

What advantages and disadvantages were there for Napoleon in agreeing to the conc...



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Before deciding what advantages and disadvantages there were for Napoleon on agreeing to the Concordat I think it is important that we look at the basic outline of the Concordat and what it stated. The Concordat was signed with Pope Pius VII in 1801, it stated that the state would pay the clergy a salary and make appointments to senior positions, such as bishops and archbishops. The position of the Pope as Head of the Catholic Church was recognized. The Catholic clergy was to obey the state and promised an oath to do so.

The Church would not try to regain lands confiscated by the revolution. It agreed that services would be supervised under police powers. Catholicism also regained its position as the official religion of most Frenchmen.

Napoleon thought that this agreement would bind the people that were behind the church and did not support the revolution (as the Church had condemned it earlier on) and those that were behind the revolution. Which should prove to his benefit, as they would all unite behind his rule also. It also meant that Royalist could no longer use the Church and the religion as a way of turning the revolution around - as now the Church was working hand in hand with state.

Also the refractory priest were won back as now the state and the Church were bound in agreement, so the refractory priest would no longer cause friction as they had done before, the Vendee being a prime example. It also meant that Napoleon could use the bishops, archbishops and priests to reinforce his authority, as they were now in his pay and had to follow his orders if they wished to be paid. He also got them to pay for the nation and him, and in services spread messages of his goodwill. It also became a way

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of encouraging conscription or relaying government propaganda and decrees. This meant that now the Church took orders from him and did almost anything he asked as they were seen as civil servants. The landowners that had bought church land during the revolution were kept happy also as they could not be taken back by the Church and were now seen as their property, their concern about losing their land disappeared and they too held more respect for Napoleon as he was the reason that they could keep their land.

The only problem now was the Jews and the Protestants; they were taken care of in the organic articles, which Napoleon put in without the consent of the Pope. It guaranteed religious toleration to them, and put Catholic priest and Protestant ministers under his pay. This also meant that no papal legislation could be published in France without government approval. All this meant that loyalty for Napoleon was guaranteed. Every parish priest told his " flock" to be loyal to Napoleon. It was also seen as a Christian's duty to obey Napoleon.

If God was respected and honored, then so was Napoleon. This meant that loyalty for Napoleon had grown, also opposition to him should have been reduced as it bound the people together in a way, he made changes that were to make people see him as the new and fairer leader. However Napoleon managed to create many disadvantages of this action too when he overstepped the mark and made himself a saint, August 16 became St. Napoleon day, replacing the original festival of the Assumption of the Virgin.

Many Christian's saw this as Napoleon's way to be seen equal to God - especially since this angered the Pope. Some argued that the Concordat had never been fully loyal to him, they never accepted themselves a civil servants. Many remained stubbornly royalist and started to regain the lost church lands. Napoleon had started facing new opposition in the form of most of the clergy, especially as the Pope wasn't very happy. The Church schools became very popular and their education was one to be reckoned with. In the long term it caused problems as it created opposition to the regime in a more united form also, especially when the Pope was put in prison.

The institution of the Church was causing problems for the Head of State. In what ways did Napoleon's legal reforms follow the principles of the revolution? In what ways did they go against them? There were two main aspects of legal change under Napoleonic rule, firstly the French law. Law in France was a huge mix of legal pronouncements in different areas. Napoleon rewrote the laws and established a single code for the whole of France.

The new civil code, code Napoleon, was published in 1804 and based on Roman law, which was quite illiberal. The second aspect of legal change was administrative, judges were no longer elected but appointed by the government, the appointments were to be for life but all judges were kept under close supervision. Some new courts were set up for armed rebels and special tribunals, and from 1801 for political crimes as well. In 1810, a system of arbitrary imprisonment without trial was established; this was basically like the ' letters de cachet' used in the ancien regime. The legal system inherited from the ancien regime and the revolution was chaotic, <https://assignbuster.com/what-advantages-and-disadvantages-were-there-for-napoleon-in-agreeing-to-the-concordat-essay/>

attempts during the 1790's to bring together the laws into a single uniform code that was applied equally across the whole of France had failed, but Napoleon managed to achieve that.

In 1804 he published the Civil Code that still forms the basis of French law. The code, followed by codes for civil procedure (1806), commerce (1807), criminal procedure (1808) and punishment (1810), was the product of a committee of legal experts, whose work was considered in over a hundred sessions of the Council of State, often chaired by Napoleon personally. The code while enshrining many of the achievements of the revolution, it included a number of illiberal measures. On one hand, it confirmed the abolition of feudalism, equality before law and freedom of the conscience, and gave a fixed title to those who had bought church and $\frac{1}{2}$ lands during the 1790's.

On the other, it reintroduced slavery to the French colonies, gave employers the upper hand in wage disputes and compelled workers to carry a passbook or livret, effectively limiting their freedom of movement. It also reflected Napoleon's views about the insubordinate position of women and children. Whilst a man could imprison an adulterous wife or disobedient child, a married woman had few property rights and could only sue for divorce if a husband insisted that the mistress share their home. What evidence can you find to support the view that Napoleonic government was highly centralised and authoritarian? It is quite clear that Napoleonic government was highly centralised and authoritarian, this is shown by the absence of freedom of speech