Invisible Poetry: Women, Ethnic Minorities and the Forgotten History of Carcanet Magazine*  
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ABSTRACT  
Before it became a leading poetry publisher, Carcanet was a student magazine set up by undergraduates who wanted to link Oxford and Cambridge. This article sheds light on the forgotten history of Carcanet magazine, focusing particularly on women and ethnic minorities. Prior to Michael Schmidt’s takeover of the magazine in late 1967, Carcanet offered opportunities to writers from India and ex-colonies (including Adil Jussawalla and Edward Brathwaite) to publish their work, before moving on to more mainstream venues. Carcanet magazine can be seen as a site of struggle between various players: between the Oxford and Cambridge literary sets, and between British/European and postcolonial groups. Drawing on extensive archival work in neglected collections, as well as oral history interviews, this article tells an alternative history of Carcanet magazine as a case study for the larger literary field of post-war Britain. The story is less focused on Michael Schmidt, without diminishing his accomplishment in transforming a student magazine into an enduring publishing enterprise.

In late 2019, Michael Schmidt gave an interview to the Daily Telegraph to talk about the fiftieth anniversary of Carcanet, the press he founded and continues to manage. Although Carcanet has experimented with fiction, it is better known as a poetry publisher, particularly of poetry in translation and inspired by the modernist movement. ‘Four Carcanet authors have received the Nobel Prize in Literature, and six have won Pulitzers’, the Daily Telegraph noted, before turning to the history of the press: ‘Carcanet began as a publisher of poetry pamphlets, having grown out of a magazine of the same name Schmidt edited while studying at Oxford’.\(^1\) A similar narrative on the origins of Carcanet can be found in a 1987 article in the London Times: ‘At Oxford [Schmidt] began editing a small magazine called Carcanet, and decided to publish a few pamphlets of poetry as a swansong. They went surprisingly well’.\(^2\)

Carcanet magazine is often presented as an undistinguished student magazine, which would have sunk into obscurity had Michael Schmidt not taken it over in 1967. It was set up by undergraduates who wanted to link Oxford and Cambridge,
but after a few issues, the magazine lost its focus and accumulated debts. According to the Carcanet Press website, ‘the magazine Carcanet had fallen on hard times by October 1967 when Michael Schmidt, a newly arrived undergraduate at Wadham College, Oxford, took it over’.3 The same narrative is repeated in the description of the Carcanet Press archive at the John Rylands Library in Manchester. This description is then cited in Michael Thurston and Nigel Alderman’s Reading Postwar British and Irish Poetry: ‘While the magazine had managed to stay in production for seven years, it was in dire straits by the late 1960s’.4 In this oft-repeated story, Michael Schmidt is the sole hero, who transformed a struggling student magazine into a successful publishing enterprise before launching the magazine Poetry Nation in 1973 (which became PN Review in 1976).

There are two interesting things in this Oxford-focused, male-dominated story. First, the influence of the Cambridge group in setting up the original Carcanet magazine in 1962 is seldom mentioned. The group is disparaged for its amateurism and financial irresponsibility. But this focus on the negative obscures the predecessors’ long-lasting legacy: a brand name that is both intriguing and meaningful (according to the Oxford English Dictionary, a carcanet is a ‘an ornamental collar or necklace, usually of gold or set with jewels’).5 The second interesting point is the invisibility of women, despite their role in the original Carcanet magazine. In his introduction to Fifty Fifty: Carcanet’s Jubilee in Letters, Schmidt mentions Roger Garfitt, then President of the Oxford Poetry Society:

The first meeting I attended when I went up to Oxford as an undergraduate in 1967 was that of the Oxford University Poetry Society. Its president was Roger Garfitt, subsequently a Carcanet poet and in the early years a close collaborator. I seem to remember him on that occasion wrapped in a kind of wizard’s gown and with the inclusive, friendly, smoky vagueness that accompanied many young cultural people in the evenings of the late 1960s. He declared that the Oxford-Cambridge literary magazine Carcanet was up for grabs and if anyone was interested they should see him after the meeting. I did so and came away with the prize.6

Schmidt says nothing about Diane Troy, who co-edited the Winter 1966 and Summer 1967 issues. Yet, it was Troy—not Garfitt—who was looking for a successor to the magazine. A decade later, Schmidt told his friend and fellow poetry publisher Peter Jay that: ‘She was very reluctant to let me have the magazine Carcanet and in the end let me have it only by default of better offers’. And he added: ‘To

3 ‘About Us’, <www.carcanet.co.uk/cgi-bin/SCRIBE?SHOWINFO=IP020> accessed 23 January 2020.
4 Michael Thurston and Nigel Alderman, Reading Postwar British and Irish Poetry (Chichester, 2014), 56.
5 ‘carcanet, n.’, OED Online, Oxford University Press, December 2019. For more on distinctive and memorable brand names, see this influential article: Kim Robertson, ‘Strategically Desirable Brand Name Characteristics’, Journal of Consumer Marketing, 6 (1989), 61–71 <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000002563>.
6 Michael Schmidt, ‘Introduction’, in Fifty Fifty: Carcanet’s Jubilee in Letters, ed. by Robyn Marsack (Manchester, 2019), p. xxi.
imagine what would have happened had someone more promising come forward! I might now be living in Hawaii!” Troy was co-editing the magazine with a young Indian poet, Farrukh Dhondy. They worked with contributors from various ethnic backgrounds, including Adil Jussawalla, who went on to a successful literary career in India. In contrast, Schmidt had more conventional poetry interests, despite his Mexican upbringing. The first issue edited by Schmidt included only English names, and only one woman: Sally Purcell.

The story of Carcanet magazine illuminates two key characteristics of the broader literary landscape in Britain: first, the emphasis on Oxford as the birthplace of literary innovation in the decades immediately after the Second World War; second, its marginalization of women and ethnic minorities. When I was researching this article, I had no problem finding interviewees eager to tell the Cambridge side of the Carcanet story. The first few issues of the magazine are preserved at Cambridge University Library and are easily available to researchers. Finding information about the women associated with the magazine is more complicated, in part because they were so few of them. Purcell, for example, is no longer here to share her own story. She produced several books of poetry and translations and died in 1998 at the age of 53.

Carcanet magazine also published ethnically diverse collaborators who went on to promote a diverse conception of English literature to a large audience. This was not entirely new, of course (the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 for Gitanjali, a book of poems in English). Building on this legacy, the generation of poets associated with Carcanet magazine championed a diverse understanding of English literature. Adil Jussawalla edited an influential anthology of new writing from India, published in 1974 as a mass-market Penguin paperback. He also wrote his own poetry, including the collection of poems Missing Person (1976). Jussawalla’s archive at Cornell University Library contains letters and documents on Carcanet which have been largely neglected.

