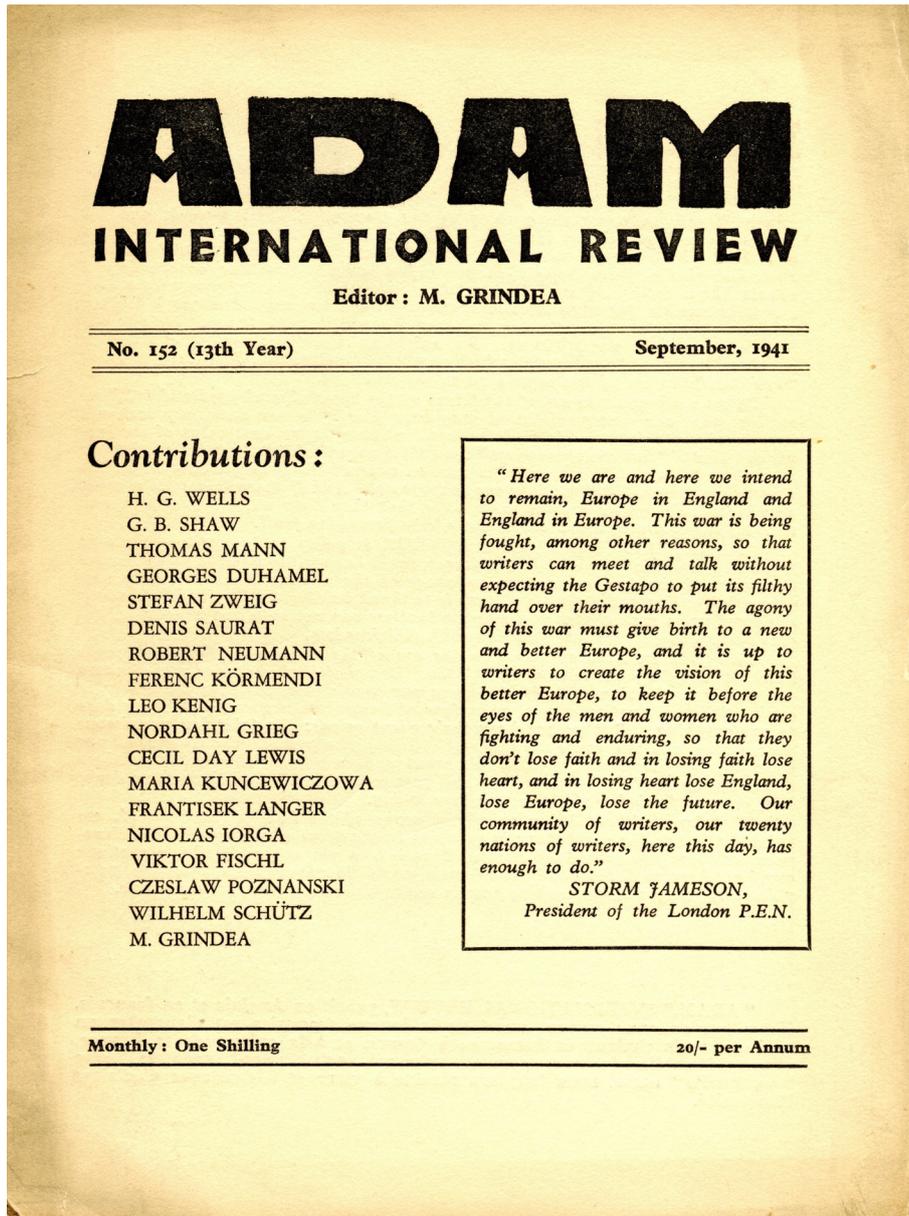


Fig. 1 *ADAM International Review*, cover image to issue No. 152 (September 1941). King's College London: College Archives.

perhaps inspired by the example of internationalism seen at Bush House and at the PEN Congress, Grindea worked to establish a network he called the International Arts Guild (I.A.G.), with Stephen Spender, Henry Moore, Benjamin Britten, and the actress Margareta Scott all offering their nominal support as members of the Executive Committee and Georges Duhamel holding the position of Honorary President. Grindea perceived how the wartime situation had created greater contact in London between musicians, actors, writers, and artists of various nationalities. In the H. G. Wells special issue of 1941, for instance, the Spaniard J. M. Batista Roca had observed:

London is now the most cosmopolitan city in the world. Men of many different tongues keep alive the cultural traditions of their own lands. But they are united in their desire to serve the cause of all humanity, and this transcends all national

differences. They even find in *ADAM* a welcome as it were of our first parent for all his children, and their divers [sic] national contributions unite to pay homage to the champion of internationalism.⁹

The I.A.G. was founded to maintain and strengthen this unity in diversity and it was Grindea's hope that the London Centre could be extended to other countries after the war, creating an international network of guilds: the I.A.G. 'will later spread and have its branches in all European capitals, in the U.S.A., Australia, Latin America, Canada, China, India, etc.', Grindea confidently stated in a programme note to a concert organized under the auspices of the I.A.G. held in January 1945.¹⁰ While the I.A.G. did not become a venture of any notable or lasting significance, it clearly demonstrated Grindea's determined efforts to establish practicable working connections both across national boundaries and between artistic disciplines. Successful events hosted by the I.A.G. included a 'memorial evening' in honour of Paul Valéry held in August 1945 at the Institut Français in London, with the keynote talk delivered by Denis Saurat and chaired by T. S. Eliot.

When the magazine began publication again in 1946, Grindea reimagined the title *ADAM* as letters standing for Arts, Drama, Architecture, and Music — a slightly contrived acronym, given that 'Architecture' was not represented in the magazine's pages at any point during the next half century of publication. More helpfully, Grindea wrote in his editorial to this first post-war issue:

ADAM offers itself as a modest vehicle for the expression of the spiritual and moral forces of the present day. As a monthly survey of the main developments and trends in the fields of literature and art, it will endeavour to promote research in the study of comparative modern literature, the introduction to readers in this country of writers and artists from abroad and any constructive comment furthering the task of an active humanism.¹¹

Having printed contributions in both English and French during the war as a sign of solidarity with 'enslaved but fighting France', Grindea now continued to publish in both languages as a 'tribute to redeemed France and liberated Europe'.¹² This bilingualism became the cornerstone for the magazine's promotion of 'comparative modern literature', and both Grindea and his contributors viewed this attempt to forge better Anglo-French connections as advancing post-war cultural reconstruction in Europe. In the opening article of this issue, for instance, Desmond MacCarthy writes:

What prompts me to contribute to this first number of revived *ADAM* is a conviction shared by many French and English writers at the present time, that the literature of their respective countries are two of the main supports of those European traditions upon which the future of Civilisation depends. Again and again in the past they have been mutually indebted to each other, and everything that now helps to bring them closer together is important — even a modest publication like this little magazine.¹³

9 J. M. Batista Roca, 'Fog and Sunshine', *ADAM International Review*, 153 (1941), 16–17 (pp. 16–17).

10 King's College London Archives, KC/ADAM/Box 02.

11 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, 1, p. 6.

