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# Reactions to the French Republican Calendar

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In a number of historical accounts, the calendar has been seen as an illustration of the unfortunate extremes of the Jacobin regime.2 Such accounts stress the links between the calendar, dechristianisation and the Terror; the calendar is presented as an unrealisable, totalitarian reform. Contemporaries also tended to view the calendar in the same fashion. In 1793, the Abbé Siéyès argued in the Convention that ‘le temps n’est pas venu de faire des changements dans la division de l’année; nos habitudes, nos rapports si multipliés avec les habitudes des peuples environnants, et des siècles qui ont précédé immédiatement le nôtre, se présentent, à cet égard, comme une masse trop effrayante à remuer.3 The Convention was considering a proposal from the Committee of Public Instruction to replace the Gregorian calendar. Although, he was not successful in this argument, Siéyès was prescient, as on other occasions: the Republican calendar’s subsequent history was to be one of relative failure. Its practical impact was limited at best. Unlike the metric system, neither was it eventually adopted by the majority of the French people, nor was it taken up beyond France’s borders. The fearsome mass to which Siéyès referred was too resilient.

Yet the reactions to the calendar, whether rhetorical or consisting of actions such as attacking *gendarmes* attempting to prevent a market from being held, continued provide an important focus for debate about the Revolution and the state of France. Popular calendar observance became a common concern for administrators, legislators and commentators on civic virtue and Revolutionary enthusiasm. *Comptes décadaires* were not complete without detailing calendar observance. In these texts, the ‘superstitious peasantry’, under the influence of refractory and secretive priests, refused to accept a rational and patriotic Republican innovation and preferred instead to remain in ignorance of the benefits of rational reform and the Republic. Even worse, by observing the Gregorian, Catholic calendar such malefactors were corrupted and counter-revolutionary. During this period of intense politics, the language used by both sides tended to remain locked within parameters set by Revolutionary or counter-revolutionary discourse. Yet the issues calendar reform touched on were not always limited to the binary oppositions created of the Revolution. Similarly, the political context in which the calendar was imposed altered and words such as ‘sans-cullotides’ (the original title for the five festivals at the end of the year) shifted in their meaning and acceptability. This article argues that the reactions to the republican calendar by the ‘fearsome mass’ were complex, but arose from complex local affinities as well as more obvious forms of political expression. Furthermore, the reaction to the calendar was not simply literary or verbal, but involved a range of social actions and performances: wearing one’s Sunday clothes and promenading on the *ci-devant* *dimanche*, or the use of a Jacobin pocket-watch. Other actions, such as the holding of markets, or the ringing of bells had a greater repertory of meaning and ambiguity. Republican (or counter-revolutionary) culture was rarely straightforward.

## 1. The creation of the calendar

The full details of the calendar’s genesis are obscure. Ostensibly, the Republican calendar, which was inaugurated in the autumn of 1793, was an attempt to solve the problem of dating the new era begun by the events of 1789. Shortly after the fall of the Bastille people began referring to the ‘First Year of Liberty’ in print and in their private correspondence. While the Gregorian calendar remained in widespread use, uncertainty existed about the date of the new year (i.e., the 1 January, the 14 July, or, with equable plausibility, the 4 August?). The lack of clear policy affronted the Convention’s sensibilities and in January 1792 a motion was passed requiring the Committee of Public Instruction ‘to harmonise the two eras’. Under the guidance of Charles Gilbert Romme, the committee exceeded its brief and proposed a whole new calendar after a summer of increasing radicalisation of Paris and the Convention.

In October 1793, Romme presented the Committee’s proposal for a wholly reformed calendar: the *calendrier républicain*.4 The new year began on 22 September, the date of the autumnal equinox and by happy coincidence, the inauguration of the Republic. The solar year still consisted of twelve months, to accord with the zodiac, although they now consisted of thirty days equally, grouped in *décades* of ten days each. The last day of the week, the *décadi*, was designated as the day of rest and earmarked for civic functions: a Republican version of *la dimanche*. The proposal also decimalised the hours, minutes and second. The remaining days of the year were grouped into a series of national festivals at the end of the year, in the manner of the Greek Olympiad. The inclusion of agricultural names for each day of the year rather than saints’ days completed the calendar’s pedagogical and propagandistic claims. It met with the legislature’s approval, although they rejected the names of the months. As a result, Fabre d’Eglantine put forward his series of ‘poetic’ appellations, from the month of vintage (vendémiaire) to the month of fruit (fructidor), and the Convention welcomed their association with the meteorological and agricultural year.5

The scientific and rational basis of the calendar provided its dominant characteristic. Romme contrasted the reform with the superstitious, illogical, and – for an increasingly secular state – awkwardly religious Gregorian calendar. In his view, by introducing the ten-day week and retaining twelve months, the calendar combined the benefits of the decimal system, with the elegance of the duodecimal system and the scientific understanding of four seasons. As such, it retained the classical elements of the calendar, but removed the Christian associations belonging to the seven-day week. Within these claims to scientific authority, the ideological import of the reform was clear. The calendar, which could simply have been presented as the scientific and practical reformation of an illogical system, was instead presented as an important aspect of the regeneration of the new France. It became a ‘Republican Institution’, a constituent of the Republican nation and a means of completing the regeneration of France. It commemorated the inauguration of the Republic, provided a means of uniting the nation without recourse to ‘superstition’ and could be an importance educational, or propaganda, device. Scientific knowledge, advanced agricultural information and the history of the Republic (or at least its introduction) was to replace the system that promoted ecclesiastical subservience and illogical traditions.6 In Romme’s words, it would supplant the common era: ‘l’ère vulgaire fut l’ère de la cruauté, du mensonge, de la perfidie et de l’esclavage; elle a fini avec la royauté, source de tous nos maux.’7

Until 1806, the calendar remained France’s official method of dating. All official and administrative actions had to follow its form, while private actions, could also face official sanction. Public activities, such as markets, church services and dances, were more ambiguous and attracted different pieces of legislation, official sanction or repression and popular hostility through the period. I will trace the course of the calendar’s meaning and reaction through this time. First, the period of the Jacobin Republic will be considered, followed an examination of the years following Thermidor which, to a great extent, consisted of reactions to and interpretation of the Jacobin era and the calendar as one of its key institutions.

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## 2. The Jacobin Republic, 1793 - Year III

The destruction of the royal regime provided the opportunity not just for iconoclasm, but for the birth and nurturing of a republican culture. Robespierre’s and his fellow Jacobins’ period of political domination was one of intense awareness of the political meanings of cultural action. The new calendar was no exception. The social and cultural consequences of the calendar were closely tied to the politics and anxieties of the period during which it was introduced.

