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MacDiarmid before MacDiarmid: Navigating the Landscapes of Christopher Murray Grieve's Early Periodicals

By
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This paper takes as its primary objects of study two of the literary-political periodicals produced and edited by Christopher Murray Grieve (known more widely by his pseudonym Hugh MacDiarmid) in the years before 1925 – namely *The Scottish Nation* and *The Northern Review*. Any thorough critical understanding of these publications with regards to Grieve's career as a whole must be dependent on, as far as possible, attempting to situate and understand them within their 'immediate social and institutional context[s]', and perceiving how these in turn shaped the publication in question.[2] Through consulting Grieve's correspondence of the time, and bibliographically-informed readings of the materials themselves, this paper will attempt to put forward the first comprehensive analysis of these publications. I will also make the case for their importance both within Grieve/MacDiarmid scholarship and the wider field of modernist periodical studies.

Through the kind of close reading advocated by Laurel Brake – paying particular attention to design features, adverts, the frequency of editorial interventions, and the presence (or otherwise) of any running features – it is hoped that a more comprehensive picture of the nature and make-up will of these periodicals will be achieved than is available thus far in the critical literature, with regard to this phase of Grieve's career.[3] Similarly, Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker propose that we expand Jerome McGann's conception of "bibliographic codes" to include "periodical codes" which explicitly reference the range of features unique to the periodical format, from "internal" factors such as page layout to "external" ones which affect the potential for distribution

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[2] Jason Harding, *The Criterion: Cultural Politics and Periodical Networks in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 8.

[3] Laurel Brake, *Print In Transition, 1850-1910* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001) xiii, 27.

such as patronage and advertising, thus opening up new interpretive avenues for materials of this nature.[4] Periodicals which combine multiple content types – poetry, drama, and illustration for example – are complex media objects in which meaning is derived from the editor's ability to corral the various inclusions into conveying the overall message of the periodical itself. Whether they are successful in the attempt or not is, perhaps, ultimately for the reader to decide. While it is tempting at first glance to dismiss Grieve's forays into periodical publications as failures, given their short lifespan and undoubtedly small circulation figures, this paper argues that these ventures should instead be read as constituting an important part of his longer career. Grieve was attempting nothing less than a revolution in Scottish culture, and used his periodicals to publish new work in a variety of genres while exhorting his compatriots to join the cause. These publications are also of interest for exposing contradictions within Grieve's thinking at this early though decisive stage of his career. Actively seeking to publish new work in the Scots language while mostly publishing pieces written in standard English, in addition to a confused sense of "pan-Northernism" which defines the *Northern Review*, we might think of Grieve's over-riding concern in the 1920s as less of a straightforward desire to remove Scotland from England's control (although this is a near-constant factor in his writings) than the creation of a self-sufficient, non-metropolitan literary sphere in which various forms of writing could circulate and come into contact with each other. Above all, the uniting factor which underlies his literary and editorial activity during this period is a desire for, and belief in, innovation as its own measure of worth.

Discussion

Central to Grieve's plans for the revivification of Scottish letters was the creation of a periodical culture similar to that in America, London and Europe. He would use his first editorial piece in *The Scottish Chapbook* (the earliest of his periodicals) to expound this argument:

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[4] Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker, "Introduction", in *The Oxford Critical And Cultural History Of Modernist Magazines Volume I: Britain and Ireland 1880-1955*, edited by Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 6.

> I readily excuse any Sassenach who admits that he regards it as hopeless to expect anything good out of Scotland. An Isolated Great Man, perhaps – but no general 'hosting' of poets and artists, as in Ireland; no Georgianism even, as in England […] None of those significant little periodicals – crude, absurd, enthusiastic, vital – have yet appeared […] No new publishing houses have sprung up, mushroom-like…..It is discouraging to reflect that this is not the way the Dadaists go about the business![5]

