

# ARENA TWO

## Anarchists in Fiction

Edited by Stuart Christie

In the second issue of *Arena* we aim to provide general insights into the role of the anarchist in fiction, both as protagonist and author.

David Weir's essay "Anarchist Fiction, Anarchist Sensibilities" focuses on the progenitor of anarchist fiction, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, published in 1794, that demonstrated the pressing need for the utopian system he described in the first systematic elaboration of anarchist philosophy, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*.

"Epic Pooh" is a newly updated revision of a 1978 article by Michael Moorcock reviewing epic fantasy literature for children, particularly J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.

While researching early twentieth-century French anarchist plays translated into Italian, Santo Catanuto discovered interesting information on the literary side of the Commune Louise Michel, indicating that she was the author of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea*.

Stephen Schwartz, a longtime critic of the detective novel, evaluates the arc of French writer Leo Malet from anarchist to arabophobe and in "Between Libel And Hoax," counters Miguel Mir's libelous depiction of the Spanish anarchist movement, *Entre el roig i el negre*.

In his discourse on B. Traven's *The Death Ship*, Ernest Larsen looks at the intractable modern problem of identity. Larsen's short story "Bakunin At The Beach" is about Mr. and Mrs. Bakunin holidaying at Lake Maggiore under the watchful eyes of Inspector Dupin of the Swiss Department of Justice and Police.

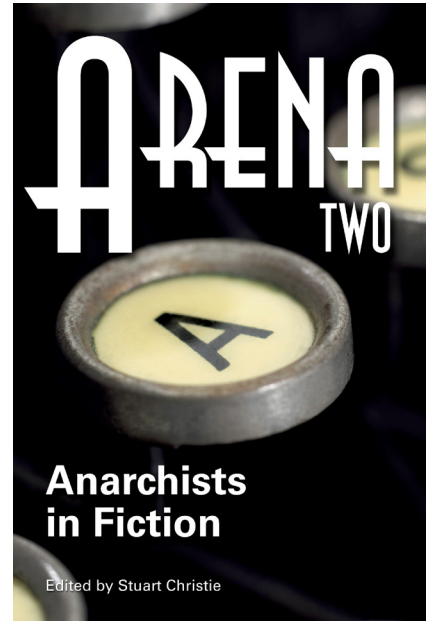
Joseph Conrad's short story "An Anarchist: A Desperate Tale" is republished here from *A Set of Six* (1908).

"Anarchists in Fiction" is a collection of idiosyncratic reviews of books in which anarchists are portrayed as an eclectic group of villains and criminal degenerates.

Finally, we conclude this second issue of *Arena* with an article by our cinema editor Richard Porton on Dušan Makavejev's playful, allusive 1971 film *WR: Mysteries of the Organism*.

### About the Editor

Stuart Christie was born in Glasgow in 1946. He has been an apprentice dental technician, sheet metal worker, barrow boy, litho printer, gas fitter, bookseller, occasional farmhand, lobster fisherman, writer and publisher. He became a socialist (Labour Party Young Socialists) at the age of 15, but moved rapidly to anarchism. He served over three years of a twenty-year sentence for 'banditry and terrorism' imposed by a Spanish court for his part in an attempt to assassinate General Franco in 1964. He was later arrested and imprisoned in London for eighteen months until acquitted in the 'Angry Brigade' trial at the Old Bailey, one of the longest trials in British legal history.



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