In the past two decades, the field of book history has moved towards more diversity. Books have no borders, and the focus on national projects is no longer the norm. The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) chose ‘Indigeneity, Nationhood, and Migrations of the Book’ as the theme of its 2019 conference. As Sydney Shep put it in her article ‘Imagining Post-National Book History’, ‘transnational, crossnational, or histoires croisées approaches are now common’. Yet, ‘we still need room on the expanding bookshelf for those other histories on the horizon including Africa, India, the Philippines, and New Zealand’. It is of course important to study the literary and publishing field in these countries. But it is equally important to pay attention to authors who sought out publishers in literary

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7 Schmidt to Peter Jay, 20 November 1979, CPA 2/3/80, Carcanet Press archive, John Rylands Library, Manchester (hereafter referred to as JRL).

8 In Cambridge Company, Dhondy describes how he started editing Carcanet magazine. He was told that ‘the magazine had been first published in the late nineteenth century as a joint venture between Oxford and Cambridge with contributory poems from both. It had been dormant for several decades and had been revived for one trial before I inherited the editorship’. Farrukh Dhondy, Cambridge Company (London, 2016), n.pag.

9 Sydney J. Shep, ‘Imagining Post-National Book History’, Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 104 (2010), 253–68.
centres in the West. Adil Jussawalla, who published with *Carcanet* magazine before returning to India, exemplifies the transnational trajectories of postcolonial writers.

In the field of postcolonial studies, an attention to the material context of publication and diffusion of literary texts has become increasingly common. For example, Laetitia Zecchini has recently discussed the influence of the Cold War on the publishing, critical and literary scene in India from the 1950s onwards, with a special focus on Bombay. Drawing on Adil Jussawalla’s unpublished documents, she pays particular attention to little magazines that enabled the transnational and translation- al traffics of Indian modernisms. Yet, she does not mention Jussawalla’s experience with *Carcanet* magazine—a periodical based in England, but open to Indian writers.10

My central argument is that *Carcanet* magazine can be seen as a site of struggle between various players: between the Oxford and Cambridge literary sets, and between British/European and postcolonial groups. The contribution of writers from India and other ex-colonies has long been forgotten. Drawing on extensive archival work and oral history interviews, this article creates an alternative history of *Carcanet* magazine as a case study for the larger literary field of post-war Britain. The story is less focused on Michael Schmidt, without diminishing his accomplishment in transforming a student magazine into an enduring publishing enterprise.

This essay starts with an overview of the first three years of *Carcanet* magazine. The original aim was to link literary groups on both sides of the Oxford/Cambridge divide. I show that this objective highlights a key characteristic of the post-war literary landscape: the focus on Oxford as the original centre of literary experimentation, leading to feelings of marginalization in other centres. The second section turns to women and ethnic minorities who contributed to *Carcanet* magazine. The last part focuses on the transition from little magazine to small press that Schmidt piloted. From the start, *Carcanet* followed a pattern characteristic of modernist publishing enterprises (think of the *Egoist* magazine and the *Egoist* Press, which published James Joyce and Wyndham Lewis). In short, *Carcanet* magazine can be seen as a pilot project that allowed Schmidt to launch his literary career and to position his press as neo-modernist.

1. 1962–1964: CONNECTING OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

In a 1974 article in *PN Review*, Michael Schmidt’s mentor Donald Davie argued that Oxford was the place to be for any young man with literary ambitions: ‘for the last fifty years each new generation of English poets, as the “generations” were subsequently to be understood and talked about by journalistic commentators, was formed or fomented or dreamed up by lively undergraduates at Oxford, who subsequently carried the group-image to London and from there imposed it on the public consciousness so as to earn at least a footnote in the literary histories’. Davie gave examples of these successful generations of Oxford undergraduates who went on to dominate the highbrow literary world: Wystan Auden and Stephen Spender in the 1930s, followed by Kingsley Amis, John Wain and other ‘Movement’ writers after the

10 Laetitia Zecchini, ‘What Filters Through the Curtain’, *Interventions* (2019), 1–23 <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2019.1649183>.
war. In the early 1960s, Ian Hamilton and John Fuller started building their literary
careers via Hamilton’s magazine *The Review*. A few years later, Michael Schmidt and
his friends Grevel Lindop and Gareth Reeves became the latest Oxford-educated
poets eager to establish themselves. For Davie, it was clear that Cambridge had not
played an important role in the literary world since the Bloomsbury group. ‘Every
new putsch has come from Oxford and has picked up its Cambridge recruits
(Christopher Isherwood in one generation, Thorn Gunn in another) only afterwards,
and incidentally’.11

The creation of *Carcanet* magazine in 1962 can be seen as an Oxford-led attempt
to recruit Cambridge collaborators from the start of the project, rather than ‘after-
wards, and incidentally’. Richard Emeny, a student at Merton College in Oxford, had
been to school with John Halliday, who was reading History at St John’s in
Cambridge. Emeny wanted to create a joint-university literary magazine, and he
asked Halliday to help him develop the project. Although Halliday accepted the offer
and became the Cambridge editor of the first issue, he lacked confidence in his liter-
ary skills, and he asked two English literature students to join the committee:
Michael Duffett and Richard Burns (who then changed his name to Berengarten).

The magazine would be called *Carcanet* and would contain short stories, poems
and critical essays. Since undergraduates could not publish a magazine without the
endorsement of established university figures, the next step was to find Senior
Members. At Oxford, the committee enlisted Nevill Coghill, a distinguished literary
scholar who had been part of an informal discussion group that included C. S. Lewis
and J. R. R. Tolkien. At Cambridge, the young men obtained the approval of
Kingsley Amis, who was much more controversial than Coghill. Apart from lending
his name, Amis played no part in *Carcanet* magazine.

The name of the magazine was suggested by someone in the Oxford team:
Richard Emeny as editor, and his committee composed of Roger Green, Michael
Hind and Roger Chinery. The cover of the first issue showed a drawing of a carcanet
as an ornamental necklace, set with jewels. It symbolized the union of Oxford and
Cambridge, to produce a delicately crafted magazine. Injecting a good dose of
schoolboys’ humour, the drawings in the inside pages played on the term’s archaism
and possible French origins.

