



# From Revolutionaries to Citizens: Antimilitarism in France, 1870–1914

*Paul B. Miller*

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*From Revolutionaries to Citizens* is the first comprehensive account of the most important antiwar campaign prior to World War I: the antimilitarism of the French Left. Covering the views and actions of socialists, trade unionists, and anarchists from the time of France's defeat by Prussia in 1870 to the outbreak of hostilities with Germany in 1914, Paul B. Miller tackles a fundamental question of prewar historiography: how did the most antimilitarist culture and society in Europe come to accept and even support war in 1914?

Although more general accounts of the Left's "failure" to halt international war in August 1914 focus on its lack of unity or the decline of trade unionism, Miller contends that these explanations barely scratch the surface when it comes to interpreting the Left's overwhelming acceptance of the war. By embedding his cultural analysis of antimilitarist propaganda into the larger political and diplomatic history of prewar Europe, he reveals the Left's seemingly sudden transformation "from revolutionaries to citizens" as less a failure of resolve than a confession of commonality with the broader ideals of republican France. Examining sources ranging from police files and court records to German and British foreign office memos, Miller emphasizes the success of antimilitarism as a rallying cry against social and political inequities on behalf of ordinary citizens. Despite their keen awareness of the bloodletting that awaited Europe, he claims, antimilitarists ultimately accepted the war with Germany for the same reason they had pursued their own struggle within France: to address injustices and defend the rights of citizens in a democratic society.

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