12 *Ibid.*

13 Desmond MacCarthy, 'Cross-Channel', *ADAM International Review*, 154–55 (1946), 1–2 (p. 1).

Across the years, *ADAM* consistently emphasized this mutual interdependence between the literatures of England and France, devoting special issues to 'Victor Hugo and England' (Nos. 229–230, 1952) and 'G.B.S. and France' (Nos. 255–256, 1956), for example, and assessing the role played by translation in either helping or hindering the reception of English writers in France, and vice versa. While recognizing 'the gamut of opposites in English and French taste and attitude towards life', Grindea hoped that *ADAM* might 'create a human bridge of real sympathy' between the cultures of the two neighbouring countries.¹⁴

Grindea was resolutely idealistic about his editorial mission when *ADAM* started publication again after the war. If artists and intellectuals before 1939 had been 'hoodwinked by the kind of abstract humanism' that had led to 'spiritual and moral inertia', Grindea argued, then *ADAM* would instead advance an 'active humanism' capable of generating the 'collective will' needed 'to repudiate violence and darkness'.¹⁵ The 'underlying spiritual and social conflicts' of Europe became a regular focus for contributors to *ADAM* in the immediate post-war years.¹⁶ This is exemplified in such prominent contributions as Julien Benda's 'Des constants de l'esprit humain sur le plan moral et sur le plan esthétique' (1947) and Jules Romains's 'Le rôle de l'esprit dans les affaires du monde' (1948). Furthermore, in 1946, Grindea published T. S. Eliot's essay 'Reflections on the Unity of European Culture' in three parts. Originally delivered as a radio lecture in Germany and later published in 1948 as an appendix to his book *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Eliot's essay was printed for the first time in *ADAM*, which represented a major editorial coup.

'Reflections on the Unity of European Culture' is important as the place in which Eliot developed his ideas about 'the European mind'.¹⁷ Eliot argues that there is a 'common European tradition' and that '[w]e cannot understand any one European literature without knowing a good deal about the others'.¹⁸ This was an argument that chimed with *ADAM*'s focus on comparative literature and European collaboration. What's more, Eliot makes repeated claims in this essay for the significance of periodicals in facilitating and maintaining the 'European tradition', arguing that an international 'network' of 'independent reviews' is 'necessary for the transmission of ideas'.¹⁹ Such a network of exchange, Eliot argues, will work to ensure the 'health of the culture of Europe', which depends on two things: 'that the culture of each country should be unique, and that the different cultures should recognise their relationship to each other, so that each should be susceptible of influence from the others'.²⁰ It was precisely this kind of philosophy that underpinned the publication of work in both English and French in *ADAM*, as well as its focus on surveying various national literatures. This internationalist mission is reflected in the issues that carried Eliot's essay, which give a sense of the kind of magazine *ADAM* was after the war: it was publishing poetry from the West Indies, as well as short stories from China and Spain (Fig. 2); the second issue provided commentary on proceedings at PEN; and the third shows Grindea unashamedly courting the literary and political establishments of Britain, with an article by Winston Churchill leading contributions surveying the works of George Bernard Shaw.

14 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, II, p. 11; I, p. 31.

15 *Ibid.*, I, pp. 5–6.

16 *Ibid.*, I, p. 5.

17 T. S. Eliot, 'Last Words', *Criterion*, 18.71 (January 1939), 269–75 (p. 271).

18 T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), pp. 112, 114.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 116.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 119.

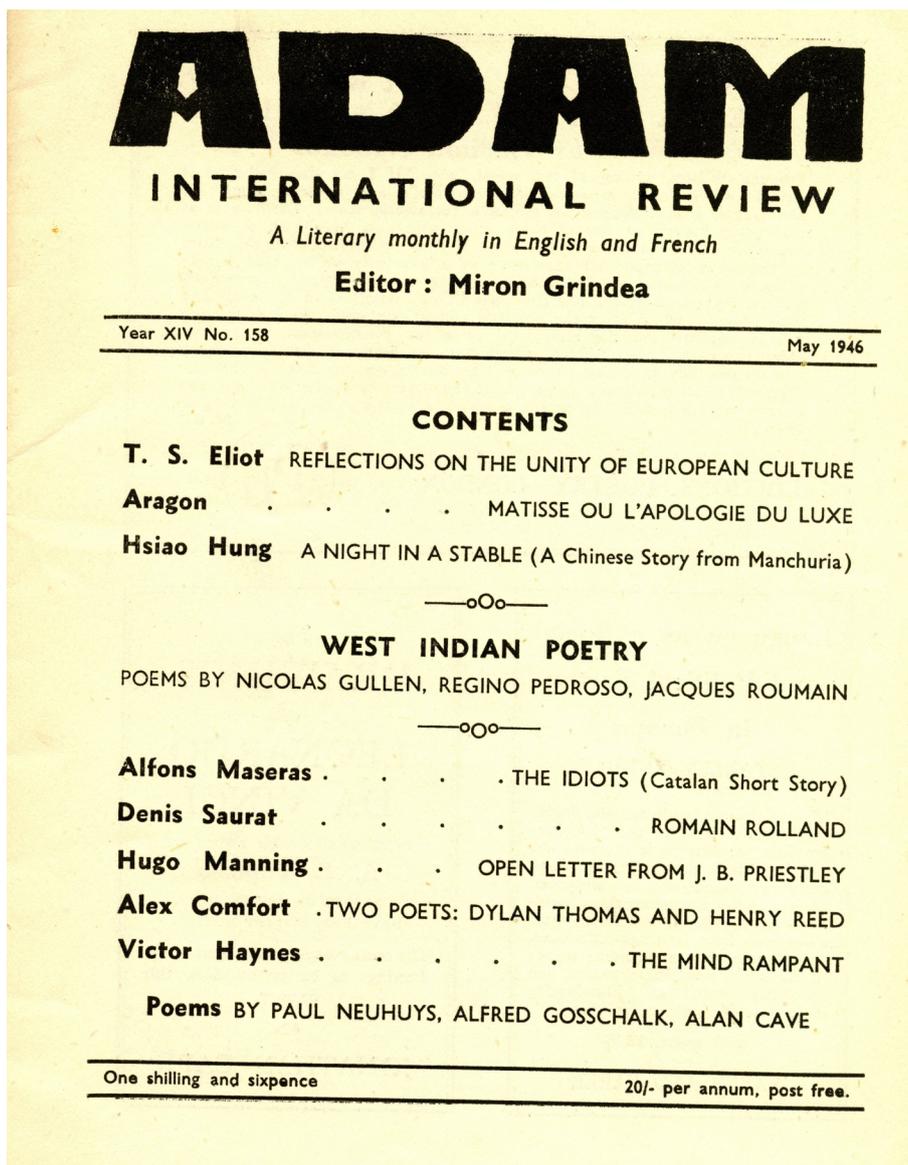


Fig. 2 *ADAM International Review*, cover image to issue No. 158 (May 1946). King's College London: College Archives.