Published in late 1962, the first issue of *Carcanet* can be seen as the product of a
male-only public-school system, which led to enduring friendships across the
Oxford-Cambridge divide. Yet, these existing ties did not necessarily make communi-
cation easy. First, there was the issue of travelling from one place to another for
meetings. The two teams sometimes met in London, which was more easily access-
able. The second problem was the lack of agreement on editorial policies. Oxford
didn’t have a regular literary magazine at that time, and the objective of Emeny and
his friends was simply to offer an outlet to fellow students. On the Cambridge side, a
central influence was *Granta*—a magazine founded in 1889 by students at the
University. Burns, who had published a short story in the *Transatlantic Review* when
he was still at school, then won a prize in *Granta*. The magazine was the leading

11 Donald Davie, ‘The Varsity Match’, *Poetry Nation*, 1974 <https://www.pnreview.co.uk/cgi-bin/scribe?
item_id=4059> accessed 18 June 2020. Ted Hughes, who studied at Pembroke College, Cambridge,
might also be mentioned in the same context.
reference for all Cambridge students with literary ambitions, and it did not compete directly against Carcanet, a much more amateurish affair. ‘Carcanet was an attempt to break away from what we saw as the portentous style of Granta’, Michael Rowan-Robinson told me.12

Like Burns, Rowan-Robinson was a student at Pembroke College in Cambridge. He contributed to the second issue of Carcanet. With the publication of Carcanet 2 in January 1963, a clearer editorial policy began to emerge, influenced by Greek mythology and culture. C. A. Trypanis, a 54-year-old Greek scholar and poet who was then at Oxford, contributed several poems to this issue. At Pembroke College, a young man called Peter Mansfield made a lasting impression on the Carcanet team. Rowan-Robinson said: ‘There were a group of us that used to meet every day in the rooms of Peter Mansfield. He had nice rooms in the courtyard of the college, so we all used to gather there’. A great drinker and bon vivant, Mansfield was excessive in many ways. He ‘was the dominant figure’, Rowan-Robinson added. ‘Very charismatic, tremendous appetite for life and experience’.13 Mansfield was reading Classics and had a mastery of Greek, both ancient and modern. His series of poems set in the Homeric world gave a distinct flavour to the second issue. The influence of Greek poets such as George Seferis and Constantine Cavafy can also be seen in Rowan-Robinson’s poems. In 1964, Rowan-Robinson met Seferis, before embarking on a professorial career in astronomy.

The first and second issue of Carcanet magazine shared sexual undertones typical of the early 1960s. In a story entitled ‘Afternoon on the sea’, Mike Travis described a Mediterranean lifestyle: ‘In the morning you work, in the afternoon you rest, in the cool evening you make children’. One man finds himself unable to respond to the sexual needs of his partner: ‘He felt her warm polished legs on each side of his body. But the sun was too hot and jealous’.14 Richard Burns also published vaguely erotic poems, ‘To His Coy Mistress’ and ‘An Exercise’, in the first two issues. These pieces remind us that Carcanet was a magazine by and for undergraduates, who were exploring sexuality. Sold for 2s., it was three times cheaper than the Faber books of poems advertised in the inside pages.

These advertisements give us information about the dominant market for Carcanet magazine: mostly male, young, relatively privileged students from Oxford and Cambridge. ‘EVERYTHING FOR YOUR SKI-ING HOLIDAY’, declared one ad for the Men’s Shop of a department store in Oxford. Barclays Bank promised students that it was easy to open a bank account: ‘For as an undergraduate you’ll quickly appreciate how useful it is to be able to pay college, books and tailors’ bills by cheque’. Another advertisement for Harrisons and Crosfield, a trading house looking for new graduates eager to start a career overseas, celebrated Britain’s colonial past. ‘Founded in 1844 as a partnership for the import of China tea into the United Kingdom, it was one of the pioneers of rubber planting in Malaya and Sumatra’. The company offered vacancies in the Far East, and rapid promotion ‘for the right men’.15

12 Michael Rowan-Robinson, email to author, 4 April 2020.
13 Rowan-Robinson, interview with author, 17 August 2018.
14 Mike Travis, ‘Afternoon on the Sea’, Carcanet (1962), 6.
15 The advertisements cited here can be found in the first two issues of Carcanet magazine.
Edited by an all-male team and designed with an audience of male students in mind, Carcanet magazine celebrated the close links between writers and ordinary readers. Single poems were issued regularly and sold for one penny in bookshops. Featuring a new work or a translation, the ‘penny poem’ sheet created a continuous link with readers who were waiting for the next magazine issue. Overall, the objective was not to create a polished literary magazine, but rather to offer an informal forum of discussion and experimentation. ‘We decided to produce a magazine not just for editors and critics, but for readers and writers’, declared the editorial of the second issue in January 1963.

By that time, however, tensions between the Oxford and Cambridge team had become public knowledge. Reviewing Carcanet 2, the magazine Varsity deplored its mediocre literary standards:

Carcanet . . . started off promisingly last November but has now become more muddled in its claims for ‘poetry in evolution’ and its aims to cater for ‘writers and readers.’ So long as the quality of the writing is good, one does not mind the strange formula, but the second issue was sadly disappointing. It contains a nonsensical editorial which was largely the result of misunderstanding between the Oxford and Cambridge sides of the business.16

Carcanet 3—which should have been edited by Richard Emeny at Oxford and Peter Mansfield at Cambridge—did not materialize until 1964 with a new editor, Roger Kuin. An enterprise started in a spirit of collaboration between the two universities ended with a takeover from the Oxford side. Another problem was that the founding members of Carcanet were about to graduate, and many of them left shortly afterwards to travel or start work. Duffett went to teach in Arabia, Burns to Greece and Italy. The original team graduated in 1964, having planted the seeds for a magazine more open to alternative voices by ethnic minorities. Throughout its history, however, Carcanet magazine remained relatively closed to female contributors—with a few notable exceptions.

II. 1964–1967: MOVING TOWARDS MORE DIVERSITY?

The first issue of Carcanet in 1962 included 25 per cent of women, a number that decreased to 9 per cent in the second issue. Among these few female contributors was Rima Alamuddin, a Lebanese student, who died at the age of 22. She chose English to express herself creatively, one of the first women from the Middle East to do so. ‘Rima drew most of her ideas, from Western Culture but the atmosphere she depicts is purely oriental’, declared Al Raida, a Beirut-based publication of the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World. ‘The background is Lebanese and so are the characters of her stories and poems, though they may appear in Western dress and adopt Western manners. Her artistry performed an ideal marriage of cultures.’17

16 Michael Sutton, ‘Magazines in Stock’, Varsity, 9 March 1963, n.pag.
17 Rose Ghurayyib, ‘Rima Alamuddin’, Al-Raida Journal (1978), 4–5 <https://doi.org/10.32380/alrj.v0i0.1688>.
Born in 1941, Alamuddin came from a wealthy, cosmopolitan family. Her Swiss mother had a doctorate, and her Lebanese father was the Director of the Middle East Airlines. Educated in Lebanese private schools, she majored in English at the American University of Beirut and then continued her studies at Girton College, Cambridge. At the age of 19, she wrote a novel, *Spring to Summer*, published in Beirut and London in 1963. Written in a realistic style, the novel told a familiar story: Samar, a young woman from a privileged background, falls in love with a fellow student of obscure origins, Akram. The *Sunday Times* declared: ‘What is remarkable is that Samar’s life at university and in the confines of her safe bourgeois home seems, despite the hot tempers of the Middle East, extraordinarily familiar . . . she could be a North London Miss’.18 The *Times Literary Supplement* found the narration awkward but conceded that ‘Miss Alamuddin writes with an energy which promises better things to come’.19