 The dissemination and enforcement of the new calendar proved to be a massive undertaking, one that required resources and commitment that the Convention was unwilling and unable to provide. Unlike the reform of weights and measures, which could draw upon a tradition of bureaucratic involvement and state coercion, the calendar had no official commissioners or inspectors. Rather, it came within the brief of the Committee of Public Instruction and was seen as an aspect of public education and scientific utility. Attention was focused not so much on its use (except no doubt by Revolutionary Tribunals), as on finalising the calculations necessary for accurate navigation and astronomical prediction and on the production of school books and pamphlets for the army. Nevertheless, considerable efforts were taken, revealing the effectiveness of the nascent bureaucracy and importance of local popular societies to the Jacobin state. Posters were produced and disseminated throughout France to every commune, while each department was provided with detailed instructions. The calendar was spread throughout France was a relative swiftness. In Toulouse, the Republican form of dating was employed from 1 November, although it took twenty days until vendémiaire replaced the more prosaic form of ‘1er mois’.8 In Besançon, the secretary of the *Justice de paix* of the fifth and sixth Sections began inscribing ‘4eme an de la Liberté’ at the top of minutes from the 7 June 1792. ‘L’an premier de la République française’ made its first appearance in Besançon on 29 September of that year. The secretary of the *Justice de paix* employed the Republican calendar from the 16 brumaire.9 It made its first appearance in the registers of the canton of Beaune-en-Gatinais, in the Ile-de-France the day after.10 Avignon began to use the new method of dating from the 20th of the second month (20 frimaire). The propaganda and administrative machinery of the Republic was well adapted to such distribution: the hierarchy of commune, canton, district and department ensured that news could be spread with some measure of rapidity and reliability. The local printing and copying of *affiches* and *décrets* helped to meet the demand for extra copies that could not be met centrally.

France’s burgeoning bureaucracy was required to reflect the new periodicity. Halls of justice, meeting rooms and offices had to follow the ten-day week. In the Year II, for example, the *officier municipal* for the Commune of Paris, warned that assemblies for October, November, December and January would be arranged according to the *décade* and would not take into account the old days of the week.11 The Convention decided on the 21st of the first month of the second year of the Republic to receive petitions only on the 10th, 20th and 30th of each month.12 Such arrangements were not limited to the Paris Commune and Convention. By thermidor of the Year II, Nantes’ Tribunal de Commerce felt that their habit of meeting on Monday, Wednesdays and Saturdays, promoted the old calendar; it was suggested that the *Tribunal* should make arrangements according to the new system. Although the days were altered slightly in the Year VI, this pattern was continued, until the Gregorian calendar was reinstated by Napoleon.13 In the Côte-d’Or, legislation similar to that passed by the Directory concerning the strict observance of the Republican calendar in the Years VI and VII was passed, ‘considérant qu’il importe d’adapter à la nouvelle division du calendrier, l’époque des différentes assemblées civiles et politiques’. Fairs and markets had to be held according to the new calendar and all general councils, tribunals and judiciary meetings had to observe the *décadi*.14 Schools were not to teach on the *quintidi* and *décadi*.15 The Paris basin and beyond responded with alacrity. As Serge Bianchi comments, ‘Nous sommes frappés par le double aspect de conformité (relativement) rapide et d’irréversibilité de la pratique municipale des villages franciliens en matière d’intégration du calendrier républicain.’16 This remark appears to hold for other areas of France.

Although news of the reform was spread fairly swiftly, it was not done so without errors and confusion about the new form of dating. Inaccurate printing and editing of departmental almanacs and decrees caused problems. Not only were the spellings of the months sometimes incorrect, but some months, especially ventôse and pluviôse, were placed in the wrong order. Perplexity with the detail of reform was not uncommon. Indeed, this may be one of the key reactions to the reforms: the Convention received complaints and worries from a number of departments. The watch committee in Alsace wondered if there was some plot at hand. Were the Republic’s enemies scheming by means of confused calendars to disrupt military affairs?17 The military implications brought complaints from the army, which complained of a lack of printed instructions. A series of the *Connaissance des temps* produced by the Bureau des Longitudes, was delayed due to problems calculating astronomical tables according to the new calendar. In general, however, it seems most departments, or at least their clerks, quickly began to use the new system, even within village municipalities. Despite delays imposed by the printing and diffusion of almanacs or concordances, clerks were able to learn the details of the new system from Paris publications such as the *Moniteur*.18

The press and other public form of information and entertainment were crucial for the calendar’s introduction. The new calendar was soon propagandised on the Parisian stage. The one-act *L’Heureuse Décade*, subtitled as a ‘divertissement patriotique’, was performed in the Théâtre du Vaudeville on 5 brumaire II (26 October 1793). The play was set in a village square and celebrated the *décadi* as a day of rest. This was contrasted with the Sundays and feast days which, it was claimed, undermined the efforts being made in the name of the Republic. As the main character, Père Socle, sang: ‘Les jours aux fêtes consacrés,/ Etaient perdus pour la patrie’ (Scene 1). Such patriotic and revolutionary fervour has some public appeal and the published play went into at least two editions. A two-act sequel followed on the 4 nivôse II (24 December 1793) entitled *Seconde décade ou le double mariage* and performed at the Théâtre Patriotique. Père Socle continued to offer advice to his now newly married son: ‘Sans doute, être dans sa jeunesse soldat & laboureur, c’est se rendre doublement utile à sa patrie, & remplir glorieusement la tâche de républicain.’19 Clearly, the use of one’s time was associated with the cause of the Republic. The calendar made its appearance, in passing, in other plays. *L’Intérieur d’un Ménage Républicain*, performed in the Théâtre de l’Opéra-comique on the 15 nivôse II (4 January 1794) contained a scene discussing the end of fêtes and Sundays (the day being ‘le jour de la Toussaint! Une des plus grandes fêtes de l’année’). Amelie, the sister of the young Republican, sings: ‘Il est un autre changement/ Qui te causera plus de peine,/ C’est que sans nul ménagement,/ L’on vient d’allonger la semaine.’ Mme. Rose commented that ‘je crois être dans un nouveau monde’.20 The new calendar was a clear symbol of the new social and political order.

This world was being created outside of Paris as well. Bordeaux’s Grand-Théâtre, for example, staged a ballet entitled ‘Le Calendrier Républicain’ during the *sans-culottides* of the Year II (17-21 September 1793). Composed by Marc-Antoine Julien, an envoy of the Committee of Public Safety, the backdrop to the stage was a Temple, in front of which dancers dressed in costumes representing the twelve new months processed, each followed by other dancers representing appropriate agricultural activities or related to meteorological phenomena. The performance finished with an ‘adoption’ (of a law), a civic hymn, and a celebration of marriage and the production of children.21 The ideals and concepts of the Revolution could be presented through the calendar. Classical allusions, recalling a more virtuous and noble era, were made through dress and use of classical tropes, while the dance of the seasons stressed the harmony between the Republic and nature.