Malcolm Bradbury describes how magazine editors are 'forever hunting angels, patrons, subscribers'.²¹ This idea is reflected neatly in the cover image to issue No. 200 of *ADAM* by the artist Ronald Searle, which caricatures Eliot as the guardian angel Gabriel to Grindea's Adam (Fig. 3). Indeed, when Eliot received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948, he gave Grindea £25 from his prize money. With an annual subscription to the magazine priced at £1, the poet reputedly said: 'I should like *ADAM* to appear for yet another twenty-five years.'²² The support offered to *ADAM* reflected Eliot's belief, famously articulated in his final editorial to the *Criterion*, published in 1939, that:

21 Malcolm Bradbury, 'Modernism and the Magazines', *Malcolm Bradbury: Writer, Critic* [accessed 6 September 2022].
 22 Quoted in Miron Grindea, 'Cultivating One's Garden: On Being a Literary Editor', in *Miron Grindea, 1909–1995: A Celebration*, ed. by Vanessa Davies (London: King's College London), 24–40 (p. 30).

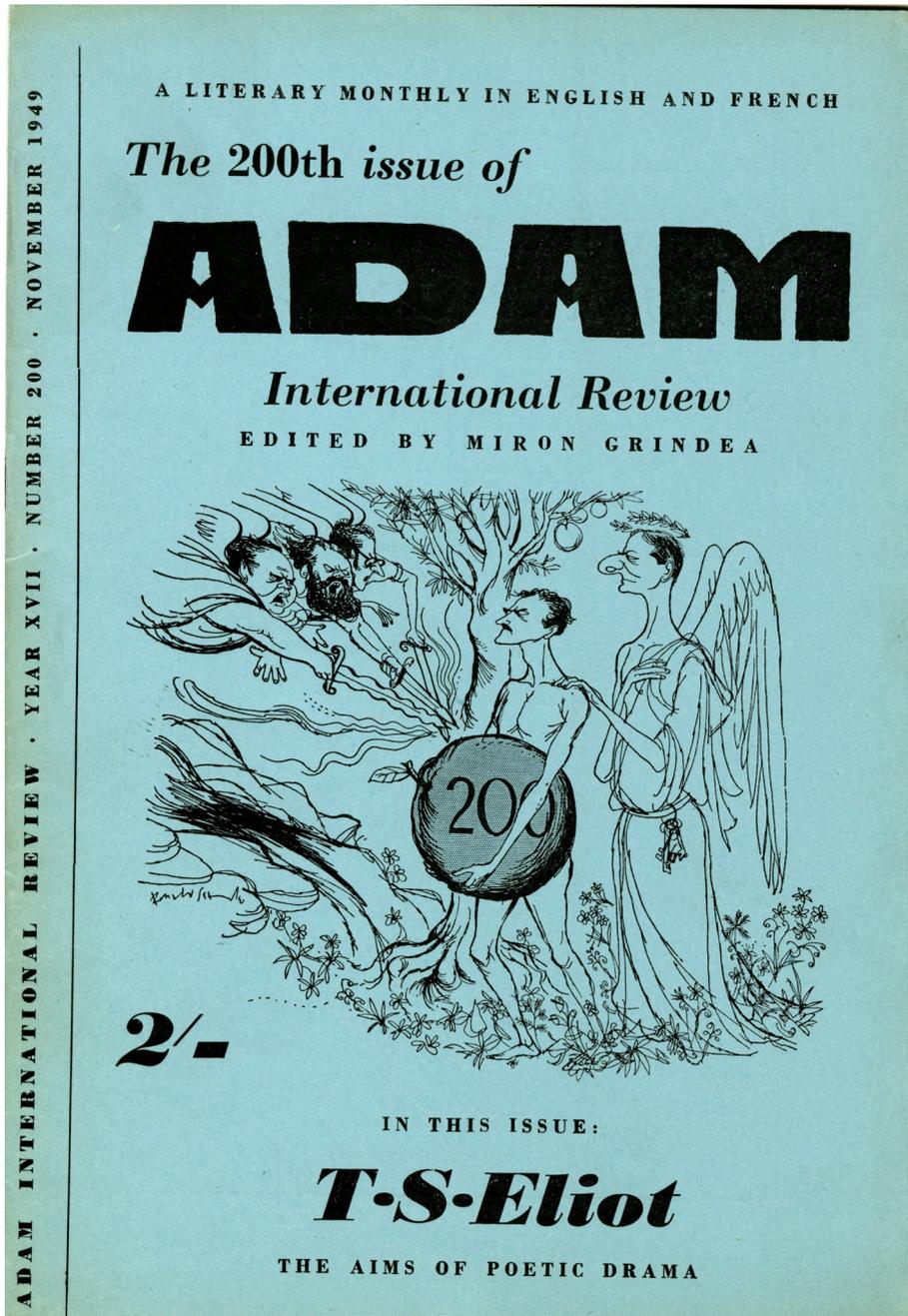


Fig. 3 *ADAM International Review*, cover image to issue No. 200 (November 1949). King's College London: College Archives.

[T]he continuity of culture may have to be maintained by a very small number of people indeed — and these not necessarily the best equipped with worldly advantages. It will not be the large organs of opinion, or the old periodicals; it must be the small and obscure papers and reviews, those which hardly are read by anyone but their own contributors, that will keep critical thought alive.²³

Grindea quoted this passage at the end of his editorial to issue No. 200 of *ADAM* and consistently looked to the *Criterion* as a model for his own magazine. As Bradbury has

23 Eliot, 'Last Words', p. 274.

described it, the *Criterion* pursued ‘a contemporary internationalist policy’ by creating ‘a brilliant network of international contacts and correspondents’, a network that reflected Eliot’s critical preoccupation ‘with the idea of the “European mind” as a vital centre of humanism and culture’.²⁴ Several post-war editors emulated the ‘humanist’ example of the *Criterion*. As Wolfgang Görtschacher has observed, for instance, Peter Russell, editor of the poetry magazine *Nine* from 1949, ‘took up Eliot’s cultural heritage by continuing the latter’s concept of the “European Mind” and enlarging it by the humanist, modernist notion of “assembling a new array of all the elements of human history, spatial and temporal”’.²⁵ Grindea looked to do something similar in *ADAM*, the magazine’s pages performing a wide-ranging ‘spatial and temporal’ assemblage that reflected a species of ‘eclectic’ editorship.