The year 1963 started well for Alamuddin and ended tragically. In January, her short story, ‘Beyond the Wall’ appeared in *Carcanet* 2. She was the only woman among 11 contributors. As often in Alamuddin’s work, the scene is set in the Middle East. The story follows an 11-year-old girl who witnesses a violent argument between her parents. Her home environment is described as a threatening place where everyone seems scared, including pet birds: ‘Behind the girl on the balcony Abdul the Bulbul was silent and still in his bamboo cage, waiting patiently, but getting more and more silent every day, his feathers cotton-ruffled, his marble-hard head half-hanging over one wing’. The girl leaves the flat at night and meets a strange man, who asks her questions about her family. She does not fully understand what he expects of her and seems increasingly frightened. The story ends with her running away back home, and a nightmarish vision of ‘nothing left but . . . a mountain of men like ants’.20 Verbal and physical violence inflicted by men is also at the centre of Alamuddin’s first novel. Akram, a murderer and thief, nearly destroys Samar, before she manages to escape this noxious relationship. Following the publication of the novel in March, Alamuddin returned to Lebanon and was murdered by a spurned suitor later in 1963.21

After her death, Hodder and Stoughton published a collection of stories: *The Sun is Silent* (1964). A volume of poetry, *The Years of Youth*, also appeared that year. Alamuddin has not been entirely forgotten: one of her stories appeared in *Hikayat: Short Stories by Lebanese Women* (London, 2006). Her short career highlights an important moment in the post-war literary landscape, the moment when diverse voices in English fiction and poetry started to attract more attention.

As early as 1962, the Cambridge-based team was keen to publish alternative voices in *Carcanet* magazine. Peter Mansfield and Richard Burns planned an Indian issue of the magazine for Autumn 1963, with two Indian students (Ajit Singh and Adil Jussawalla) as ‘honorary editors’.22 It never materialized, in part because the

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18 Frederic Raphael, ‘Sincerity and Shoddiness in Fiction’, *Sunday Times*, 31 March 1963, 31.
19 David F. Williams, Christopher Wordsworth, and Ann Knight, ‘Other New Novels’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 26 April 1963, 292.
20 Rima Alamuddin, ‘Beyond the Wall’, *Carcanet* (January 1963), 41–51.
21 *Le Dictionnaire Universel Des Créatrices*, Éditions des femmes (Paris, 2015).
22 Ajit Singh to Adil Jussawalla, n. d., box 7 folder 31, Adil Jussawalla papers, Cornell University Library.
Oxford team was reluctant to commit to the project. ‘The internal politics of this magazine is in a bit of a mess’, Singh wrote to Jussawalla.23 Following the takeover by Oxford, the third issue of Carcanet was published in 1964. It did not include any texts by women or ethnic minorities. Reflecting 1960s preoccupations, the main theme was spirituality, outside traditional religions. ‘Lou is God’—a story about an obscure cult—was followed by a translation of ‘Speech of Christ, Dead, from the Heights of the Cosmos, Concerning the Absence of God’, by the German writer and theologian Jean Paul (1763–1825). With only 28 pages, Carcanet 3 was approximately half the size of the previous issue. It had no cover illustration and no editorial.

After disappearing in 1965, the magazine re-emerged with a new editorial team who regenerated a declining enterprise plagued with financial problems. Farrukh Dhondy and Diane Troy edited the Winter 1966 and Summer 1967 issues (Carcanet 4 and 5) and moved the magazine towards more diverse writings. Focusing on death and sex, these two issues featured striking covers: ‘Soldiers’ Heads’ by Elizabeth Frink, and a psychedelic drawing of a naked woman and a skull, by Salim Patell. Exploring the darker side of the 1960s, Adil Jussawalla’s ambiguous poems seem to deal with drugs, overdose and suicide attempts. ‘The Raising of Lazarus’ concludes with the dying speaker being rescued, only to face a cold and threatening world: ‘He brought me round but never asked the matter | With my life nor why it went | Nor took the fatal tablets from my coat’. The second poem describes children playing in a municipal park, and laments the loss of childhood: ‘At evening | comes the lame | guard to shut | the gates lock | the lank | chains’. The third poem can be read as the quest of a drug-addict looking for his dealer: ‘White man whose daily dis- | Appearance is my brief. The last word of the poem, ‘maiming’, reinforces the impression of racialized violence and impending death.24

Born into a Parsi family in the city of Bombay, Adil Jussawalla moved to England in 1957, at the age of 17. Like Nissim Ezekiel, Dom Moraes and other Indian poets writing in English who emerged after Independence, Jussawalla was educated and trained in the British way. He read English at Oxford and taught in a language school. In 1962, his first collection of poems, Land’s End, was published by the Writers Workshop, a new Calcutta-based imprint dedicated to Indian writing in English. ‘The paradox [is] that in India, English came into its own as a language capable of poetry only after Indians got rid of its original speakers’, he wrote in 1968. ‘Indian poetry in English doesn’t seriously begin to exist till after Independence’.25

This new generation of writers faced two major obstacles. First, Jussawalla was acutely aware of the difficulties of writing in the language of the ex-colonial power: ‘In my own poems, mostly written abroad, I have tried to show the effect of living in lands I can neither leave nor love nor properly belong to’.26 He saw himself as belonging to a movement of Indian writers that were using English for lack of a better option. Although he had a basic knowledge of three Indian languages (Gujarati,
Hindi, and Urdu), he could read and write the first two with painful slowness and could only understand a spoken usage of the third. In the early 1970s, when he edited the influential Penguin anthology *New Writing in India*, he had to rely on English-language translations of Indian works written in regional languages.\(^{27}\)

While Jussawalla has never been a prolific writer, his conception of language has had an important influence on Indian writers. *Marginalized: Indian Poetry in English*, a 2014 volume edited by Smita Agarwal, contains a chapter on his work alongside other major poets.\(^{28}\) His essay ‘Being There: Aspects of an Indian Crisis’ is also included in Meena Alexander’s anthology, *Name Me a Word: Indian Writers Reflect on Writing* (Yale University Press, 2018). These critics particularly value Jussawalla’s self-awareness as a poet who feels that the language he is using is not really his own. Alexander argues that in *Missing Person*, Jussawalla ‘gives voice to the fragmented life of a protagonist who effectively has nowhere to go but within and is effectively forced to piece together a self from the shards of several civilizations’.\(^{29}\) Jussawalla’s ambiguous feeling towards the English language was shared by many other postcolonial writers.