Writers and publishers of almanacs saw the opportunity to educate and turn a profit from a new public and produced variants on the calendar. In the Year II a publication titled *Decadaire* [sic] *républicain ou Calendrier des Vertus* was printed in Paris. Each day of the month was provided with a Republican, Jacobin virtue, such as chastity or zeal. It expressed the hopes and fears of the Jacobins. Deforges, the author, also hoped that his almanac would help punctuality, another virtue ‘d’un grand mérite qui consiste à faire exactement et à point nommé tout ce qu’on a promis.’ Each department published their own almanac and a range of other republican calendars, concordances, such as one advertised ‘pour les Sans-Culottes, un cadran indicatif, avec lequel on peut très-facilement […] connoître les heures décimales, par le moyen d'une montre ancienne.’22

As a result of such propaganda, enforcement and commercial cultural activity, the calendar was swiftly made known and, on occasion, was used in private life. In January 1794, for example, Rose Dobrée, a fifteen-year old girl, wrote to her grandfather. Mlle. Dobrée’s father, as a prominent local merchant, was a supporter of the early Republic and served on the Revolutionary committee. She began her letter by apologising for not having written for so long, but she had hardly any time since the Revolution had begun. She then remarked that he would no doubt know that ‘nos mois ont été changé’ and the year no longer began in January, but in ‘vendémiaire ou septembre’, before sharing her fears of brigands and other, less serious matters.23 Mareis Henri Beyle used the Republican form of dating in his diary. The periodicity of private meetings was also affected by the new system. As Michel Meinzer has demonstrated, those close to radical centres, such as fishing ‘guilds’ in Marseilles, did follow the new calendar. Coercion, as much as conviction, may have played its part. Diaries, journals and personal correspondence that survive not only reveal both acceptance and rejection of the calendar, but also its rhetorical and political associations. Michel Célarié of Bégoux in the Lot, whose journal recorded personal and village life, used the calendar until its abolition ‘par ordre du gouvernement impérial ou pour mieux dire par ordre de Bonaparte, empereur de France.’ Célarié was a member of the *Comité de surveillance* in Bégoux and generally a supporter of the Revolutionary and Republican cause.24 In contrast, Claude Bailly, an artisan from Chinon, rejected the calendar in his record of the Revolutionary period. Within his journal of the events in Chinon, he used the Gregorian calendar and regularly criticised, with a dry humour, attempts to impose observance of the *décadi*. He comments on the announcement of the introduction of the calendar in November 1793:

le même jour on a annoncé au son du tambour que les dimanches sont abolis ainsi que toutes les fêtes fondées par l’église, qu’il faut travailler ces jours-là et faire la décade.25

Bailly was generally hostile to the Revolution, especially towards its consequences for Catholicism. The internal textual evidence of the diary suggests that he composed his account several months after the event, as at this point his journal was a summary of the year, rather than a daily record of events written soon after or during the occasion. Events subsequent to the introduction of the calendar may have coloured his interpretation of the motivations behind it, in particular the dechristianisation in Tours and the Terror in Paris. One has a sense that he is writing for a potential reader other than himself, perhaps primarily for posterity. His selection of events and arrangement of the text clearly relates the calendar to the process of dechristianisation and the terrors of the Revolution. Bailly records that sixty Catholics were arrested in Chinon on the first day of the new calendar. These were the first of such arrests in Chinon. He asks the reader to imagine the grief felt at the news from Paris of the guillotining of a thousand persons each *décade.* The time of the new calendar is linked for the prospective reader of Bailly’s journal with the mounting bloodshed and disorder that the Revolution unleashed. To Bailly’s mind, the calendar had become a cipher for the evils of the Revolution.26 Both writers reveal acute local awareness of the calendar, even if it was unpopular and brought with it rather dreary civic commitments every ten days. They demonstrate how individual political and religious attitudes affected responses.

Popular societies were quick to adopt the new style of dating. For example, one club, the *Société des Amis de la Constitution* of Artonne in the Auvergne, began to use the new style of dating on the 25 brumaire II (15 November 1793) and changed its constitution to take account of the *décade* as article XIII of the Convention’s decree of 5 October 1793 demanded. The club continued to defend the *décadi* and attempted to enforce it locally.27 A member of Dijon’s surveillance committee said he believed it to be ‘nécessaire de surveiller les particuliers qui affectent de travailler le jour de *décadi* et de se reposer les jours des ci-devant fêtes et dimanche.’28

A number of pieces offering opinions on the new calendar were received from all over the country. Tailhand, the municipal officer at Riom complained that ‘les jours des fêtes et dimanches sont exactement observés par la paresse et l’oisiveté’. He asked for clarification on the laws that he could apply and encourage useful work and activity on these outlawed occasions. He suspected that it was possible to enforce observance of the new calendar, since he had received authority from the representative to the Rhône-et-Loire which ruled that any ‘personne qui fera circuler de faux bruits ou des décrets faux sur la suppression du calendrier républicain sera saisie et mise en état d’arrestation pour être poursuivie à la rigueur des lois.’ It condemned the interruption to agriculture, to the production of saltpetre, to public establishments and to the production of arms caused by resting on Sundays. Those who did must be referred to the representative of the people within twenty-four hours (use of decimal time had not extended this far). Citizens and popular societies were invited to redouble their surveillance of others and to increase their own zeal for educational institutions such as the celebration of *fêtes décadaires*.29 Indeed, communes were given the powers in floréal to refuse grain ration to those who did not work on the *ci-devant décadi*.30

The use of the wrong calendar attracted moral or political condemnation: in Rouen, for example, the *Gazette Révolutionnaire* criticised the *conseil général* for its use of ‘l’ère chrétienne’.31 The great majority of conflicts it created related to the religious issue and the calendar became a means of justifying dechristianisation and the forceful defence of local Republican pride. The geography of support for the Republican calendar coincided with anti-clerical activity. Priests were attacked as being ‘très nuisibles à l’établissement du calendrier républicain’. Outward signs of religion were destroyed and the society assisted in the organisation of *fêtes décadaires*.32 Especially in areas where dechristianisation was an important local issue, then the calendar was likewise strictly imposed by the terrorist’s bureaucratic machinery.

Jean-Baptiste-Jérôme Bo, on mission to Nantes in the Year II, railed against the problems caused in the countryside by obstinate use of the Gregorian calendar. In the Year II, Bô, whilst *en mission* to the south-west of Brittany and the west coast, ensured that *affiches* explaining the new policy were printed and distributed throughout the Loire-inférieure. The posters were clear on the ideological importance of the new calendar and related it to the campaign against the superstitious, counter-revolutionary influence of the Catholic Church. Superstition, which had caused so much trouble in the Vendée, still had its hold. Observance of religious feasts and Sundays led to idleness. The good citizen had a duty to work regardless of the old calendar:

Lorsque votre repos est superflu et nuisible à l'intérêt commun[…] vous êtes des mauvais Citoyens[...] L'homme qui travaille a besoin de délaissement, et vos Législateurs ont consacré au repos le dixième jour de chaque Décade[…autrement] le travail est un devoir, une vertu, et le repos serait un crime.