Eclectic Editorship

ADAM was one of very few periodicals to survive what Robert Hewison has described as the ‘grand slaughter of magazines’ that resulted from the wartime paper shortage.²⁶ The most prominent survivor of this slaughter was *Horizon*, edited by Cyril Connolly across the 1940s. Connolly had provided *ADAM* with free advertising space in *Horizon* and showed a keen interest in the magazine’s fate. Most impressively, in March 1963, he devoted his regular *Sunday Times* column to a full review of *ADAM*, something that Grindea later described as ‘an unprecedented event in English journalism’.²⁷ This single article ensured *ADAM*’s survival for another decade, after the Curwen Press, which had printed the whole run of *Horizon*, offered to publish the magazine. Following Connolly’s death in 1974, Grindea organized a memorial issue of *ADAM* dedicated to his ‘editorial idol’.²⁸ Here, Grindea described Connolly as ‘a constant inspiration’: his ‘style was unique, and so was his persona’, ‘and it is difficult to imagine what any future issue will mean — at this editorial end — without his immediate telephone call from Eastbourne as soon as a new number would come out’.²⁹ Despite their obvious differences in temperament and outlook (in contrast to Grindea’s effusiveness and unrelenting enthusiasm, Connolly was notoriously reserved and often mean-spirited), there were striking similarities between the two as editors. Notably, Connolly’s reference points were also European, and *Horizon* promoted an avowed Francophilia. *Horizon* was also modelled on the kind of ‘eclectic’ editorship that Connolly delineated in an essay surveying ‘Fifty Years of Little Magazines’ contributed to the inaugural issue of another ‘international review’, John Ashberry’s *Art and Literature*.

In this essay, Connolly pondered the familiar dualism between ‘dynamic’ and ‘eclectic’ editors. Whereas dynamic editors are animated by a cause or mission, conducting their magazines ‘like a commando course where picked men are trained to assault the enemy position’ (one thinks here of Wyndham Lewis’s magazines *BLAST* and the *Enemy*), according to Connolly, the eclectic editor is ‘like an hotel proprietor whose rooms fill up every month with a different clique’.³⁰ In contrast to dynamic editors, who define their magazines ‘by whom they keep out’, eclectic editors are resolutely catholic

24 Bradbury, ‘Modernism and the Magazines’.

25 Wolfgang Görtschacher, *Little Magazine Profiles: The Little Magazines in Great Britain, 1939–1993* (Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1993), p. 34.

26 Robert Hewison, *Under Siege: Literary Life in London, 1939–45* (London: Methuen, 1988), p. 12.

27 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, II, p. 131.

28 Grindea, ‘Cultivating One’s Garden’, p. 28.

29 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, I, pp. 211–12.

30 Cyril Connolly, ‘Fifty Years of Little Magazines’, *Art and Literature: An International Review*, 1 (March 1964), 95–109 (p. 95).

in approach.³¹ While the dynamic magazine tends to figure largely in literary history, acquiring a certain 'glamour', it will inevitably 'have a shorter life' than the eclectic magazine, which is likely to enjoy a longer publication run but be relegated to the margins of literary history.³² One such obscure 'eclectic' magazine named by Connolly towards the end of his article is *ADAM*:

I know only of three magazines which survive unaltered from the thirties: *Partisan Review* [...], *The Wine and Food Quarterly*, [...] and M. Grindea's indestructible *Adam* which keeps popping up with invaluable special numbers though apparently expected to live on air. I suppose that just as collectors pay large sums for *Personal Landscape* edited by Robin Fedden in Alexandria during the war because it contained work by Durrell so they will one day collect *Adam*, too late.³³

Of the two categories, dynamic and eclectic, Connolly well knew which side he belonged to, and set out to show that eclectic editorship need not equate to an absence of discrimination or courage. So too did Grindea. In a speech delivered in 1985, Grindea observed: '*ADAM* has always been eclectic, its main preoccupations being to cover features which other publications have left untouched. Hence my frequent practice of publishing surveys of foreign literature or of following forgotten or doomed fields of research.'³⁴

The surveys of foreign literature that Grindea presented in *ADAM* encompassed special issues devoted to the literatures of Switzerland, Latin America, Catalonia, Denmark, Ecuador, the Netherlands, Portugal, Japan, Sweden, Canada, India, Sri Lanka, Senegal, Iceland, Finland, and Norway, as well as cities such as Venice, Trieste, Paris, and Jerusalem, and writing in Hebrew and Arabic. This exercise in literary mapping emphasized the unique yet interrelated cultures of different countries, following the prescriptions for a literary review made by Eliot in 'Reflections on the Unity of European Culture'. It also demonstrated a commitment to the 'active humanism' Grindea hoped to cultivate in *ADAM*, as well as to 'world literature' as a concept. This commitment was reinforced by the geopolitical shifts of the post-war era, such as the initiatives of international cooperation UNESCO and NATO, as well as the signs of intransigent and dangerous division, such as the use of the atom bomb and the development of the Cold War, all of which became recurring reference points in Grindea's editorials. Discussing the atomic age, for example, he writes:

If the sixteenth century was able to clear away the dogmas that held up the growth of humanism, why shouldn't the second half of our own century, with all our strivings towards *One World* and a *world literature*, succeed in reaching similar heights? When all speculations on mankind's capacity for self-destruction have been weighed, one is forced to conclude that a new type of humanism must assert itself [...] [I]t is our hope that, providing the worst does not happen, a sign of a constructive new trend in world thought and world literature may open the second half of *our* century.³⁵

And, a few years later, Grindea observed that 'ours is an atomic age. And in such an age, a nation's literary creation cannot any longer remain communing with itself: it must

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., p. 108.

34 Grindea, 'Cultivating One's Garden', p. 40.

35 Miron Grindea, 'Towards 1950, by The Editor', *ADAM International Review*, 192 (1949), n. p.

reach the whole world.³⁶ This international focus is highlighted, for example, in how Grindea, after publishing a short article by Pablo Neruda in 1947, devoted a whole issue of *ADAM* to the Chilean poet the following year, which remained the only English language translation of Neruda's work in Britain for the next decade.