This passage explicitly makes the link between 'significant little periodicals' and literary innovation. Referencing Dadaism in this fashion allows Grieve to frame his own periodical as manifesting similar aesthetic sensibilities to the publications of that movement. *The Scottish Chapbook*, then, was conceived at its inception to be a textual environment within which radical literature was to be encouraged and given the outlet that it otherwise lacked in Scotland. Emily Hage has written persuasively regarding the centrality of the journal medium to the Dadaist cause, and Grieve's evocation of this parallel invites us to read *The Scottish Chapbook* as a similarly important publication in connection with his hoped-for renaissance in Scottish literary life (33-50).[6]

Grieve would also oversee a newspaper-sized weekly periodical, *The Scottish Nation*, which ran for just over half a year, and another monthly entitled *The Northern Review*, which ran to only four issues. By choosing to enter the periodical marketplace, Grieve was attempting not only to promote his own work and ideas, but also to create the readerly public which he felt that Scotland was lacking at this time. Positioning his interventions in the periodical arena as – to borrow a term of Lawrence Rainey's – counter-spaces, they provided the means by which Grieve sought to construct, and appeal to, a "counterpublic" of readers with similar interests and beliefs.[7]

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[5] Christopher Murray Grieve, "Causerie", *The Scottish Chapbook* 1, No. 1 (1922): 5.
[6] Emily Hage, "The Magazine as Strategy: Tristan Tzara's Dada and the Seminal Role of Dada Art Journals in the Dada Movement", *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 33-53.
[7] Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 5.

Not that he was solely concerned with promoting purely aesthetic or literary development. Unlike many of his modernist contemporaries, Grieve could rarely be accused of averting his attention from the political.[8] *The Scottish Nation*, which adopted the newspaper format, can be read in line with Benedict Anderson's formulation of newspapers as an active force in the shaping of cultural systems by which nationalist feeling might be made stronger.[9] The attempted creation of a "discourse community" through which Scotland's political and literary revival could be achieved provided the driving force for Grieve's early career as the joint editor and proprietor of these periodicals.[10]

The oft-unrealisable ambition which Edwin Morgan and G. S. Fraser posit as typifying Grieve's later poetic output under the guise of Hugh MacDiarmid is also a defining feature of his early career as magazine editor and publisher (Morgan 192-193, Fraser 227). Not content with running only *The Scottish Chapbook*, Grieve nurtured plans to launch a weekly periodical, which made its first appearance on the 8th of May 1923. As a tabloid-sized newspaper (37 cms x 24.5), printed in triple columns, *The Scottish Nation* was markedly different in appearance to *The Scottish Chapbook*, which boasted brightly coloured covers and high-quality paper. Grieve's "Topics of the Week" varied in content from coverage of a Bill for the aiding of illegitimate children in Scotland to Bertrand Russell's candidacy for the rectorship of Edinburgh University. While *The Scottish Chapbook* was to be almost exclusively a vehicle for furthering Scotland's literary development, *The Scottish Nation* acted more as a soap-box for the profusion of ideas regarding varied areas of Scottish culture. The "Programme" which appears in the very first issue bears witness to this sense of textual diffuseness:

> 'The Scottish Nation' will be as fully representative a national organ as possible. Its columns will be open to all who are

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[8] Patrick Williams, '"Simultaneous uncontemporaneities': theorising modernism and empire', in *Modernism and empire*, ed. Howard J. Booth and Nigel Rigby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 22.

[9] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983; reprinted London: Verso, 2006), 12.

[10] Fiona M. Douglas, *Scottish Newspapers, Language and Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 15.

> interested in Scottish affairs, arts, and letters – no matter from what angle. If partisan articles are published or partisan attitudes taken up editorially, full scope will be given to those who would seek to challenge or rebut the opinions expressed or the statements made. Nor will it be forgotten that nationalism presupposes internationalism. The aim throughout will be to elucidate and develop Scottish points of view in regard to all affairs, national, imperial, and international, and in arts and letters, to maintain and further the traditions of our distinctive Scottish culture.[11]

Readers could be forgiven, on this evidence, for thinking that Grieve's ambitions reached beyond the possibility of fulfilment, setting himself (and the paper) the task of both maintaining and furthering the "traditions of […] distinctive Scottish culture." However, this declaration of intent possesses a distinctly modernist tone – as an attempt to reconcile past and present through a fusion of their distinctive elements. The lyric poems written in synthetic Scots which Grieve was publishing at this time under his other identity of Hugh MacDiarmid, can thus be understood as representing the textual embodiment of this ambition. In these poems the Scots tongue – more associated with tradition than innovation – was being put to use in deliberately provocative ways in order to assert its continuing viability as a means of poetic expression.