The second obstacle that Jussawalla’s generation faced was the lack of publication opportunities. Corresponding with several Indian writers in the late 1960s, Jussawalla soon realized that many had to depend on themselves to get their work published:

> Professional publishers didn’t seem to have been around from the very time they started. The situation now is much worse. The writers – novelists, playwrights, poets – have continued to write. New writers have emerged. But new publishers haven’t. No publisher, that is, who has been willing to keep pace with the quality and quantity of the work. It’s the writers themselves who’ve had to take this risk, venturing into a field about which they know nothing but must, of necessity, learn.\(^{30}\)

After returning to India in 1970, Jussawalla co-founded the influential poetry publishing house Clearing House in Bombay, with Arvind Krishna Mehrotra and others. He saw the press as a way to bypass irresponsible publishers who closed their door to Indian poetry in English. This publishing work has contributed to Jussawalla’s international reputation (Cornell, a university at the forefront of postcolonial studies, has the archive of Jussawalla and Mehrotra). As a poet-turned-publisher, Adil Jussawalla has a trajectory similar to that of Michael Schmidt.

There is another common point between the two men: both were influenced by literary modernism and tried to find new audiences for the movement. Modernism has often been viewed as a European and American product, transnational only

\(^{27}\) Adil Jussawalla (ed.), *New Writing in India* (Harmondsworth, 1974), 22.

\(^{28}\) A. J. Thomas, ‘Indian Poetry in English: Dom Moraes, Keki Daruwalla, Eunice de Souza, Adil Jussawalla, Gieve Patel’, in Smita Agarwal (ed.), *Marginalized: Indian Poetry in English* (Amsterdam, 2014), 199–243.

\(^{29}\) Meena Alexander (ed.), *Name Me a Word: Indian Writers Reflect on Writing* (New Haven, CT, 2018), 248.

\(^{30}\) Cited in Jerry Pinto, ‘Key Document: Eight Books, Seven Poets, One Clearing House’, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 53 (2017), 233–46.
insofar as many modernist artists and writers lived outside their countries of origin. However, the past two decades have seen an expansion of scholarship beyond the period of high modernism (1910–1930), and towards non-Western countries. Jussawalla’s poetry ‘voices typical Modernist angst’, notes A. J. Thomas. ‘Dark irony, images of a shattered mirror, decentred forms and a general sense of hopelessness and despair’ pervade these poems. This analysis certainly applies to the texts published in Carcanet magazine. With Clearing House press, Jussawalla brought modernism to India—publishing the works of leading figures such as Gieve Patel, Dilip Chitre and Arun Kolatkar.

Like the modernist periodicals of the 1910s and 1920s, Carcanet magazine played a pioneering role in discovering and sponsoring the new literature. In their 1947 study of little magazines, Frederick J. Hoffman et al describe these publications as the ‘advance guard’. In contrast, large publishing houses are the ‘rear guard’ whose editors ‘will accept a writer only after the advance guard has proved that he is, or can be, commercially profitable’. It is true that large publishers did not discover James Joyce or Gertrude Stein. They waited until these difficult writers had accumulated enough social capital and celebrity to open up new markets for their difficult texts.

Similarly, post-war commercial publishers waited a long time to publish ethnically diverse authors writing in English. Jussawalla’s first collection of poems had already been published by a small press in Calcutta when he started contributing to literary magazines based in Britain and the United States (Carcanet, Benoit Poetry Journal). These periodicals opened the door to more mainstream publishing opportunities. Shortly after his poems appeared in Carcanet magazine, Jussawalla started working with Penguin to edit an anthology of Indian writing. To be published in an Oxbridge little magazine was a step towards recognition as a serious Anglophone poet, on an equal footing with English-born writers. Jussawalla was not the only Indian writer associated with Carcanet magazine who later collaborated with commercial publishers. New Writing in India appeared in 1974, two years before Dhondy’s collection of short stories East End at Your Feet, published by Macmillan.

Born in 1944 in a Parsi family, Farrukh Dhondy studied at Poona University in India before getting a scholarship to read English at Cambridge. With Diane Troy at Oxford, he brought new life into the declining Carcanet magazine. After graduation, he worked as a teacher before publishing several books on the experience of young adults in Britain’s ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. From 1984 to 1997, he was Commissioning Editor in charge of Multicultural Programming for Channel 4 television. As a chronicler of British multicultural experiment, Dhondy has been described as a prominent figure in Britain’s ‘alternative establishment’ of the 1970s and 1980s.

31 Thomas, ‘Indian Poetry in English’, 230.
32 See Laetitia Zecchini, Arun Kolatkar and Literary Modernism in India: Moving Lines (London, 2014).
33 Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography, 2nd edn (Princeton, NJ, 1947), 3.
34 Michael Rosen, ‘You Do What You Have to Do to Survive’, Guardian, 7 June 2002, Books section <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/jun/08/featuresreviews.guardianreview46> accessed 18 June 2020.
The Jussawalla archive at Cornell includes correspondence with Dhondy and Adi Katrak, who contributed to the Winter 1966 and Summer 1967 issues of Carcanet. The Jussawalla-Dhondy-Katrak group was completed by another Indian student, Fershid Bharucha, who designed Carcanet 4. Like Dhondy, Bharucha was born in Poona, India, before moving to Britain to pursue his studies. In 1971, he settled in France, where he became known as a specialist in US comics through his involvement in various publishing enterprises—including large-circulation magazines such as L’Écho des savanes. In 1995, he founded his own press, Éditions USA, to publish comic books by American authors. Indian-born contributors to Carcanet magazine shared at least one common point: they did not stay in a little magazine ghetto. They used this experience as a step towards a larger audience, like successful modernist writers and artists had done before them.

Carcanet 5 included works by Indian writers, but also a poem by Edward Brathwaite, a 37-year-old who had studied at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Originally from Barbados, Brathwaite often wrote about the experience of displacement, loss and suffering. His Carcanet poem, ‘Robin’, focuses on a dead bird caught on an electric line:

Caught in her flights’ trans-
Actions: power-
Less breast
Along the power
Line’s strength.