At an event held at the Institut Français in 1953 in celebration of *ADAM*, the Scottish poet and translator G. S. Fraser delivered a speech praising its internationalism, writing that the way in which '*ADAM* has devoted special numbers to the literature of particular small countries, like Ecuador or, for that matter, like Scotland, is one of the most admirable things about it':

Mr. Grindea is an internationalist, but not a cosmopolitan, if being a cosmopolitan means despising regional culture. [...] Gabriel [Coulthard] and I used to say that what we really looked forward to was the number devoted to the folk-epics of the Eskimos; and we used seriously to worry what would happen to *ADAM* when Miron had run out of small countries to put on the literary map.³⁷

Fraser describes Grindea here as a 'one-man British Council', opening his doors to all: 'Both as an editor and a host, one might say, his main purpose has been to promote, through the free exchange of ideas, the unity of the human spirit'.³⁸ This description of the editor-as-host echoes Connolly's idea of the 'eclectic' editor as an hotel proprietor, welcoming all.

In the issue of *ADAM* in which a transcript of Fraser's speech was printed, Grindea reiterated his aims and objectives as an editor:

There is throughout the literary and artistic world a common restlessness, and it should be the objective of a magazine like *ADAM* to contribute, however little, to a better knowledge of what is essentially native and at the same time universal in each contemporary literature. [...] To publish the best possible new writing from as many countries as available; to remain as flexible and searching as possible; to pay homage to the best that even fashionable writers have to offer while giving earnest consideration and encouragement to the unknown, the neglected and the unfashionable simply on the basis of talent; to steer clear of all doctrinaire catchwords and pitfalls, thus avoiding becoming a stooge and instrument of any group or movement: this *ADAM* has tried to do.³⁹

For Grindea, then, editorial eclecticism equated to an avowed internationalism and autonomy from political doctrine or critical fashion.

Grindea's success in this project as editor was celebrated widely in his lifetime. In addition to his MBE and OBE, he was awarded the Prix de l'Académie Française in 1955, the Lundquist Literary Prize in 1965, and the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 1974; he received an Honorary DLitt degree from the University of Kent in 1983, and was made Commander, Order of Arts and Letters in France in 1985, the same year in which an annual *ADAM* lecture was inaugurated at King's College London to mark the institution's acquisition of the magazine's archives (lectures in this series included Christopher Fry's 1986 talk on 'Genius, Talent and Failure: the Brontës' and Yehudi Menuhin's lecture the following year on the topic of 'Tolerance'). Grindea was

36 Miron Grindea, 'Coming of Age', *ADAM International Review*, 234 (1953), 5–7 (p. 6).

37 G. S. Fraser, 'For the Younger Writers', *ADAM International Review*, 234 (1953), 39–41 (p. 40).

38 Ibid.

39 Grindea, 'Coming of Age', pp. 6–7.

also happy to be interviewed about *ADAM*, on *Channel 4 News* in 1984, for example, as well as for a fifty-five-minute profile on the BBC's *Bookmark* programme in 1990, which introduced Grindea rather grandiloquently as 'a kind of genius, a real hero, a man of amazing tenacity who has for the last fifty years despite every kind of local sabotage and frivolous distraction succeeded almost single-handedly in keeping alight the flame of international literature'.⁴⁰ And when he died in 1995, Grindea received obituaries in the national press, including from John Calder in the *Guardian* and Anthony Rudolf in the *Independent*, the latter warmly celebrating Grindea for his 'mixture of chutzpah, flattery, intelligence, passion, straightforwardness and charm'.⁴¹

In this obituary, however, Rudolf also recognized that 'it would falsify the record to censor the fact that [Grindea's] behaviour could be fairly awful', noting that he 'was not an easy man to work with': 'He could be infantile, selfish, uncaring of other people's equally pressing priorities', 'obsessive and disorganised', and was widely considered by the young assistants he 'exploited' and the authors he hounded to be 'the most exasperating editor of all time'.⁴² In her autobiography, Storm Jameson noted something similar while putting it more mildly, describing Grindea as a man who 'started in me a conflict of admiration, respect, and mild discomfort':

A face and body burned down to the wick, black and as it were fused eyes, the look of a slightly mad mendicant friar [...] At one time or another every celebrated writer in Europe gave him a piece of writing, shamed into it by the spectacle of a total dedication.⁴³

This feeling of discomfort was one shared by many. Grindea claimed that 'the literary scene is enlightened and humanised by acts of giving' and he relied heavily on the generosity of others, asking for contributions *gratis* and pursuing people for details that might progress his research; but, by his own admission, he was 'unrepentant, nagging' and not immune to 'editorial bullying and persuasion'.⁴⁴ In producing each issue of *ADAM*, Grindea felt that he had to 'cross swords with many, cajole others sadistically reluctant to give even a thimbleful of information' and he would use his editorials to relate the 'bitterness and frustration' that frequently accompanied his pursuits, even going so far as to list those individuals who had failed to help him in his research or refused to contribute to his magazine.⁴⁵

Editorial obstinacy and tenacity, then, could often bleed into impertinence and rudeness. Indeed, Alan Ross openly suggested that famous writers and artists would give Grindea 'a mere scrap' simply 'to get rid of him'.⁴⁶ Meeting Picasso for the first and only time in 1952, for example, Grindea was rewarded with a 'scrap', a drawing the artist made on a napkin in the lavatory of his studio caricaturing the editor of *ADAM* as a Don Quixote figure and literary bird of prey. Like Cervantes's protagonist, Grindea was a man driven by obsessions verging on madness, ruthlessly pursuing contributions from distinguished writers and, magpie-like, persistently seeking out unknown works or ephemera to publish in his magazine. Despite the 'big name' contributors who filled the pages of *ADAM*, then, the quality of the writing could often be negligible, and this

40 'Miron Grindea's *ADAM*', *Bookmark*, BBC TV, 7 February 1990.

41 Rudolf.

42 *Ibid.*

43 Storm Jameson, *Journey from the North*, 2 vols (London: Virago, 1984), II, p. 337.

44 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, I, pp. 99, 109, 123.

45 *Ibid.*, II, p. 67; I, p. 123.