In this *affiche* Bo exhorted citizens to attend the temple of reason and to work hard in order to gain in moral vigour and to avoid vice.33 With virtue under threat, observation of Sundays and *décadis* did not pass unobserved by the authorities. The reports of *surveillance administrative* in series F7 of the Archives nationales provide some information on the situation in a number of departments and municipalities.34 Many remarked that the *décadi* was frequently ignored and that superstition and *habitude* drive the ignorant to observe Sundays. Several correspondents informed the authorities the *décade* meant too much work since rest days came only every ten days instead of every seven. The *accusateur public* of the *Tribunal criminel* for the department of the Ain denounced Valentin Duport of St Martin who publicly attacked the *décade* because ‘les hommes et les animaux ne peuvent travailler neuf jours consécutifs’.35 A clash occurred in Havre Libre (the Revolutionary name for Roye in the Somme) between the majority of the village who affected to celebrate Sundays and religious festivals with dances and games, and insulted the remaining *patriotes* who only recognised *fêtes nationales*. The *patriotes* demanded assistance.36 In areas where the popular societies had more influence, public observance of Sundays and lack of respect for the *décadi* was dangerous. A family near Bordeaux was denounced by the popular society of Trequier to the *comité de surveillance* for imprudently walking ‘insolemment dans les rues’ on the *décadi*. Tellingly, they were also under suspicion for being related to *émigrés*.37

Such conflicts reveal the political or religious understanding of the new calendar and the Republican regime and its cultural and social innovations. There is a close association between Republican sympathy and calendar use, and, on the other hand, counter-revolutionary feeling and defence of the Catholic, Gregorian calendar. Support for refractory priests and local opposition to the *comité revolutionnaire* also suggested that the almanac which hung in the kitchen (or owing to the times, perhaps hidden elsewhere) was based on the Gregorian, not Republican scheme for the year. The reports which local officials and representatives on mission returned to the central authorities were inclined to see such action as one piece. Religious observance, neglect of the décadi, and obstinate adherence to the seven-day week and dominical traditions, such as a Sunday perambulation, could easily be taken as a snub to the regime and as evidence of counter-revolutionary spirit. Yet, as Susan Desan has shown, religion and support for Revolutionary freedoms were not necessarily contradictory. Church and state could, if they allowed it, share loyalties.38 Furthermore, efforts could be made to involve the jurist Church in the institutions of the state – or at least for Sunday services to be moved to the *décadi* as was the case later in the decade. However, the Terror and dechristianisation, the complexities of war, the centripetal forces of federalism and the exigencies of counter-revolution ensured that the ‘thick description’ which properly characterised the range of responses to the calendar was cut away by the Republican gaze, leaving behind cruder political meanings. Local identity, the role of traditional practices (particularly agricultural) and the suspicion of unnecessary reform were seen not just as qualities of a ‘mass too fearsome to be moved’, but as superstitious, backwards, and under the influence of sinister, secretive priests and foreign powers. In this context, opposition to a Republican institution could be little short of treason.

## II. Post Thermidor

Robespierre’s fall inaugurated a period of redefinition of the Revolution and the Republic. While the private machinations of the period’s key players remains obscure, criticism of the Jacobin regime was possible. Opposition to the calendar could be expressed more openly. How the calendar was to be viewed in the light of Thermidor vexed several members of the Convention and religion and its relation to the state and the acceptance of the Jacobin reforms became the questions by which debate on the calendar was framed. While the calendar remained the official means of dating following thermidor, the legislature’s will to enforce it declined. Debate instead focused on the nature of the Republican festivals. Its use declined during this period.

The calendar remained strongly associated with the Jacobins and the period of the Terror. The calendar was often attacked in the years subsequent to Robespierre’s fall. Lanjuinais assaulted the calendar as one created by ‘tyrans’. He criticised its practical and ideological failings. The majority of the citizens rejected and scorned it. Furthermore, the names of the seasons were a ‘mensonge perpétuel’, it threatened commerce and was not in harmony with nature, since neither man nor beast could bear ten consecutive days of work.39 Faure, deputy for the Loire-Inférieure, demanded that the ‘calendrier prétendu républicain’ should be reconsidered and that all work on the *Fêtes décadaires* ought to be suspended. The calendar had become explicitly associated with *terrorisme*.40 Duhem, for example, worried during the debate on the calendar in October 1793 that such a programme as was suggested held dangers of idolatry and preferred a neutral, numerical system. Terral, of the Haute-Garonne, lambasted the system as an invention of the disgraced Fabre d’Églantine and claimed that it had been used to assert Robespierre’s tyrannical and egomaniacal schemes. In Terral’s view, Robespierre had attempted to replace the superstitious and Ancien Regime Catholic religion with an equally irrational ‘religion nationale’. This tendency had now to be checked and indeed was ridiculed: ‘Depuis la chute de ce dernier tyran, l’on a affaibli l’idée de l’existence de l’être suprême & de l’immortalité de l’âme, par le juste ridicule que l’on a jeté sur les projets du tyran’.41 Terral was not adverse to months with an equal number of days, but he held that seventeen centuries of observation of Sundays could not easily be forgotten. He proposed the end of the *décadi* and suggested combining civic with religious ceremonies on *ci-devant dimanches*.

Yet it was also closely linked to the constitution and could the Republican zeal of the Jacobin period. With this in mind, the neo-Jacobin Directory provided a raft of legislation to support the calendar. Such support was not simply negative in attempting to stamp out the old-seven day week and its religious associations, but represented a real attempt to enforce the Republican calendar as a positive, civic virtue. These actions did not simply represent dechristianisation for its own sake, but a propensity to support Republican institutions. The special commission concerned with the Republican calendar concluded that the new measure represented ‘une belle & grande conception de l’esprit humain’ and were regular, simple, uniform and based on the certainties of nature. The calendar was to be strongly supported: ‘ses dispositions sont justes, sages, & indispensablement nécessaires.’

A concern for secularisation and the eradication of superstition was another, related, motive.42 Soon after the coup of the 18 fructidor Fouché disseminated a circular requesting the clergy to ‘sanctify the *décadi*’. On 14 germinal VI (3 April 1798) the Directory decreed, to the protests of Grégoire, that all official acts had to be dated according to the Republican calendar. It was also argued that observance of the calendar would help bring about social order. The decree began with a defence of the Republican calendar. It prescribed its adoption by all *caisses publiques*, the postal and message services, public schools, spectacles, commercial meetings such as bourses, fairs, markets, contracts and agreements and all public agencies, by demanding that they be regulated by the *décade*, the new months, and the *jours complémentaires* (the Thermidorian replacement for the *sans-culottides*). The *Conseil exécutif*, the civil service and the municipalities were encouraged to take all the measures that would lead to a love of order and the public good, in order ‘to accelerate the changes demanded by the new division of the year.’ It was for all good citizens to provide an example by following the new calendar in all their correspondence, whether public or private. The Constitution recognised only one calendar, which would also help remove the ‘last traces of the royal, noble and sacerdotal regime.’ The decree denounced all those who regulated their meetings by Sundays and fêtes of the previous calendar. All public officials were ordered to regularise their audiences by *décade*. State schools were also regulated and had to observe the *décadi*. Traffic was restricted. Canals, rivers and public carriages of all types would not be used on the *décade*. Finally, dates on periodicals were to follow the new style, as the old era ‘no longer exists for French citizens.’ These importance measures concerning the strict execution of the Republican calendar, were circulated in the *Bulletin des lois*, number 194.43