Opposing nature and technology, the poem presents migration as inherently dangerous, a power game that the migrant is bound to lose.35

Shortly before the publication of Carcanet 5 in Summer 1967, Oxford University Press published Brathwaite’s first collection of poems, Rights of Passage, about a West Indian’s moves to London and New York and home again. References to slavery gave historical depth to the volume, conceived as the first of a trilogy. The book was a Poetry Book Society recommendation and was widely reviewed. In the Sunday Times, Christopher Ricks praised the ambition and ‘direct intensity’ of the collection and situated it in the long history of modernism: ‘Not only does it marry simplicities of rhythm to some of T. S. Eliot’s experiments with unpatterned verse, it makes use of very subtle rhyming and punning’.36 Three months later, in June 1967, the Sunday Times published Brathwaite’s poem ‘The Cat’, about a feline playing with mice: ‘Untriumphant lazily rubb- | Ing the soft fur of home’.37 Migrating was a source of danger, and home was not a safe haven.

Endorsed by emerging and established publishing institutions, Brathwaite’s work attracted the attention of the Arts Council. In late 1967, he was awarded a bursary of £1,200 (the novelist Jean Rhys received the same amount). Brathwaite went on to win numerous honours and fellowships from the Fulbright Foundation, the Ford

35 Edward Brathwaite, ‘Robin’, Carcanet (Summer 1967), 19–20.
36 Christopher Ricks, ‘Virtuosity out of Virtue’, Sunday Times, 26 March 1967, 27.
37 Edward Brathwaite, ‘The Cat’, Sunday Times, 11 June 1967, 52.
Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He has taught at Harvard University, the University of the West Indies, and New York University. Now a major voice in the Caribbean literary canon, Brathwaite benefited from the support of Carcanet magazine when he was still a relatively unknown writer.

Although Carcanet 4 and 5 did not lead to the creation of a coherent literary movement, the magazine fostered close relationships between contributors. Several names appeared in both issues, including Adi Katrak, Peter Jay and John Birtwhistle, as well as the co-editors Farrukh Dhondy and Diane Troy. Only Jay and Birtwhistle continued to contribute to the magazine following its transfer to Michael Schmidt in late 1967. His editorship of the magazine was initially characterized by a focus on young white males, and a move from little magazine to small press.

III. 1967–1970: FROM LITTLE MAGAZINE TO SMALL PRESS

In 1972, Schmidt published an essay on recent British poetry by women in a volume co-edited with Grevel Lindop. Two years before, the first National Women’s Liberation Conference at Ruskin College, Oxford, had offered a forum to discuss the challenges facing women and to prepare a series of demands. The prominent feminist magazine Spare Rib was launched in 1972. It is in this context that Schmidt decided to publish the piece under a female pseudonym (Margaret Byers). In short, he shared his own opinion on women poets while hiding behind a female persona. Explaining his stratagem to Lindop, Schmidt expressed contentment with this ‘rather neat little essay’, suitably entitled ‘Cautious Vision’.

In this essay, Schmidt noted the lack of gender diversity in poetry publishing: ‘I am always disappointed to see how few women are included in anthologies as they appear’. To explain this neglect, Schmidt pointed out that the best contemporary women poets ‘constitute a sort of a group’ with common characteristics—including ‘background, themes, formal preoccupations, aesthetic frames of reference, social class’. Limited by their middle-class condition, these poets lacked the ability to see beyond their own personal lives as ‘teacher, housewife, invalid’. Clustered in metropolitan centres and university towns, they could not contribute to the growth of regional literatures: ‘No female spawn have been reported in the swamps of Liverpool or the slow waters of Tyne’. Deriving their inspiration from humdrum realities, their poetry had ‘a well-educated aesthetic quality’ but lacked variety.

Overall, Schmidt edited seven issues of Carcanet (out of a total of 12), with a focus on young Oxford men—including Peter Jay, Grevel Lindop, and Gareth Reeves, who co-edited the eleventh issue in Winter 1969–1970. The under-representation of women contributors in Carcanet magazine did not start with Schmidt’s editorship. Carcanet 3, 4 and 5 did not feature any texts by women. Surprisingly, the gender diversity did not improve during Diane Troy’s tenure as co-editor. When Schmidt took up the magazine, the percentage of women contributors reached an average of around 15 per cent, with a peak at 31 per cent for Carcanet 10 (Autumn 1969), an issue guest-edited by Elizabeth Jennings.

38 Michael Schmidt to Grevel Lindop, 29 January 1972, Grevel Lindop papers, JRL.
39 Margaret Byers, ‘Cautious Vision: Recent British Poetry by Women’, in M. Schmidt and G. Lindop (eds), British Poetry since 1960: A Critical Survey (Oxford, 1972), 74–84.
Schmidt’s generation often viewed women as weaker competitors in the literary field (if they were competitors at all). Socialized in a male-only environment at a time when there were only a couple of colleges for women, the original team of Carcanet magazine did not pay much attention to gender diversity. This bias was also shared by men from ethnic minorities. Adil Jussawalla included only three female writers in his anthology of 40 representatives of New Writing in India. This generation also tended to reduce women to their physical attractiveness. For example, Garfitt told me about Sally Purcell’s pleasant appearance (she had long straight blond hair) and liberated sex life.40

Sally Purcell was the only woman poet who appeared in nearly all the Carcanet issues from 1967 to the demise of the magazine in 1970. Born in 1944 in a working-class family, she was the first girl at her school to win a scholarship to Oxford, where she studied Medieval and Modern French literature at Lady Margaret Hall. She was involved with the university’s Poetry Society and made valuable contacts there—including Peter Jay who launched the little magazine New Measure before creating Anvil Press. Purcell completed her first degree in 1966, but she remained in Oxford to do an MA thesis and thereafter rarely left the city. She scraped a living doing odd jobs—working in a pub, typing theses, copyediting books. ‘Careless of her material well-being and wholly without self-pity, she never complained of her breadline conditions’, wrote Jay.41

Purcell’s poems show her fascination for the writers of medieval France, Italy and the early Renaissance, as well as her deep knowledge of the classics. Her first poem in Carcanet 6 (Winter 1967–1968) is dedicated to the French scholar Étienne Dolet (1509–1546), who was convicted of heresy, strangled and burned at the Place Maubert in Paris. In the same issue, a short notice announced the forthcoming publication of a collection of Purcell’s poems in the new Anvil Press series. This pamphlet, The Devil’s Dancing Hour, was followed by the publication of Provencal Poems, one of the first booklets published by Carcanet Press.

A total of eight Carcanet booklets appeared in 1969—including titles by Schmidt’s partner Peter Jones, his friends and fellow students Grevel Lindop, Gareth Reeves and Ishan Kapur (a 21-year-old Indian poet who was then studying at Pembroke College, Oxford). The collected poems of Robert Needham—an Oxford contemporary who committed suicide at the age of 20—was also published in this series, alongside Schmidt’s own poems, Black Buildings. All books were sold for 7s.