46 Alan Ross, 'Stalking the Schnorrer', *Times Literary Supplement*, 4533 (16 February 1990), 173 (p. 173).

extended to work by young, aspiring writers too. In the BBC *Bookmark* programme profiling Grindea, Stephen Spender is recorded describing *ADAM* as a ‘very quirky’ magazine and ‘full of bad things, which I like’:

For instance, there’s a number I was looking at which is about painting and poetry, and some of the poems are very good but some of the poems are obviously only there because they happen to be poems by quite unknown and perhaps quite insignificant poets about some particular painting. So, it’s quite unexpected and surprising; it’s rather like the morning mail.⁴⁷

This reflects Görtschacher’s observation about ‘eclectic’ magazines, that they frequently run the risk of ‘becoming literary grab bags with no vitality whatsoever’.⁴⁸ While Spender praises the ‘unexpected and surprising’ nature of *ADAM*, there is no denying the fact that the quality of the material published, especially in the magazine’s later years, was frequently uneven.

Grindea identified *ADAM* as a ‘little review’.⁴⁹ Such ‘littleness’ indicates not only the magazine’s limited financial resources and small number of readers (the archival records at King’s College London clearly show that, at points in the magazine’s history, the number of subscribers reached into the low hundreds only), but also positions *ADAM* quite purposely in a literary tradition of iconoclastic, modernist ‘little magazines’. As Suzanne Churchill and Adam McKible define the genre, little magazines are ‘non-commercial enterprises, founded by individuals or small groups intent upon publishing the experimental works or radical opinions of untried, unpopular, or under-represented writers’.⁵⁰ *ADAM* was most certainly non-commercial, relying on the goodwill of writers (rather than paying for contributions) and lurching from issue to issue, narrowly avoiding financial collapse. ‘There is no true editorship when everything is safe and prosperous’, Grindea claimed: ‘It is the essence of a literary magazine’s life to be always uncertain of tomorrow.’⁵¹ This uncertainty was typical of the little magazine. Figures 3 and 4 (caricaturing Grindea as *ADAM*) also remind one of Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich’s foundational definition from 1947 of the ‘little magazine’ as ‘willing to lose money, to court ridicule, to ignore public taste, willing to do almost everything — steal, beg, or *undress in public* — rather than sacrifice their right to print good material, especially if it comes from the pen of an unknown Faulkner or Hemingway’ (my emphasis).⁵² Indeed, reflecting on his editorial career, Grindea concluded his 1985 lecture by noting that what had sustained him was ‘the hushed expectancy of yet another surprise – in other words, the discovery of new talent’.⁵³ And, in waiting for that surprise, Grindea could be incredibly generous to young, aspiring writers. In a recent issue of the *TLS*, for example, Ian Sansom recalled his own experience corresponding with the editor of *ADAM* as a schoolboy: Grindea ‘took the time to reply to a sixteen-year-old student who wrote to him for literary advice. I had no idea who he was. He certainly had no idea who I was. He wrote simply because I asked for help.’⁵⁴ Poets who were published

47 ‘Miron Grindea’s *ADAM*’, *Bookmark*, BBC TV, 7 February 1990.

48 Görtschacher, p. 19.

49 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, 1, p. 31.

50 Suzanne W. Churchill and Adam McKible, ‘Introduction’, in *Little Magazines and Modernism: New Approaches*, ed. by Suzanne W. Churchill and Adam McKible (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 1–18 (p. 6).

51 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, 1, pp. 19–20.

52 Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), p. 2.

53 Grindea, ‘Cultivating One’s Garden’, p. 40.

54 Ian Sansom, ‘Can’t Be Helped’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 6219 (10 June 2022), 27 (p. 27).

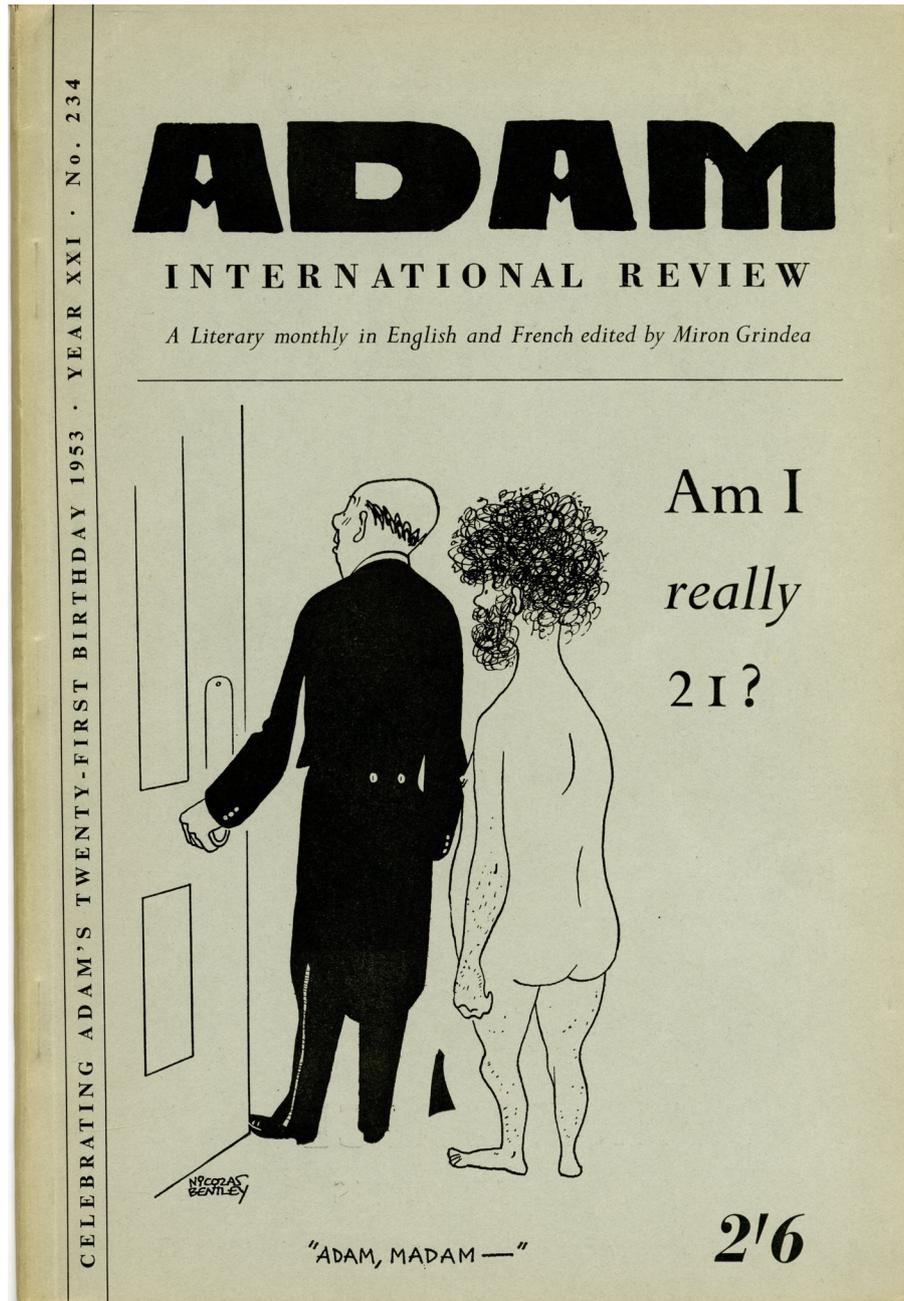


Fig. 4 *ADAM International Review*, cover image to issue No. 234 (1953).
King's College London: College Archives.

in *ADAM* when still relatively unknown include, for example, Lee Harwood, Jeremy Reed, and William Oxley, a list that reflects Grindea's catholic approach to editing.