Although this 'Programme' sounds a confident note, *The Scottish Nation* was subject to compromise from the outset. Writing to R. E. Muirhead on the 24th of February 1923, Grieve outlined his vision for the paper's appearance and contents: originally planned to be "a 24 pp weekly, 3 cols. to page, with one or two line or wood-cut illustrations by Scottish artists – well-printed, on excellent paper," the paper was in fact 16 pages in length for the majority of its issues and contained no original illustrations.[12] Writing again to Muirhead on the 26th of April, Grieve admitted that it would in fact "consist of sixteen pages instead of

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[11] Christopher Murray Grieve, "Programme", *The Scottish Nation*, May 8, 1923.
[12] Christopher Murray Grieve to R. E. Muirhead, February 24, 1923, in *Hugh MacDiarmid: New Selected Letters*, ed. Dorian Grieve, Alan Riach, O. D. Edwards (Manchester: Carcanet Press Limited, 2001), 278.

twenty-four (for purely technical reasons – we cannot handle a 24-page without introducing new machinery)."[13] This did not stop Grieve from declaring, in the "Programme" (which appeared subsequently to this letter), that the paper would increase in size to twenty-four pages, suggesting a misguided overconfidence on his part.

Despite this initial setback, Grieve's conception of the Scottish Renaissance as modelled within his publications can clearly be seen to have been ever-evolving outwards from the purely literary to the differing spheres of cultural life. Margery McCulloch highlights the flexibility afforded to Grieve by the new weekly format, arguing that *The Scottish Nation*'s wide-ranging contents are the closest that Grieve came to replicating the spirit of J. R. Orage's influential weekly *The New Age* (which Grieve read assiduously and mimicked somewhat in editorial style).[14] Table 1 below shows that *The Scottish Nation* displayed a genuine mix of article types – with the proviso that it is based on the contents of eight issues rather than the entire run. Every 5th issue was chosen for analysis on the basis that this would provide enough of a gap between copies to trace developments and changes in content and layout in a uniform fashion.

Table 1

Article category	Percentage of overall content
Literary articles (including book reviews)	51
Political articles/essays	25
Poetry	17
Short stories	3
Religious articles/essays	4

[13] Christoper Murray Grieve to R. E. Muirhead, April 26, 1923, in *The Letters of Hugh MacDiarmid*, ed. Alan Bold (London, Hamish Hamilton,1984), 278.

[14] Margery Palmer McCulloch, "Scottish Renaissance Periodicals: Work in Progress Revisited", in *Scottish Literary Periodicals: Three Essays* (Edinburgh: Merchiston Publishing, 1998), 38-39.

Evidence for McCulloch's claim can be taken from a series of articles, by different authors, which appeared under the heading "The Religious Outlook." W. H. Hamilton's article "A Trumpet for the Church," which appears in the issue of June 5th, is written in direct response to a piece which appeared a week earlier and was written by "A Scottish Layman." This is exactly the kind of dialogic content which Orage's *New Age* specialised in, and was orchestrated by Grieve to produce a similar effect: *The Scottish Nation* sought to present itself as a textual arena for open debate and discussion between opposing authors. By appearing on a weekly basis, these exchanges were given a feeling of greater immediacy than was possible in monthlies or quarterlies. Debates of this nature were valuable for outlining "the persona of the magazine as defined by its content and the manner in which that content is presented to the readers," as one which fostered engaging journalism rather than merely serving a pedagogic function.[15] This "persona," then, is a composite of both content and appearance – which in the case of *The Scottish Nation* throws up something of a dilemma. By choosing to follow a newspaper-style layout, Grieve presents us with a difficult textual terrain to navigate. Longer pieces such as short stories found themselves being split up, thus disrupting any sense of textual continuity, while the poems which appear are not given the space one would expect them to receive due to the pressures of filling a three-column newspaper page. As Allen Hutt avers, the newspaper is a different environment to the periodical, with its own set of conventions and their attendant pressures and difficulties.[16] Grieve's desire to present articles on as wide a range of topics as possible, as stated in the "Programme," led to this sense of confusion on the level of content. The demands of newspaper design, defined by Edmund Arnold as a "need [to] convey an air of immediacy, alertness, importance, interest and invitation" despite the disparate nature of the content presented to the reader, can thus be seen to have affected any sense of internal unity