Yet, some suggested, even these requirements fell short of what was necessary for the proper enforcement of the Republican calendar so three further pieces of legislation were introduced. The Law of the 17 thermidor VI (4 August 1798) demanded that shops and boutiques had to close their doors on *décadis* and on national festivals. This was followed by the Law of 13 fructidor VI (30 August 1798), which stipulated a fête for every *décadi* and enforced the *décadi* as the only day when marriages could be celebrated. The law of 23 fructidor (9 September) confirmed the desire to forbid the old calendar ‘dans toutes les actes ou conventions, soit publics, soit privés,[…] ouvrages périodiques, affiches ou écriteaux’. The offence carried a fine of ten francs for ordinary citizens and fifty francs for government employees and notaries. Where markets were held in communes according to the old calendar, new arrangements had to be made.44 The later legislation demanded that teachers take their charges to the *fêtes décadaires*, and the school could face closure if the school neglected these duties. Numerous circulars were sent to departmental authorities by Fouché, Neufchâteau, Lambrecht, and others, demonstrating the importance given to the strengthened policy by the Directory.45 In one circular from the Minister of Police, it was argued that the laws of 17 thermidor, 13 and 23 fructidor formed the first foundations of Republican institutions through these institutions composed people’s opinion and morale.46 The Minister of the Interior, recognising the difficulty of applying the law in all localities, actively sought advice from local officials on the best means of pursuing such a policy.47

Crucially, the law forbade markets and fairs on the *décadi*, and on tradiational festive days.48 The new dates were to be in line with the Republican calendar and not based around the hebdomadal week. Lambrecht, the Minister of the Interior argued:

Les foires et marchés sont] encore presque partout indiqués par les dénominations de l’ancien calendrier, dont chaque jour rappelle l’idée d’un culte dominant, lorsque la République n’en reconnaît aucun et que ses principes seuls doivent dominer. Il importe, pour ôter au fanatisme tout moyen de se perpétuer et s’agiter, de fixer les jours de foires et marchés d’après l’ère républicaine. 49

Under the *décret* of 18 vendémiaire II, the Departments were in charge of drawing up the table of fairs and markets according to the new calendar. This was followed in some Departments, such as the Doubs, with some initial problems as the various towns and villages competed to hold markets.50 Under article V of the Law of 23 Fructidor VI each Department was ordered to draw up the table anew, in accordance with the *Annuaire de la République*. A number of instructions and letters from the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Justice continued to stress the importance of the new measure and set about collecting data from each Department to ensure that they were complying with the new scheme.

Fairs and markets had long been the occasion for disagreements about timing. They were orchestrated according to the clock and calendar and provided an important element in France’s temporal framework. Almanacs listed the dates of fairs and markets, while farmers, peasants, merchants and townspeople alike arranged their weekly routines around them. The introduction of the Republican Calendar, with its ten-day cycle interrupted this long established pattern. Yet interruption was not immediate and was geographically erratic, depending on the willingness of local officials to please their superiors, the regional strength of Revolutionary feeling and the local desire for alteration in the number of markets. The reorganisation led to, in some areas, a 40% rise in the numbers of fairs: towns often seized the opportunity to hold a self-aggrandising fair or market. The legislation for the calendar only stipulated official adherence. The Directory recognised the need to supplant the two main temporal frames for the mass of French men and women in order for the calendar to succeed: those of the church and of commerce.

Because of the timing of the legislation concerning fairs and markets, the creation of a new scheme led, according to Thomas’ study of the Haute-Garonne, to a purgatorial month of messidor VI (July 1798). The old markets were banned and the new *table* of fairs and markets remained to be settled. This created enormous problems for local economies, undermined farmers’ and merchants’ livelihoods, and again threatened many households with hunger, as grain was unavailable for purchase.51 The beginning of the harvest and the need to sell and buy produce compounded the problem. Demand to hold markets increased, especially if nearby towns held the promise of markets. Impromptu and illegal markets were held. In Montréjeau, for instance, in the Haute-Garonne four thousand turned up to a market which the local gendarmes were unable to halt.52 Throughout France, political sentiment and the efficiency of the administration affected the manner of the change to the new system. In the Vendée fairs were held ‘dans plusieurs cantons à l’ancienne époque’.53 Like the other legislation on the strict observance of the calendar, the new measures caused disagreements between cantons. In Rocheguyon in the Seine-et-Oise the new measures had been adopted, to the fury of the nearby canton of Vernon, whose merchants complained about the upset to their trade. The canton’s administration nonetheless pressed on with their introduction and claimed in a letter to the Minister of the Interior that they found it necessary to use harsh measures against ‘les mutins’.54

Officially, France’s system of markets was aligned to the new calendar and had severed the link to the patterns of the Gregorian year and the modes of the Ancien Regime. But how far did the dates of markets really change, rather than the dates simply being translated into the new style? Evidence for the timing of markets, when they were really held rather than officially ordained, is scant. Thomas argues that the correlation between the dates of markets and of notaries’ business days is significant and provides an effective method of dating markets: people took advantage of market days when they needed to visit the notary. From a study of six towns in the Haute-Garonne he concludes that the new Republican markets had ‘un succès certain entre la fin de l’an VI et prairial an X’. The majority of markets in these towns followed the new calendar by being held on, typically, *quartidi* or *nonidi*, rather than Wednesday or Saturday. The shift was, in some places such as Ferran, progressive and gradual, while elsewhere, as in Montréjeau, it could be sudden and violent. In sum, Thomas concludes, ‘le changement de calendrier a réellement été assimilé par les populations haute-garonnaises en ce qui concerne les jours de marché.’55 On the whole, the reports contained in the *Archives nationales* testify to a widespread annoyance at the disruption to local affairs.56 Yet these altercations proved to be a caesura and regular markets were eventually arranged.

Strict observance of the calendar, then, was attempted amidst a whirlwind of bureaucracy and anti-Catholic legislation. *Comptes décadaires* regularly had sections dealing with the calendar and its observance and, as noted earlier, cantons had to report on the measures taken to organise the *fêtes décadaires* and had to provide an account of each ceremony. As Vernerey argued, it was government functionaries and their families who would provide the best example to their fellow citizens:

D'abord, il serait superflu de vous dire que tout magistrat, tout fonctionnaire public et tout employé par le gouvernement doit férier le jour de la décade et y assujettir sa famille. Il en est de même des instituteurs publics et de leurs élèves, puisque c'est à eux à se montrer les plus zélés observateurs des fêtes nationales, et à se rencontrer toujours aux cérémonies ordonnées pour les célébrer. 57

The Years VI and VII mark a profound attempt to orchestrate the nation’s time in a way never attempted before.

The religious and political context of these new measures for the strict observance of the calendar differed subtly from the Year II and a variety of measures and penalties were put in place to enforce the new system that were previously lacking. Such action had practical consequences. Central government now had a more mature relationship with the provinces and a more established system of local administration. The calendar’s enforcement no longer depended on the help of Jacobin clubs or popular enthusiasm, but on the assistance of local officials. The decree of 14 germinal VI, for example, was received in the Marne on 5 floréal VI (24 April 1798) by the central administration. It was distributed to all municipal authorities who then printed and displayed posters detailing the forbidding of dances on the *décadi* as other regulations.58 Decrees were followed up with notices from the Minister of the Interior and required a response from the local administration. Such bureaucracy did not necessarily lead to any practical improvement: posters might remain unread through illiteracy or lack of interest, local officials might lack zeal for what must have seemed an impossible task, and local reports might have exaggerated the efforts made. Nonetheless, the structures that were in place offered the possibility that social legislation could have a real impact. As Isser Woloch has shown, the history of the Directory is as much one of bureaucratic and administrative development (or meddling) as of political scheming.59 The amount of paper evidence that was generated testifies to the importance that the bureaucracy placed on the Republican calendar.