It would be wrong to see *ADAM* as a typical or successful 'little magazine', however. As Spender's assessment indicates, Grindea failed to 'print good material' consistently (which the 'little magazine' editor should do without compromise, as Hoffman et al. suggest); what's more, *ADAM* was far from being 'experimental' or 'radical' (as the 'little magazine' must be, according to Churchill and McKible, who align the genre explicitly with modernist endeavour). While Grindea's intellectual formation had taken place in the ferment of avant-garde artistic activity that centred on the cities of continental Europe in the early twentieth century, his marked nostalgia from the 1960s

onwards for those other spaces and that earlier time shaped his magazine as distinctly backward-looking in character, a humanistic-conservative counterblast to postmodern cultural relativism and the climate of anti-intellectualism that pervaded Britain from mid-century. Attempting to insulate his magazine from that wider culture, Grindea increasingly privileged archival recovery above the discovery of new work, focusing on the work of canonical figures and finding it increasingly difficult to attract writing ‘from the pen of an unknown Faulkner or Hemingway’.⁵⁵

Throughout his editorials from the 1960s onwards, Grindea describes his ‘feverish pursuit’ of personal obsessions, carried out with ‘shameless and at times suicidal obstinacy’.⁵⁶ Proust alone, for example, was the subject of eight special issues of *ADAM*. Wide-ranging and in-depth research ‘had its share of adventure and excitement’, especially when those investigations resulted in Grindea discovering long-lost works or ephemera.⁵⁷ Adventure, he noted, ‘seems to remain the safety valve of this journal’.⁵⁸ Over the years, many important manuscripts passed through Grindea’s hands, and *ADAM* became virtually synonymous with the *inédit*: among the material printed for the first time in *ADAM* were a previously unseen cadenza by Mozart, sketches by Modigliani, letters from Dickens to the Count d’Orsay, drawings by Proust, and a play by Sartre. For this reason, reading *ADAM* and consulting the magazine’s archives at King’s College London can be a thrilling experience of discovery.

However, Grindea’s ‘archival spirit, sufficiently eccentric and determined not only to penetrate the hidden thickets of English bibliography, but also to exorcise, if need be, any demons lurking along the route’, meant that *ADAM*, by the mid-1960s, had become distinctly conservative in character, with Grindea in the grip of ‘reconnoitring and excavation’ and his magazine haunted by ‘phantoms and reminiscences’.⁵⁹ This conservatism is highlighted in the number of special issues Grindea devoted to long-dead writers, artists, and composers, often marking the anniversaries of births and deaths. Some of the subjects of memorial issues include Hans Christian Anderson, Friedrich Schiller, Charles Baudelaire, Katherine Mansfield, Beethoven, and Leonardo da Vinci, among many others. This focus on mapping literary histories figured a ‘temporal’ assemblage in the magazine analogous to the ‘spatial’ assemblage created by Grindea’s other mapping impulse, profiling different regional and national literatures in various special issues. Increasingly over the years, Grindea’s editorial endeavours focused on the ‘rescue from an unjust neglect [of] the occasional or minor masterpiece of yesterday’, with him pursuing ‘intensive, often frenzied research’ in the search for overlooked material: ‘one still drags on digging, shamelessly, perversely’, he wrote.⁶⁰ As a result, from the 1960s to 80s, each issue of *ADAM* largely constituted ‘a detailed and unavoidably digressive sequence of marginalia’, often opening with an ‘immorally long editorial’ in which Grindea ‘indulg[ed] in interminable bibliographical convolutions’.⁶¹

In quoting from these editorials, I’ve shown that Grindea was not unaware of these tendencies in himself and his magazine. Indeed, he defended archival recovery and a focus on the past as central aspects to literary editorship. Referencing a

55 In 1966, for example, Grindea announced ‘the creation of three literary prizes’ with ‘the object of encouraging new talent’, but six years later was forced to admit that ‘none of the entries for poetry and drama [had] proved to be of sufficient artistic merit to be awarded the £100 prize offered in each category.’ (Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, II, pp. 57, 121).

56 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, II, p. 72; I, p. 100.

57 *Ibid.*, II, p. 33.

58 *Ibid.*, II, p. 68.

59 *Ibid.*, I, pp. 171–2; I, p. 72.

60 *Ibid.*, I, p. 24; II, p. 166; I, p. 176.

61 *Ibid.*, I, pp. 123, 85; II, p. 168.

contemporary series of parody self-help books (with titles like *Lifemanship*, *Upmanship*, and *Supermanship*), Grindea asked:

Is there really anything reprehensible in getting excited about such literary 'dustmanship', as Stephen Potter might call it? Together with his search for new talent, has the literary editor, we wonder, any more valuable function than that of erasing the stucco of injustice and forgetfulness from an author whose work has meant much to previous generations?⁶²

As Grindea focused more and more on his intensive, prolonged 'dustmanship' in the archives, however, the publication of *ADAM* became increasingly irregular and haphazard. In stark contrast to the slim twenty-four-page issues printed every month in the immediate post-war years, *ADAM*'s association with the Curwen Press from 1965, and then the University of Rochester and the publisher Frank Cass, enabled Grindea to produce sometimes lavish issues in hardback that often ran to several hundred pages. This put *ADAM* yet further beyond definition as a 'little magazine': book-like in format, the magazine aimed for a degree of permanence far removed from the to-the-moment publication and ephemerality distinguishing most little magazines, with individual issues instead the product of months, if not years, of research. As such, the frequency of *ADAM* moved loosely from monthly publication in the 1940s and early 50s, to quarterly publication in the late 50s and 60s, before becoming so infrequent that Grindea was lucky if he printed one or two issues in a year. Grindea's habit of printing one issue of the magazine under multiple issue numbers marked this irregularity (to take one year as an example, in 1984 three separate issues were published but covering nine issue numbers: Nos. 446–48, Nos. 449–51, and Nos. 452–54). This habit meant that, while Grindea was at work preparing a celebratory issue No. 500 at the time of his death, only 137 individual issues of *ADAM*, strictly speaking, had been published in Britain: undoubtedly a remarkable achievement, over a period spanning half a century, but a far more modest one than Grindea's numbering of the magazine implied.