[15] David Reed, *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States 1880-1960* (London: The British Library, 1997), 11.
[16] Allen Hutt, *Newspaper Design* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 3.

which *The Scottish Nation* sought to present to its readers.[17] While Anderson notes that the juxtaposition of differing content types is a prerequisite of publishing in the newspaper format,[18] this can be seen to have negatively affected the particular contents which Grieve wished to include: short stories being more dependent on presentational continuity than reportage. The nature of the newspaper medium itself exerts strong restrictions on the kind of content which can be presented effectively, restrictions which Grieve might be seen to have been unable to accommodate successfully. This resistance of the newspaper form to existing modes of sustained critical analysis need not be a dead end. Instead, we as critics ought to expand and refine the techniques and approaches which we bring to the analysis of periodicals. *The Scottish Nation* defies easy categorisation as either literary periodical or newspaper, containing as it does elements of both, testifying to Grieve's willingness to cross boundaries of form in search of a vehicle for the achievement of his aims.

Grieve's own contributions as editor were manifold, as a letter to Muirhead from November 1st 1923 testifies in boastful fashion: "[s]urely the *Scottish Nation* is almost unique in the history of journalism – I do the editing, proof-reading, book-keeping, despatching and a great deal of the actual writing single-handed."[19] While Grieve sounds a note of defiant pride in this letter, this kind of workload would prove exhausting, especially in conjunction with his efforts on *The Scottish Chapbook*. By pricing the paper at only threepence, Grieve was joining many other journal proprietors by becoming dependent on advertising revenue to provide the necessary profits to continue (Scholes and Wulfman, 127),[20] but despite a relatively high number of adverts in each issue, this figure would prove elusive, as the same letter goes on to discuss: "[t]he paper would require very little to be self-supporting […]

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[17] Edmund C. Arnold, *Functional Newspaper Design* (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), 325.

[18] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 33.

[19] Christopher Murray Grieve to R. E. Muirhead, November 1, 1923, in *Hugh MacDiarmid: New Selected Letters*, 22.

[20] Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines: An Introduction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 127.

Five hundred more readers and a couple of columns more advts per week would do it."[21]

The adverts which *The Scottish Nation* ran are noteworthy as evidence of Grieve's widening search for sources of revenue, as well as his increasing grasp of the realities of the periodical marketplace. Securing representation by an advertising firm in London saw *The Scottish Nation* carry commercial messages on behalf of a wide range of clients. Adverts for Cadbury's Cocoa and McVitie's Digestives frequently appeared on the front pages of the paper, bracketing the "Principal Contents" section in an evocative reminder of the relationship between modernist innovation and its necessary commercial underpinnings. Scholes and Wulfman describe this relationship thus: "[a]dvertising is inside modern poetry […] as well as all around in the pages of the magazines," and reminds us that for the proprietors of periodicals "success required not a separation from the culture of commodities but an immersion in it, with art and commerce intricately entwined."[22] This ties in with Robert Jensen's statement that the "dialogue of money and art is manifest in the language, in the institutions, and in the actions of modernist artists and their audiences."[23] Grieve's editorial persona is here subsumed by the language of the marketplace as he takes on the role of advertiser. Running these periodicals was, increasingly, forcing Grieve to occupy multiple roles at once – from author and editor all the way to salesman. Nor was he shy about displaying further commercial realities within the text of *The Scottish Nation*; several issues contain a short summary of advertisement rates, sorted by price according to length and size of advert. These frequent irruptions of purely mercantile subject matter within the pages of *The Scottish Nation* make clear just how eager Grieve was to secure the revenue which was vital to pursuing his aesthetic and political aims. This chimes with Stephen Brown's declaration that modernist authors were "authorpreneurially minded at all times" – a