Political or cultural opposition was also widespread. Abroad, although the calendar was welcomed and distributed by Jacobin sympathisers, it was more often mocked as an example of French folly – English journalists suggested alternative names of the months such as *sneezy*, *foggy*, and *breezy*. Within France, Royalist almanacs proudly rejected the Republican form, but continued to list the Catholic feasts and saints’ days according to the Gregorian calendar. The calendar had been a challenge to the Church. Indeed, this was one of the main reasons for the difficulty that had been encountered in imposing it since Year II: in the words of an *agent national* in the Gironde, there were many ‘qui ne solennisent pas le jour de la décade & ne célèbrent que le jour de dimanche.’60 The hard-line view expressed by this Jacobin *agent national* became part of government policy in the Year VI as decrees on the strict enforcement of the Republican calendar were congruent with the religious policy of the Directory. External symbols and signs of religious activity and faith, such as the display of crosses and the ringing of church bells, were prohibited. Attempts were made to encourage priests to move the mass from Sunday to the *décadi* and, as this circular from the Doubs shows, local officials were exhorted to make efforts to set this about: ‘vous devez engager les ministres de tous les cultes à transporter aux décadis leurs fêtes et leurs cérémonies religieuses les plus importantes’.61 Although some of the civil clergy were obliging, the majority was not. Some examples do exist, as in departments like the Nord, where ‘les ministres du culte du canton de Maroilles ont transporté aux décadis leurs cérémonies des dimanches’.62

Complaints were not just made against priests, but also against other communes: the calendar could increase the differences between communities. Those communes that observed the *décadi* were being undermined by their neighbours who were lax, to the point of being considered counter-revolutionary, in such matters. Old jealousies, political opinions, or current squabbles between communities sometimes surfaced because of the calendar. The financial and symbolic qualities of time meant that conflict between occupations could also arise. By the Year VII, the authorities could officially sanction urgent or necessary work, which sometimes created jealousies between the different classes. In one case, ploughmen in the canton of Messigny in the Côte-d’Or were given permission to work, leading to grumbling amongst the wine growers of the region who were liable to fines for dressing their vines on the *décadi*.63 The calendar thus had the power to heighten social differences, whether of politics, geography or profession. In Gevrey, just south of Dijon, the *société populaire* remarked that ‘il existe dans notre canton une difformité de conduite qui choque l’esprit de la société.’ They petitioned the departmental administration for ‘un arrêt pour tout le département qui abolisse cette sorte de schisme, et qui fixe la liberté ou la nécessité de vaquer à ses travaux le jour de la décade.’64 This canton continued to make complaints about those who lacked enthusiasm for the Republic by observing the work restrictions on the *décadi* and, in consequence, set a bad example to the more easily led citizens. In brumaire VII (November 1798), Gevrey complained about non-observance of the *décadi* in Dijon Extra-Muros, which was in fact having problems enforcing the *décadi* due to a lack of national guardsmen. The result was that the good citizens of Gevrey were being put at a disadvantage.65 Unfair economic advantage (by working when others did not) for one area and general anti-Republican behaviour provided two, possibly complementary, motives for complaint and outrage on behalf of the local popular society or administration. Working in public view on the *décadi* was a visible, obvious rejection of the new calendar. Whether this was a rejection of the Republic by extension is a moot point. The fact that these infractions were the object of complaint demonstrates that such behaviour was probably not done out of ignorance of the law, but after a consideration of its irrelevance, impracticability or stupidity. Many considered the seven-day week to be ordained by God and hence unalterable. Religion, and the nature of Sundays in an officially secular state were vital issues.

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The conflicts that the calendar both provoked and represented posed some difficulty for the Napoleonic regime. The role of religion France following the 18 Brumaire was by no means certain. By this point, the Republican Calendar was, in the press at least, seen almost wholly as a dechristianising measure. Ostensibly, the calendar was abolished on the advice of the Senate, who argued the calendar was astronomically incorrect. On this advice, the Gregorian calendar was reinstated from 1 January 1806. While science and commerce were cited as the reasons for the move, it was viewed as an attempt to come to resolve the religious divide. This was argued in the 1806 play, *Janvier et Nivôse*. It told the story of the adventures of two young lovers, ciphers for the two calendars, provided the plot for the evening. One, Nivôse, was weak and asthmatic, while the other, Janvier, was ‘jeune et gai’. For several years Janvier had been exiled, but has now returned to his country with his friend Carême. On his return he is welcomed with gifts of flowers and almanacs, but still has to fight Nivôse for the hand of the character of Victory. He wins and, later, Nivôse’s death is announced to the audience. The *Courrier* praised the play for its celebration of the abolition of one of the Revolution’s ‘imprudent innovations’ The journal suggested that ‘the public has quickly seized on the timeliness of the subject and applauded all that relates to the superiority of the ancient calendar over the new’.66 The end of the Republican calendar was not seen, as the discussions and reports in the Senate suggested, as a result of rational, scientific deliberation and considerations of pragmatism and commerce, although the play’s review did suggest that Gregorian calendar’s (presumably scientific) ‘superiority’ had been decided. Rather, it was viewed as a victory of religion over attempts at dechristianisation. Religion was the main issue. The Catholic calendar, the *Courrier* reviewer argued, was the basis for all ‘our customs and traditions’ and ‘joins all the events of our lives; it rules our work and our doings [*engagemens*]’. It was in the pages of the established calendar that ‘we invoke our first protectors’ and in its festivals remember God. The play celebrated the end of a modern aberration and a return to a pious and traditional relationship between time, its record, and life. The journal concluded by asking whether the change in the calendar, now meant a change in general journalistic styles. Would these ‘revolutionary forms’ which had introduced ‘anarchy’ into the ‘sanctuary of arts and letters’ and ‘excited the bile’ of their readers now be replaced by more respectable tropes? The author argued that the return to the Gregorian calendar represented an important symbol for the Empire and represented an important step to recognising the religious character of France.

*The Times* of London also concluded that the abolition of the Republican calendar was a religious issue. Practical concerns were evinced. Previously, in a report on events in France, the English paper noted that it had been informed on 30 July ‘that the present French calendar will soon be abolished, it being found productive of endless inconvenience in mercantile transactions, in comparing dates of letters and bills of exchange, and possessing not one advantage in return, as it was not even astronomically just, and separated us from all the rest of Europe.’67 *The Times* has the benefit of escaping the pen of the French censor and, although not without its own biases, does appear to have relied on genuine reports from France. It succinctly summarises the opinions expressed in France. After the publication of the *sénatus-consulte*, another story in the paper, on ‘The French Kalendar [sic]’, took the change as an example ‘of the unpopularity of those principles which gave birth and support to the system.’ It recognised that a calendar could never be politically neutral and that the ‘revolutionary kalendar was adopted, as one great means for the overthrow of Christendom and is most dear to its civil, political, and religious interests.’ The report then continued to argue that the Republican calendar attempted a severe breach with the Christian order of things, by trying to sever the links between the seventh day and its divine ordination as a day of rest and worship.68 The calendar was seen as a cipher for political and religious (or anti-religious) allegiance. This association was to continue. In *Les Consultations du Docteur Noir*, Vigny’s Romantic alter-ego, Stello, stumbled across a ‘bon canonnier’ and the sight of the various tattoos on his arm caused him to exclaim: ‘ton bras est un almanach de la cour et un calendrier républicain.’69 In 1870, the Communardes attempted to revivify the calendar along with the political institutions of the Revolution. The calendar retained its symbolic link with the 1790s.

