‘We’ is for Anarchism: Construction and Use of Collective Identity in the Anarchist Press of Fin-de-siècle Switzerland

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Despite strong statist and societal headwinds in late 19th and early 20th century, the anarchist movement in Switzerland persisted and for both seasoned and new activists, it remained an inviting and attractive movement to engage in. This paper brings to attention, that the permanent (re)constitution of collective identity played an integral part herein. As I shall contend, collective identity’s dualistic character of simultaneous preservation and maintenance on one hand and of progress and development on the other, was key to the preservation of anarchism as a social movement in Switzerland. The analysis of 23 anarchist newspapers published between 1885 and 1914 in Switzerland in French and German discloses construction, use and embodiment of anarchist collective identity that are to be presented and discussed. In conclusion, light shall be shed on collective identity’s role as a key motivational factor for social movements that focus on abstracta rather than on realia.

**KEYWORDS:** Collective Identity, Anarchism, Fin-De-Siècle, Switzerland, Anarchist Media.

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