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[21] Christopher Murray Grieve to R. E. Muirhead, November 1, 1923, in *Hugh MacDiarmid: New Selected Letters*, 21.

[22] Scholes and Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines*, 121 and 124.

[23] Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-siecle-Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 10.

mindset which Grieve in his role as editor was clearly unafraid to display.[24]

Political articles, also, were highly visible within *The Scottish Nation*. An article by Lewis Spence, "J'Accuse," which appears in the issue of June 5th 1923, is sternly pugilistic in its call for Scottish independence, a stance which was echoed by the paper's initial title page, which carried the slogan "Scotland must be freed from the predominance of English influences in every direction." This would disappear from subsequent issues' title pages although it would be resurrected as a sub-heading for a series of articles entitled "International Arts and Affairs" in later editions, eventually being dropped altogether by the 26th of June. Grieve's "Topics of the Week" mostly focused on political matters, rather than literary. Indeed, politics would often overshadow or even disrupt an ostensibly literary feature such as "At the Sign of the Thistle," which initially consisted of a series of essays on mostly literary-historical figures such as Mikhail Lermontov and Byron. This was soon used for political purposes, and was the heading under which two articles regarding Fascism appeared in the issues of June the 5th and 19th, thenceforth playing host to a range of subjects, in a move away from its origins as a feature with literature as its focus.

As the year 1923 drew to a close, it became apparent that neither of Grieve's concurrent publications would be able to survive in their existing formats. The last number of both publications would appear in December of that year, although Grieve was already planning his next move: a return to monthly publication. By April 1924 Grieve had settled on a title – *The Northern Review*. The first issue appeared the following month, and is visually striking for several reasons. Firstly, the bold cover illustration, which shows a black-outlined picture of Northern Britain bisected by an imaginary line between North and South (see Figure 1). By including the cities of Liverpool, Newcastle and Manchester in this visual depiction of his idealised "northern" community, Grieve was cannily using illustration to signal the

[24] Stephen Brown, "Selling poetry by the Pound: T. S. Eliot and the Waste Land brand", *Consumption Markets and Culture* 18 (2015): 421, accessed July 24th 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2015.1020795.

broadening geographic scope of his projected cultural and political revolution. Also of note is the length of each issue; at 80-plus pages this is by the far the largest of Grieve's early periodicals, and being printed in a double-column format lends an air of solidity and authority to the appearance of the pages themselves. Of similar dimensions to *The Scottish Chapbook* (*The Northern Review* measures 24 cms x 18, *The Scottish Chapbook* 25 x 18.5), Grieve used this return to a familiar format to revive certain features of his previous publications.

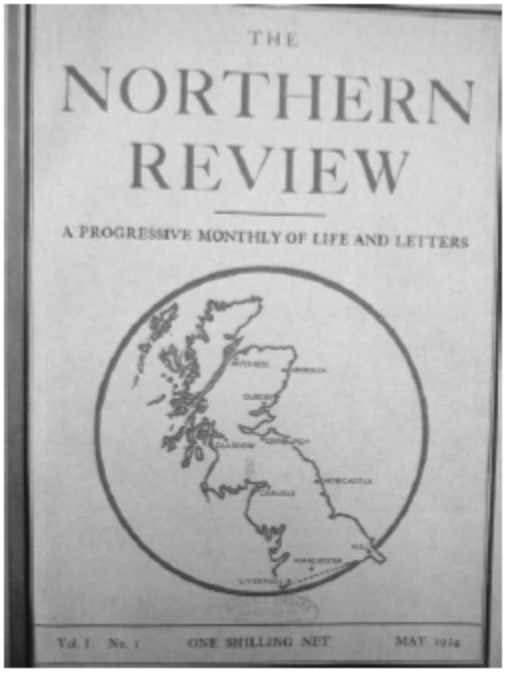

Figure 1.