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2 And undoubtedly an irritation to those, genealogists included, who have to resort to tables of concordance between the Gregorian and Republican calendar. Michel Vovelle, *La mentalité révolutionnaire: sociétés et mentalités sous la Révolution française* (1985), pp. 199-200; Mona Ozouf ‘Revolutionary Calendar’ in *A Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution* François Furet and Mona Ozouf, eds. (Yale, 1992), pp. 538-539.

3 Guillaume, *Comité d’Instruction publique*, vol. 1, p. xlix. Siéyès continued to express opposition to the calendar, and came to see it as a clear attack on Catholicism.

4 For the importance of Romme’s role, see James Friguglietti, ‘Gilbert Romme and the Making of the French Republican Calendar’, in *The French Revolution in Culture and Society*, David G. Troyansky, Alfred Cismaru & Norwood Andrews jr., eds. (Westport, 1991), pp. 13-22.

5 The full list runs as follows: *vendémiaire* (vintage), *brumaire* (mist), *frimaire* (frost), *nivôse* (snow), *pluviôse* (rain), *ventôse* (wind), *germinal* (germination), *floréal* (flowering), *prairial* (meadows), *messidor* (harvest), *thermidor*  (heat), *fructidor* (fruit).

6 The astronomical zodiac provided a further source of inspiration. Each month related to the zodiacal month and the *décade*, the three zodiacal *decans* of 10°, while the zodiacal names were proposed to the Convention as possible names for the Republican months. Guillaume, *Comité d’Instruction publique*, vol. 2, pp. 431-39.

7 Quoted in Guillaume, *Comité d’Instruction publique* vol. 1, pp. 440-4.

8 J. de Rey-Pailhade, ‘Étude historique sur l'emploi du calendrier républicain et sur le temps décimal à Toulouse pendant la Révolution’, *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Toulouse*, 4 (1908), p. 436.

9 B.M. Besançon, I 3 1, *Justice de Paix*, 5th & 6th Sections, 30 October 1790 - 29 ventôse X (20 March 1802).

10 Renée Simon, ‘La Révolution vécue par un bourg d’Ile-de-France: Beaune-en-Gatinais, 1789-1799 (d’après les registres municipaux)’, *R.H.M.C.*, 18 (1971), p. 253. Beaune-en-Gatinais received the name Beaune-la-Rolande on 27 August 1823.

11 ‘Le citoyen Tonnelier, officier municipal, chargé de recevoir les actes préliminaires du divorce, prévient les citoyens à qui il a été indiquée des jours pour des assemblées, pour paraître dans les mois d'octobre, novembre, décembre et janvier, que ces assemblées auront lieu quoi-qu'elles [sic] tombent à des jours de décadi’, ‘Commune de Paris. Suite de la séance du 1 jour de la troisième décade’, *Journal du Matin des amis de liberté et de l'égalité*, no. 895 (II), p. 4.

12 *Moniteur*, 21 vendémiaire II (12 October 1793).

13 A.D. Loire Atlantique, L 2113\*, Register, *Tribunal de Commerce*, Nantes, 1791-1849. Entry for 24 thermidor II (11 August 1794).

14 On the calendar’s effects on markets see Jack Thomas ‘Le temps du marché, le temps de dieu: le calendrier républicain en Haute-Garonne, de l’an VI à l’an XI’, *Annales du Midi*, 109 (1997), pp. 93-103.

15 A.D. Côte-d’Or, L 1660, *Arrêté du directoire du département. de la Côte-d'Or concernant l'application de la division du nouveaux calendrier, aux époques des assemblées civiles et politiques*, October 1793.

16 Bianchi, ‘«Bataille du Calendrier»’, p. 247, n. 12.

17 A.N. F17 1008 D, Report, 27 nivôse II (16 January 1794).

18 De Rey-Pailhade*,* ‘calendrier républicain’, p. 440.

19 Barré, *L’Heureuse Décade, divertissement patriotique, en un acte et en vaudevilles* (1793), in *Répertoire du théâtre républicain ou recueil de pièces de théâtre imprimés avant, pendant et après la République Française et qui presque toutes, ont été représentées*, 1788-1810 (Geneva, 1986), vol. 7. *Seconde décade ou le double mariage*, p. 25, reprinted in *ibid.*

20 *L’Intérieur d’un Ménage Républicain, Opéra-Comique*, pp. 7-8 reprinted in *Rêpertoire du théâtre*.

21 R. Brouillard, ‘Un ballet original’, in *Revue historique de Bordeaux et du Département de la Gironde* 5 (1912), pp. 277-78.

22 B.N. Lc-815, *Les Décades républicaines ou Histoire abrégée de la république française* (Year II), vol. I., no. 6 (18 pluviôse II).

23 Rose Dobrée to Thomas Dobrée, 13 Nivôse II/2 January 1793, AM Nantes, Z/2 A.13.

24 Christiane Constant-le Stum, ed., *Journal d'un bourgeois de Bégoux: Michel Célarié 1771-1836* ( 1992), p. 178. Célarie: b. 5 February 1754, d. 16 September 1842.

25 Luc Boisnard, ed., *Journal d'un artisan tourangeau 1789-1830 tenu par Claude Bailly artisan sellier a Chinon au no. 27 de la rue Saint-Etienne.* (Chambray-lès-Tours, 1989), p. 34.

26 *Ibid*. p. 41.

27 A.N. AD VIII 15, *Décrets relatifs à l’établissement de l’ère républicain,* 5 October 1793.

28 *Ibid.*, Register of the *Comité des surveillances*, 12 floréal II (1 May 1794). For similar provisions in the Dordogne, see Henri Labroue, *L'esprit public en Dordogne pendant la Révolution* (1911), pp. 94-102.

29 A.N. F1cIII Puy-de-Dôme 9, Gilbert Tailhard, Municipal Officer, Riom to the Comité de Salut Public, 16 floréal II (5 May 1794).

30 Albert Mathiez, *La vie chère et le mouvement social sous la Terreur* (1927), p. 443.

31 Eric Wauters, *Une presse de province pendant la revolution française: journaux et journalistes normands (1785-1800)* (1993), p. 162.

32 Fernand Martin, ed., *Les Jacobins au village. Documents publiés et annotés* (Clermont-Ferrand, 1902), pp. 67-159.

33 B.1743 d. 1814. Elected by Aveyron to the Legislative Assembly and Convention and prominent in efforts towards educational reform and poor relief. He was also sent on several missions: 1793 Aveyron and Tarn with the Army of the Ardennes and in the Marne; 1794 in departments of Lot, Cantal, Tarn, Aveyron, Lozère and at Nantes; 1795, with the Army of the Pyrénées. After a spell in the civil service he returned to medicine in 1809 at Fountainbleau; A.D. Loire-Atlantique, L 99, Bo, Représentant du Peuple, *Le représentant du Peuple à Nantes, près de l'Armée de l’ouest, & dans les Départements en dépendants, Aux habitans des Campagnes*, 4 messidor II (22 June 1794).