An even more deleterious effect of Grindea's pursuit of personal obsessions was that, whereas *ADAM* in its first years of publication in Britain had served to bring together an identifiable community of international writers in exile in London, from mid-century onwards the magazine was reducible largely to the voice of one man, with no community or network discernible in its pages. Indeed, while Grindea occasionally employed associate editors and countless young assistants, it is difficult to discern their impact on the magazine. Instead, Grindea preferred what he called 'literary lone-wolfing'.⁶³ For this reason, while he might have been nostalgic for the conviviality of the literary *salons* of early twentieth-century Paris and Bucharest (those 'centres of intellectual commerce' which, he maintained, were impossible to replicate in the 'Soho pubs' where 'the pints flow monotonously on' or in 'those innocent, reeking, fish-and-chip cafés on our shores'), Grindea's magazine did not facilitate conversation between contributors in the later years of publication.⁶⁴ Churchill and McKible emphasize how little magazines typically 'provide a published record of the richness, variety, chaos, and exhilaration of modernist talk'.⁶⁵ Instead, reading *ADAM* more closely resembles a party in which the host might enthusiastically introduce all his guests, but none of those in attendance talk to one another or stick around for very long.

62 *Ibid.*, i, p. 24.

63 *Ibid.*, i, p. 16.

64 *Ibid.*, i, pp. 20, 115, 144.

65 Churchill and McKible, p. 13.

Conclusion

As Matthew Philpotts has observed in an article delineating ‘broad typological species of editorship’, when the ‘personal’ habitus of an editor and the ‘institutional habitus’ of their journal are aligned too closely, ‘then under rapidly changing circumstances that powerful sense of mission and personal investment’ that was once a source of strength ‘can soon become a stubbornly entrenched and exposed position which incurs an unsustainable loss in the [cultural] capital’ of the magazine.⁶⁶ As Figures 3 and 4 illustrate, by mid-century Grindea was *ADAM*, *ADAM* was Grindea: editorial habitus dominates and defines the entire tenor and character of the magazine. This hadn’t quite been the case in its initial years of publication in Britain. The genuine internationalism that had breathed life into *ADAM* in the war years and immediate post-war period — sustained by and itself to some extent sustaining the collaborative networks of PEN and the I.A.G., for example — was more and more superseded by the undoubtedly wide-ranging but nevertheless idiosyncratic interests of the editor, the individual replacing the community. What’s more, the editorial idealism (Grindea’s investment in ‘active humanism’ and European civilization, for example) that had first motivated and given direction to the magazine in its early years increasingly resembled a ‘stubbornly entrenched’ position when those commitments were overtaken by changing historical circumstances. In his 1985 lecture, for example, Grindea was forced to admit that political developments had not fulfilled his hopes for stronger Anglo-French ties, ‘confronted as we are with the alarm signals of a crippled and confused Europe’ and with ‘the two great neighbouring countries’ still not knowing ‘how to tolerate each other as they should’.⁶⁷

Belonging to a Central European, Francophile tradition that held the figure of the ‘intellectual’ in reverence and unashamedly, fervently valued ‘high art’ above all, Grindea found himself increasingly disaffected with the contemporary moment. In 1966, for example, he published the text of a questionnaire sent out to ‘a number of writers all over the world’ on the subject: ‘has literature a future?’⁶⁸ These questions reveal the anxieties that motivated Grindea’s editorship of *ADAM*, such as: ‘Do you fear that the new mass media [...] might in the end replace people’s need for books altogether?’, and: ‘Will the present vogue for “poésie concrète” and “sound” poetry replace five thousand years of poetry mostly based on normal intelligibility?’⁶⁹ The responses to this questionnaire were never published and there appears to be little archival trace of them, suggesting that few people shared Grindea’s fears for the future. Indeed, these were the concerns, as Vanessa Davies notes, ‘of a literary editor whose formative years were clearly in a different intellectual-historical era and who can see change only as decline’.⁷⁰ In his editorials, for example, Grindea writes dejectedly of ‘our “air-conditioned” age’, ‘our days of [...] atonal upheavals’, our ‘materialistic age’, and ‘our half-demented society’.⁷¹ Against this context, Grindea found it increasingly difficult to see literature as that which would facilitate greater understanding between nations. Once so optimistic about the possibility for international connection, by the 1970s Grindea was observing that the ‘deterioration of language as a vehicle for our understanding of one another’ was

66 Philpotts, pp. 43, 63.

67 Grindea, ‘Cultivating One’s Garden’, p. 38.

68 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, II, p. 58.

69 *Ibid.*

70 Vanessa Davies, *Adam International Review, 1941–1991: A Short Publishing History* (London: Adam Archive Publications, 1992), p. 18.

71 Grindea, *Art, Drama, Architecture and Music*, I, pp. 9, 11, 39; II, p. 36.

'being exposed in contemporary writing at the same pace as the scientists' fear that the planet itself is approaching its final doom'.⁷²

From the 1960s onwards, then, *ADAM* was shaped by editorial concerns that were becoming more and more out-of-step with the times. Grindea's long, digressive editorials reveal a formidable and sometimes uncomfortably dedicated individual, but also someone preoccupied with the ideas, concerns, as well as the literature and art of a bygone age. However, in the 1940s and 50s especially, *ADAM* was clearly successful in providing a vital meeting place for British and continental European writers at a time of world crisis and European cultural re-evaluation, modelling the kind of tolerant, humanist internationalism that, to many, promised hope for the future in the face of the twin existential threats of Nazism and the Cold War. As such, it is easy to agree with Yehudi Menuhin, who, after the editor's death in 1995, wrote that Grindea 'occupies a very special niche in the cultural history' of the twentieth century.⁷³

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⁷² *Ibid.*, II, p. 111.

⁷³ Quoted in *Miron Grindea, 1909–1995: A Celebration*, ed. by Vanessa Davies (London: King's College London, 1995), p. 2.

- , 'Cultivating One's Garden: On Being a Literary Editor', in *Miron Grindea, 1909–1995: A Celebration*, ed. by Vanessa Davies (London: King's College London), pp. 24–40
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