Grieve's editorial voice was present once again in the shape of a "Causerie" in the first two issues, although this was dropped afterwards. The first of these sees Grieve making an attempt to link *The Northern Review* to that which had passed before: In a column leader devoted to "The Scottish Renaissance," the *Glasgow Herald*, in discussing the newer forces at work in Scottish life and literature, and in assessing the value of the work that has been done in the past year or two by the younger writers associated mainly with *Northern Numbers*, *The Scottish Chapbook*, and *The Scottish Nation*, contended that […] literary devolution was desirable and imminent. *The Northern Review* has been founded to further all the tendencies making in that direction […] What Scotland has not had hitherto is a representative periodical devoted to its national arts and letters approximating in any degree in intelligence, force, and serious quality to the best two or three such organs in every other country in

Western Europe. *The Northern Review* will be resolutely tendencious in character, and will represent a more determined effort than has hitherto been made to rescue Scottish arts and letters from the slough of Kailyairdism.[25] This desire to connect his latest periodical with its predecessors is a clear attempt on Grieve's part at establishing a continuity-through-print for the Scottish Renaissance and its "organs" which, given the unfortunate tendency of these magazines to end abruptly, they could not entirely be said to possess in actuality. At the same time as emphasising this continuity, Grieve positions *The Northern Review* as the most forward-looking of his publications to date – it was to be a textual arena where "a more determined effort than has hitherto been made to rescue Scottish arts and letters" could be attempted.

Nor, as the cover illustration suggested, was this pioneering sensibility to be limited to Scotland. The Causerie goes on to state that: there are other centres over the Border – Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham – which suffer from the effects of cultural centralisation in London as much as do Glasgow and Edinburgh, and we seek to make common cause with the elements which are seeking local autonomy thereby turning his editorial attention "over the Border" Grieve provides further indication of his desire to appeal to the readerly population of the built-up areas extraneous to London and its monopoly on cultural developments and coverage. This pan-Northernism is seemingly at odds with Grieve's fierce nationalism, yet as has been previously noted, a tendency towards contradiction was never far from his plans. The crude, yet clear, cover illustration reveals the proposed demarcation between North and South to be an entirely subjective choice, conducted according to Grieve's own standards: a topographical projection of his own ideological uncertainties. The exclusion of Leeds, a populous Northern city, from the map is of interest. This omission highlights the tenuously constructed nature of Grieve's conception of the divides between London and the South and a North defined by a willed-for cultural solidarity which was, at this point in time, not entirely fixed.

In terms of external contributors, *The Northern Review* boasts the most diverse cast of any that Grieve managed to assemble during his

[25] Christopher Murray Grieve, "Causerie", *The Northern Review* 1, No. 1 (1924): 1-5.

editorial career. The first issue has Walter de la Mare, Margaret Sackville and Edwin Muir among the authors listed, while Neil Gunn would feature in each subsequent number. Worthy of note, also, is the wide-ranging scope of the contents: the lengthy Reviews section to be found at the rear of each issue contain a variegated selection of texts and authors under discussion, from Aldous Huxley to Richard Aldington. Furthermore, Grieve wished to highlight this variety as being a hallmark of *The Northern Review*. In an essay contained within the final issue, Grieve states that the magazine opens it pages to writers of any school with any theory of art or of technique, however apparently freakish, so be it they are resolved […] to make literature. Therefore its pages cannot have that unity the absence of which may be charged against it. It is a battle-ground [.][26] By proclaiming this absence of unity to be one of the defining features of the publication, Grieve positions *The Northern Review* as a textual environment defined by a sense of eclecticism as an aesthetic value in itself. This pledge of support for "writers of any school with any theory of art or technique" allowed Grieve to reiterate the experimental spirit at the heart of the Scottish Renaissance and its attendant publications. This is reflected in the aggregate range of contents to be found in *The Northern Review*, which are more evenly spread between textual categories than was the case for *The Scottish Nation*, as table 2 shows:

Table 2

Article Category	Percentage of overall content
Poetry	20
Essays	30
Short stories/descriptive prose	6
Drama	4
Book Reviews	40

While "Drama" constitutes the smallest category, plays invariably took up more pages than other article types, and by publishing at least one per issue under a feature headed "Little Scots Theatre," Grieve ensured

[26] Christopher Murray Grieve, *The Northern Review* 1, No. 4 (1924): 234.

that a place was reserved for the dissemination of new work in this field by Scottish authors. This commitment to publishing new dramatic works is also referred to in the Causerie for the first issue, where Grieve declared Scots drama to be a vital part of any literary awakening in Scotland.

This flexibility would extend to the sourcing of material as well – a poem by F. V. Branford published in the second issue, "The Idiot," carries a bracketed disclaimer that it had first appeared in an issue of the influential American periodical *The Dial*. This suggests two things: firstly, that Grieve continued to perceive engagement with contemporary periodicals as a key element of his editorial duties, and that his habit of textual recycling was expanding to include whole texts rather than being confined to fragments. There is a further element to this repurposing of Branford's poem – by reprinting the work and giving this information regarding its original publication context, Grieve places into the reader's mind the suggestion that *The Northern Review* inhabits the same sphere as *The Dial* in terms of its literary aspirations. Through these kinds of editorial intervention, which we might term 'quiet' as opposed to the 'loud' represented by editorially-penned articles or interpositions affixed to articles written by others, Grieve is able to influence the reader without seeming to interrupt the flow of text or the layout of the page. Reading through the four issues of *The Northern Review* makes clear that Grieve's role of editor had perceptibly changed from that evinced in *The Scottish Chapbook* and *The Scottish Nation*. While he still penned articles, his interventions in the articles of others were far fewer. Although Grieve's conception of his duties as editor may have changed, the external pressures facing any new periodical publication had not. Most pressing of all was the "perennial crisis of funding' which plagued so many modernist magazines."[27] In-text advertisements, which appear frequently in the first two issues of *The Northern Review* – a departure from their previous segregation in the other periodicals under discussion – decline sharply in the final two issues, with none in the third and a solitary advert on behalf of Foyle's, the London bookshop, in the last issue. This slow-

[27] Matthew Luskey, "Modernist Ephemera: Little Magazines and the Dynamics of Coalition, Passing and Failure" (PhD diss., University of Oregon, 2003), 3.

down in revenue would prove fatal, and after four issues *The Northern Review* also folded. Grieve's attempt at a return to the monthlies market was doomed to be the least successful – in durational terms – of all his periodical publications.

Leaving Montrose to seek regular journalistic work in London at the end of the 1920s, Grieve would continue to juggle seemingly irreconcilable aesthetic and political aims throughout his career. From 1926 onward, with the publication of *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* – a rejoinder, in Scots, to *The Waste Land* – he would find fame primarily as a poet. Yet he remained active in the periodical sphere for much of his life. The chief example of this being his work on *Vox*, the precursor to the *Radio Times*, which had been set up by Compton Mackenzie – a publication which places him at a critical point in the history of broadcast journalism. His early editorial activities can thus be read as professional preparation for this aspect of his career, while also signalling the intellectual eclecticism which he believed to be essential for any revolution in Scottish cultural life. Furthermore, they reveal the compromises and tensions inherent in any such exercise: voicing a fiercely avant-garde outlook while relying on dwindling advertising revenue, Grieve's aspirations to provoke literary modernism into existence in Scotland were built on ground which was far from stable. Modernism and the marketplace, as much recent scholarship has shown, were uneasy but necessary bedfellows. Grieve's publications confirm this, with poems and advertisements sharing the page with ill-defined political manifestos in a visual reminder of the inescapability of commerce in the 20th century.

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Legends to Figures

Figure 1: Front cover of the first issue of *The Northern Review*, May 1924.