34 A.N. F7382, *Surveillance administrative*, Year II.

35 *Ibid*., 6 messidor II (24 June 1794).

36 *Ibid*., 12 messidor II (30 June 1794).

37 *Ibid*. 6 floréal VI (25 April 1798).

38 Susanne Desan *Reclaiming the Sacred: Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France* (Ithaca & London, 1990).

39 B.L. F 1185 6, Lanjuinais, *Sur l’introduction du calendrier des tyrans* (Year III).

40 B.N. le381210, *Sur les* *fêtes décadaires*, (Year III), p. 7.

41 B.H.V.P. 950845, Joseph Terral, *Réflexions sur les Fêtes Décadaires* (Year III), p. 3.

42 A.N. AD VIII 15, Lenoir-Laroche, *Rapport... sur la résolution du 21 thermidor, relative à l'annuaire de la République. Séance du 23 fructidor an 6* (Year VI), p. 4.

43 A.D. VIII 15, Directiore Executif. *Arrêté du Directoire Exécutif qui prescrit des mesures pour la stricte exécution du calendrier républicain*, 14 germinal VI (3 April 1798).

44 *Ibid*.

45 French Revolution Research Collection (F.R.R.C.), 8, Circular, Lambrecht, Paris, 29 germinal VI (18 April 1798).

46 F.R.R.C., 8, Circular, Duval, Minsiter of Police, Paris, 26 frimaire 7 (16 December 1798).

47 A.D. Doubs, L 380, Letter, Department of the Doubs to the municipality of Besançon, 5 floréal VI (24 April 1798).

48 *L’Ancien Moniteur* (1863 ed.), vol. 29, pp. 150-51; F.R.R.C. 6, *Loi contenant des dispositions nouvelles pour l’exacte observation de l’Annuaire de la République*, 23 Fructidor 6 (9 September 1798).

49Quoted in Jack Thomas*, Les Temps des foires: Foires et marchés dans le Midi toulousain de la fin de l'Ancien Régime à 1914* (Toulouse, 1993)., p. 208. Lambrecht, the Minister of Justice, believed that this would efface ‘jusqu’aux dernières traces d’usages bizarres’, F.R.R.C, 6, ‘calendrier républicain’, Letter to the *Administrations centrales*, Paris, 29 Germinal VI (18 April 1798).

50 A.D. Doubs, L 316, Correspondence concerning fairs and markets.

51 See Thomas, *Les Temps des foires*, pp. 208-211 for the effects in the south-west of France.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 208.

53 A.D. Loire-Atlantique, L 152, Letter, Department of the Loire Inférieure to the Department of the Vendée, 22 vendémiaire VII (13 October 1798).

54 A.N. F12 1274, Letter, canton of La Roche-Guyon, Seine-et Oise, to the Minister of the Interior, 27 floréal VI (16 May 1798).

55 Thomas, ‘Le temps du marché, le temps de dieu’.

56 For example: ‘Si le gouvernement est bon, juste et humain, il est aussi ferme et sagement energique, et il ne souffrira pas que les mesures prises [et] pour l'adoption du Calendrier républicain, et notamment pour la fixation des jours de marchés et de foires restent sans exécution, ou soient entravées, comme cela est déjà arrivé. Il soutiendra aussi de son autorité paternelle ceux qui, comme moi, sans vues d'ambition ou de fortune, l'ont toujours soutenu, et qui par amour pour la Liberté et la philosophie se sont dévoués sans réserve à la chose publique et à la propagation des principes.

Les désagrémens et les difficultés que nous éprouvons par rapport au changement des jours de marchés à La Roche-Guyon, viennent de ce que les administrations de Vernon, Mantes et autres ont pris un délai trop éloigné pour l'exécution de l'arrêté du Directoire, ce qui dérange les intérêts commerciaux, fait un tort notable à notre marché et existe des plaintes injustes contre nous qui avons mis de l'empressement à faire exécuter les lois à cet égard.

Il seroit à désirér Citoyen ministre, que toutes les administrations marchassent ensemble, et peut-être vous trouvez sage d'ordonner à celles de Vernon surtout de faire exécuter sans délai l'arrêté qu'elle a pris relativement à la fixation de la tenue de ses marchés. Pourquois nous dit-on, voulez-vous faire exécuter une loi qui n'est point exécuteé aux Andelys, Mantes, Vernon, Gïzouses, de là l’opiniâtreté des marchands a vouloir suivre l'ancienne routine, et la nécessité où nous nous trouvons de sévir contre les mutins, ou de favoriser par l’impunité les infractions à la loi du gouvernement, profitent de ces circomstances pour exaspérer encore les esprits mécontents. Mais le gouvernement ne reculera point, et il peut compter sur le zèle et le courage des administrateurs de La Roche-Guyon’, A.N., F121274, Letter, canton of La Roche-Guyon, Seine-et-Oise to the Minister of the Interior, 7 floréal VI (26 April 1798). This carton contains several other similar letters of complaint.

57 A.D. Doubs, L 380, Circular, Besançon, 17 frimaire VI (7 December 1797).

58 A.N. A.D. VIII.15, *Arrête de l'administration centrale du département de la Marne*, 5 floréal VI (24 April 1798).

59 Woloch, *New Regime*.

60 A.N. F1cIII Gironde 8, Laporteries, *Agent national* of the commune of Martien, Gironde, to the Comité de Salut Public, 23 ventôse II (13 March 1794).

61 A.D. Doubs, L 380, Circular, Besançon, 17 frimaire VI (7 December 1797). The author could have had in mind Christmas masses in his reference to ‘les plus importantes’ ceremonies.

62 A.N. F171454, Department of the Nord to the Committee of Public Instruction, 25 prairial VI (13 June 1798).

63 A.D. Côte-d’Or, L 476, Letter, canton of Messigny to the Department of the Côte-d’Or, 2 fructidor VII (19 August 1798).

64 A.D. Côte-d’Or L 1660, Letter, *Société populaire* of the canton of Gevrey to the Department of the Côte-d’Or, 20 frimaire II (10 December 1792).

65 A.D. Côte-d’Or L 476, Letters, canton of Dijon Extra-Muros, 25 floréal VI (14 May 1798) and Canton de Gevrey, 21 brumaire VII (11 November 1798) to the Department of the Côte-d’Or.

66 *Courrier des Spectacles, Journal des Théâtres et de Littérature*, 1 January 1806, pp. 2-3. P. 1 reads ‘Le public a vivement saisi l’à-propos du sujet et applaudi tout ce qui se rapporte à la supériorité de l’ancien calendrier sur le nouveau’.

67 *The Times*, 8 August 1805.

68 *The Times*, 30 September 1805.

69 Vigny, *Les Consultations du Docteur Noir. Stello ou les diables bleus. Première consultation* (1832), ch. 23.