Why did Michael Schmidt decide to transform Carcanet magazine into a fully-fledged publishing enterprise? This transformation did not happen overnight, but several factors pushed Schmidt to launch the series of booklets which then developed into a small press. The first factor was the model set up by T. S. Eliot, perhaps the most famous poet-turned-publisher. Schmidt was in New York on 5 January 1965—the day the writer’s death was announced. He remembered buying the newspaper—the Times—which had Eliot’s death on the front page.42 In Schmidt’s narration, Eliot’s extraordinary talent was intertwined with his celebrity. After one year spent at

40 Garfitt, interview with author, 16 August 2018.
41 Peter Jay, ‘Obituary: Sally Purcell’, Independent, 29 January 1998 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/obituary-sally-purcell-1141564.html> accessed 18 June 2020.
42 Schmidt, interview with author, 24 November 2015.
Christ’s Hospital (a prestigious public school in Sussex), Schmidt went to Harvard in Autumn 1966. As a young student, Schmidt had not yet decided that he wanted to be a publisher, but he knew that he wanted to emulate the great modernist poet. Eliot had contributed to and was on the editorial board of the *Harvard Advocate*, and Schmidt decided to apply. After being rejected, he set up his own magazine called the *Island* which only ran for three issues. After the disappearance of the *Island*, Schmidt became aware that a little magazine was a fragile endeavour. One way to avoid failure was to change the business model from magazine to press—a model that the modernist patron Harriet Weaver Shaw had pioneered with the *Egoist* in the early twentieth century.

The promise of financial rewards was the second factor that convinced Schmidt to launch the booklets. An advertisement inserted in the magazine explained that the series would be funded by subscription and patronage. In 1969, subscription to the entire series was 42s. or $8. Patrons were asked to pay £8 or $20 for signed and numbered editions of each pamphlet as it appeared, as well as copies of *Carcanet* magazines. This system of patronage would allow young poets ‘an outlet for their work’.43 Once again, Schmidt was turning towards the modernist precedent to design a business model that would ensure the survival of his enterprise and maximize the aura of his new press. Between 1919 and 1923, books published by Virginia Woolf’s Hogarth Press were available by subscription, and A-list subscribers would sometimes receive signed copies. In the United States, the signed copies of Woolf’s *Orlando* published by Crosby Gaige were also numbered, to distinguish the book from mass-produced editions. Likewise, the print run of each Carcanet booklet was limited to 300 to 500 copies. ‘We had over 160 subscribers to the first series of seven pamphlets’, wrote Schmidt. ‘They were widely and positively reviewed and did so well we decided on a second and then a third series’.44

The Carcanet pamphlets were also available individually from bookstores in Oxford (Blackwell’s, Museum of Modern Art, Turl Cash Bookshop), London, Brighton, Bristol and Manchester. To display his publications, Schmidt created special racks, which were long and narrow. He used to cycle to the Oxford bookshops with the racks sticking out. At Blackwell’s Bookshop, ‘those racks survived for two decades, though they were used for other publishers’ produce later on’.45 The racks attracted the attention of customers and promoted the series as a whole. This was not a new idea: in the interwar period, the Modern Library (an American series of reprints) was displayed on racks that encouraged readers to collect all the books and build their own libraries.46

The third factor that convinced Schmidt to publish booklets was the model set by Peter Jay. Born in 1945, Jay read Classics and English at Oxford, where he founded the poetry magazine *New Measure*. Ten issues appeared between 1965 and 1969. From the start, *New Measure* was a much more ambitious magazine than *Carcanet*. It was priced at 6s. (versus 2 to 3s. for *Carcanet*) and had an average of 68 pages (38

43 Carcanet subscription leaflet, 1969, British Library.
44 Schmidt ‘Introduction’, xxv.
45 Schmidt, ‘Introduction’, xxiv.
46 See Lise Jaillant, *Modernism, Middlebrow and the Literary Canon: The Modern Library Series, 1917–1955* (London, 2014).
pages for *Carcanet*). At the time when Schmidt was still in high school, Jay was already publishing noteworthy poets including Gavin Bantock, Christopher Middleton and Sally Purcell. After helping to create *Carcanet* magazine, Richard Burns contributed to *New Measure* 4 and 5. The movements between the two periodicals went both ways. Jay started contributing to *Carcanet* magazine in Winter 1966, when the magazine was co-edited by Troy and Dhondy.

The two magazines became increasingly linked together after Schmidt took over *Carcanet* in late 1967. Purcell published texts in *New Measure* 2 and 9, and in nearly all the *Carcanet* issues edited by Schmidt. Gareth Reeves, who contributed to five *Carcanet* issues, was also published in *New Measure* 10. Schmidt himself developed a good working relationship with Jay, who accepted his first book (*Flower and Song: Poems of the Aztec Peoples*). He also contributed to *New Measure* 9, a special issue dedicated to the new Anvil Press.

In 1968, Jay announced that he would soon publish booklets, which had two objectives: to showcase ‘small collections of verse by new poets’; and to publish works ‘which are too short for standard book publication’.47 The six first booklets featured poets that Jay had discovered through *New Measure*: Purcell, Bantock, Marcus Cumberlege, Peter Levi, Lavinia Mansel and W. G. Sheperd.

Jay also prepared an ambitious programme of expansion. He decided to publish hardbacks, including *First Born*—a collection of poems by Louise Glück, a 25-year-old American poet who had recently been awarded a Rockefeller grant. He also enlisted a US distributor, Unicorn Press in Santa Barbara, which agreed to handle 200 copies of each publication. And he applied for an Arts Council grant to support the development of his press.48 In June 1969, the Arts Council awarded Anvil Press its first grant of £400. Jay, who was now running his press full-time, used the money to get books out on schedule and to improve distribution.

After imitating Jay’s idea to issue booklets, Schmidt decided that he, too, should apply for an Arts Council grant. In a prospective letter dated 13 December 1969, he wrote: ‘For three years the magazine *Carcanet* has been the sole regular poetry magazine at Oxford University’.49 Schmidt said nothing of *New Measure*: although it was started in Oxford, the last issues (7 to 10) were edited from Northwood in Middlesex. Having established his credentials as the sole literary leader in Oxford, Schmidt informed the Arts Council that his ambitions were national and international. *Carcanet* magazine published works from all over Britain, but also the United States. After raising money for a first series of pamphlets through subscription, the objective was now to obtain financial assistance for a second series and for the magazine.

