Despite its resolute chauvinism and enthusiastic support for the war, *Le Rire Rouge* ultimately related an ambivalent, complicated war story during its four-year existence. It lauded national leaders, military and civilian alike, and chastised antiwar opposition and peace activists at home. It glorified the image of the *poilu*, the archetypally rugged French infantry soldier, as national hero and icon, while reviling the enemy *Boche* with violent fanaticism. It accused the neutral powers of moral duplicity. In this way, *Le Rire* played an instrumental role as a satirical arm of the visual imaginary of what certain French historians have variously termed “war culture” or *consentement patriotique*: the collective effort to forge a coherent ideological unity, belonging, and civic duty in all echelons of French society in support of armed conflict. *Le Rire* ultimately played but a role in the wider tapestry of the French mediascape during the war, joining the ranks of scores of publications who cooperated with authorities to disseminate fictitious vagaries, misrepresentations, and outright falsehoods in their coverage of the war. The motivations for cooperating in the construction of French war culture, I maintain, were primarily ideological in nature, though also economic, as *Le Rire* ultimately sought to preserve its survival in times of general mobilization and scarcity.¹

Nevertheless, *Le Rire Rouge*’s war propaganda was not one-dimensional. Though its editors and contributing artists remained committed to the war effort until a victorious end, the journal painted an increasingly complex and emotionally honest representation of wartime conditions at home and on the frontlines alike. Fatigue and doubt became increasingly obvious aspects of the war experience for those who lived it, regardless of their roles. Adjusting to the new conditions and daily rhythms of life at war was not an effortless transition, and despite the limitations of censorship, *Le Rire Rouge* found spaces to articulate those discontents. As such, *Le Rire Rouge* was able to participate actively in the construction and perpetuation of French “war culture” at the same time as its propaganda increasingly laid bare the tensions and fissures underpinning its artifice.