In his letter of 18 December 1969, Charles Osborne, the Assistant Literature Director of the Arts Council, initially told Schmidt that there was no possibility of a grant at the present time. ‘Our allocation for magazines is overspent, and the Literature Panel intends, in any case, to review its policy towards magazines early in

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47 Anvil Press Catalogue, 1968, ACGB/62/38 Anvil Press Poetry, Arts Council Archive, Victoria & Albert museum, London (hereafter referred to as V&A).
48 Peter Jay, Grant Application, 1969–1970, ACGB/62/38 Anvil Press Poetry, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
49 Schmidt to Arts Council, 13 December 1969, ACGB/62/40 Carcanet Press, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
the New Year. One month later, Osborne had a change of mind following the intervention of his boss Eric W. White. He asked Schmidt for the details of costs for the second booklet series, and an estimate of income from sales. A grant of £150 towards the cost of Carcanet’s general activities was awarded a few months later.

Why did Eric White decide to help Schmidt and his new press? Why did the Literature Director of the Arts Council start a correspondence with a 22-year-old Oxford student? On 12 December 1969, one day before his general prospective letter, Schmidt wrote directly to White on the recommendation of Jon Stallworthy (whose book Root and Branch had recently been reviewed in Carcanet). Through Stallworthy, Schmidt had heard that White was a friend of H. D. [Hilda Doolittle]. He explained that he was setting up a press and he wanted to issue a selection of H. D.’s prose and poetry, with an introduction by Peter Jones. He also asked White for information concerning the literary executors of the modernist poet.

Although Carcanet could only offer meagre royalties to the literary executors, Schmidt hoped they would nevertheless accept his offer as a first step in reintroducing the work of an important and neglected figure:

The neglect of H. D. in Britain seems a shame. Our small book, which would be paper-back, could be on a small scale only (we visualize 1,000 copies) – but it might serve to reawaken interest in her, and perhaps spark off larger publishers to reissue her work. There is also a not small demand for her poems already.

The project of reintroducing H. D. in Britain came at a perfect time. In Autumn 1969, the American scholarly journal Contemporary Literature published a special issue ‘to examine and revaluate a writer who, in our opinion, is of much greater significance than has commonly been supposed’.

In the immediate post-war period, H. D.’s reputation had collapsed: while T. S. Eliot was celebrated as a literary lion, H. D. was largely neglected. Feminist scholars have interpreted this marginalization as the price she had to pay for her gender: ‘as woman and artist, she was not taken seriously by mainstream scholars establishing the canon’, writes Caroline Zilboorg. Other scholars have pointed out that H. D. was not as productive and ambitious as her contemporaries. ‘From 1916 until her death in 1961, H. D. published only forty-three articles – less than one per year’, notes Lawrence Rainey before adding: ‘she felt little impetus to engage in an active or genuine dialogue with her contemporaries’.

50 Charles Osborne to Schmidt, 18 December 1969, ACGB/62/40 Carcanet Press, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
51 Osborne to Schmidt, 27 January 1970, ACGB/62/40 Carcanet Press, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
52 Arts Council to Schmidt, 8 July 1970, ACGB/62/40 Carcanet Press, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
53 Schmidt to Eric White, 12 December 1969, ACGB/62/40 Carcanet Press, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
54 Schmidt to Eric White, 12 December 1969, ACGB/62/40 Carcanet Press, Arts Council Archive, V&A.
55 L. S. Dembo, ‘Introduction’, Contemporary Literature, 10 (1969), 433–4
56 Caroline Zilboorg, ‘Hilda Doolittle’, American National Biography Online, 2000.
57 Lawrence Rainey, Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture (New Haven, CT, 1998), 155.
By the late 1960s, however, the rise of the women’s movement led to renewed interest in H. D.’s work. The Yale Professor Norman Holmes Pearson also played a major role in shaping her republication and reception in the United States and abroad. One of the first academics to teach literary modernism in the Ivy League, Pearson encouraged his institution to collect the archives of female American modernists, including Gertrude Stein. After the Second World War, he became H. D.’s agent and literary executor in the United States, working tirelessly to establish her as a major poet. For example, his long interview on H. D. appeared as the first essay in the 1969 special issue of *Contemporary Literature*.

Why did Michael Schmidt become interested in H. D.? At that time, he was living with Peter Jones, who was writing imagist-inspired poetry and doing research on H. D. The term Imagism often appeared in *Carcanet* magazine. For example, the Summer 1969 issue reassured readers and prospective contributors that ‘none of the poets included is a doctrinaire imagist, nor is selection made on any ideological basis’. Schmidt sensed that there was a market for H. D.’s work—and an opportunity to transform *Carcanet* magazine into a small press on the modernist model.

Eric White responded enthusiastically to Schmidt’s suggestion. He arranged to have lunch with Schmidt in January 1970 and was so impressed by the young man’s ‘enthusiasm and judgement’ that he immediately wrote to the Executor, Norman Pearson Holmes. He also lent Schmidt a copy of *Tribute to Freud*, which had become extremely rare. Shortly after, Holmes gave Carcanet permission to use H. D.’s copyrighted material.

White helped Carcanet secure an Arts Council grant and copyright permissions for H. D.’s work, and he also advanced Schmidt’s own career as a poet. In February 1970, he helped with the submission of poems to the Poetry Book Society and arranged for Carcanet to be added to the Society’s mailing list. As Schmidt was anxious to find a job after graduating from Oxford, White even offered to meet with him again to discuss possible options. Without a good business idea, Schmidt would probably not have caught the attention of the Arts Council Literature Director. A core talent of the young publisher was his ability to use other people’s ideas, and to drive the projects to completion. He did not come up with the idea of reissuing H. D.’s work (Peter Jones did), but he had the drive, energy and focus that Jones lacked. Likewise, none of the original *Carcanet* team and contributors had Schmidt’s ambition when it came to the magazine. They did not own the project, they just contributed to one or two issues and moved on with their lives. No wonder that Schmidt’s narrative has become dominant. There was no challenger to tell an alternative story, no one to say: by the way, *Carcanet* magazine was not such an insignificant project.

If *Carcanet* magazine was a site of struggle between various players, it is clear that Oxford won over the Cambridge literary set, and that the British/European influences prevailed over postcolonial groups. Under the impulse of Michael Schmidt, the
magazine morphed into a fully-fledged press that issued a series of seven booklets. In 1969 and 1970, the two enterprises (the magazine and the press) co-existed, before the disappearance of the magazine in Summer 1970. Schmidt understood that the survival of his press depended heavily on pleasing the Arts Council and its Director. Since Eric White had been a friend of H. D. and was eager to help a project of rediscovery, Schmidt decided to push his advantage. In his next grant application, submitted in December 1970, he explained his project ‘to bring the work of neglected poets’ including Elizabeth Daryush and Charlotte Mew ‘back into circulation through judicious selections and collections’. In the next two years, Schmidt continued to consolidate his links with the Arts Council before moving the press from Oxford to Manchester and establishing Carcanet as a leading poetry publisher.

*Forgotten History of Carcanet*