

## General Topics :: evil, just evil----"the Code Noir"

**evil, just evil----"the Code Noir", on: 2009/10/25 8:31**

God blessed me with a new work, a bit of writing to do, and one of the characters is a Haitian follower of Jesus, and during a group Bible study, he unveils his life, what happened to him, ie, how he came to live in America, and I was doing a bit of research on the Haitian slave rebellion of the 1800's, and I stumbled across a document that the Franch slaveowner's put in place called the "Code Noir" ... "the Black Code", and it is truly evil, because to buttress this satanic document, the slaveowners use the roman institution to give them a "bit of covering" with God, and it occurred me how man misuses and abuses the Name.

the Code Noir:

The "Code Noir" (1685)

Source: Le Code Noir ou recueil des reglements rendus jusqu'a present (Paris: Prault, 1767) .

Translated by John Garrigus

[Back to "French Colonial Texts"](#)

-----

The Black Code

Edict of the King

Concerning the enforcement of order in the French American islands  
from the month of March 1685

Registered at the Sovereign Council of Saint-Domingue, May 6, 1687

Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre, to all present and to come, greetings. Since we owe equally our attention to all the peoples that Divine Providence has put under our obedience, We have had examined in our presence the memoranda that have been sent to us by our officers in our american islands, by whom having been informed that they need our authority and our justice to maintain the discipline of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman church there and to regulate the status and condition of the slaves in our said islands, and desiring to provide for this and to have them know that although they live in regions infinitely removed from our normal residence, we are always present to them, not only by the range of our power, but also by the promptness of our attempts to assist them in their needs. For these reasons, by the advice of our Council, and by our certain knowledge, full power, and royal authority, We have said, ruled, and ordered, we say, rule, and order, wish, and are pleased by that which follows.

### First Article

We wish and intend that the edict by the late King of glorious memory our very honored lord and father of 23 April 1615 be enforced in our islands, by this we charge all our officers to evict from our Islands all the Jews who have established their residence there, to whom, as to the declared enemies of the Christian name, we order to have left within three months from the day of the publication of these present , or face confiscation of body and property.

### II.

All the slaves who will be in our Islands will be baptized and instructed in the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion. We charge the planters who will buy newly arrived negres to inform the Governor and Intendant of the said islands within a

week at the latest or face a discretionary fine, these will give the necessary orders to have them instructed and baptized within an appropriate time.

III.

We forbid any public exercise of any religion other than the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman; we wish that the offenders be punished as rebels and disobedient to our orders. We prohibit all congregations for this end, which we declare "conventicles," illicit and seditious, subject to the same penalty which will be levied even against masters who allow or tolerate them among their slaves.

IV.

No overseers will be given charge of negroes who do not profess the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, on pain of confiscation of the said negroes from the masters who had given this charge to them and of discretionary punishment of the overseers who accepted the said charge.

V.

We forbid our subjects of the so-called reformed religion to disturb or prevent our other subjects, even their slaves, from the free exercise of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, on pain of exemplary punishment.

VI.

We charge all our subjects, whatever their status and condition, to observe Sundays and holidays that are kept by our subjects of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion. We forbid them to work or to make their slaves work on these days from the hour of midnight until the other midnight, either in agriculture, the manufacture of sugar or all other works, on pain of fine and discretionary punishment of the masters and confiscation of the sugar, and of the said slaves who will be caught by our officers in their work.

VII.

Equally we forbid the holding of negro markets and all other markets the said days on similar pains, including confiscation of the merchandise that will be found then at the market and discretionary fine against the merchants.

VIII.

We declare our subjects who are not of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion incapable in the future of contracting a valid marriage. We declare bastards the children born of such unions which we desire to be held and considered, we hold and we consider to be truly concubinage.

IX.

The free men who will have one or several children from their concubinage with their slaves, together with the masters who permitted this, will each be condemned to a fine of two thousand pounds of sugar; and if they are the masters of the slave by whom they have had the said children, we wish that beyond the fine, they be deprived of the slave and the children, and that she and they be confiscated for the profit of the hospital, without ever being manumitted. Nevertheless we do not intend for the present article to be enforced if the man who was not married to another person during his concubinage with his slave would marry in the church the said slave who by this means will be manumitted and the children rendered free and legitimate.

X.

The said solemnities prescribed by the Ordonnance of Blois, Articles XL, XLI, XLII, and by the declaration of November 1629 for marriages will be observed both for free persons and for slaves, nevertheless without the consent of the father and the mother of the slave being necessary, but that of the master alone.

XI.

We forbid priests to officiate at the marriages of slaves unless they can show the consent of their masters. We also forbid masters to use any means to constrain their slaves to marry against their will.

XII.

The children who will be born of marriage between slaves will be slaves and will belong to the master of the women slaves, and not to those of their husband, if the husband and the wife have different masters.

XIII.

We wish that if a slave husband has married a free woman, the children, both male and girls, will follow the condition of the

heir mother and be free like her, in spite of the servitude of their father; and that if the father is free and the mother enslaved, the children will be slaves the same.

XIV.

Masters are held to put into Holy Ground in cemeteries so designated their baptized slaves; and those who die without having received baptism will be buried at night in some field near the place where they died.

XV.

We forbid slaves to carry any weapon, or large sticks, on pain of whipping and of confiscation of the weapon to the profit of those who seize them; with the sole exception of those who are sent hunting by their master and who carry their ticket or known mark.

XVI.

In the same way we forbid slaves belonging to different masters to gather in the day or night whether claiming for wedding or otherwise, whether on their master's property or elsewhere, and still less in the main roads or faraway places, on pain of corporal punishment, which will not be less than the whip and the fleur de lys and which in cases of frequent violations and other aggravating circumstances can be punished with death: this we leave to the decision of judges. We charge all our subjects to approach the offenders, to arrest them and take them to prison, even if they are not officers and there is not yet any decree against them.

XVII.

Masters who are convicted of having permitted or tolerated such assemblies composed of slaves other than those belonging to them will be condemned in their own and private name to pay for all the damage that will have been done to their neighbors by these said assemblies and a fine of 10 ecus for the first time and double for repeat offenses.

XVIII.

We forbid slaves to sell sugar cane for whatever reason or occasion, even with the permission of their master, on pain of whipping for the slaves and 10 livres tournois for their masters who permitted it, and a similar fine against the buyer.

XIX.

We forbid them also to expose for sale, at the market or to carry to private houses for sale any kind of commodity, even fruits, vegetables, firewood, herbs for their food and animals of their manufacture without express permission of their masters by a ticket or by known marks, on pain of confiscation of the things thus sold, without restitution of the price by their masters, and of a fine of six livres tournois to their profit for the buyers.

XX.

We wish, to this end, that two persons be charged by our officers in each market to examine the commodities and merchandises that will be carried by the slaves, together with the tickets and marks of their masters.

XXI.

We permit to all our subjects living in our islands to take all the things slaves are carrying when these slaves are without tickets from their masters, or known marks, to be returned instantly to their masters, if the plantations are neighboring the place where the slaves are surprised in this crime, if not they will be instantly sent to the hospital to be held there until the masters have been notified.

XXII.

Each week masters will have to furnish to their slaves ten years old and older for their nourishment two and a half jars in the measure of the land, of cassava flour or three cassavas weighing at least two-and-a-half pounds each or equivalent things, with two pounds of salted beef or three pounds of fish or other things in proportion, and to children after they are weaned to the age of 10 years half of the above supplies.

XXIII.

We forbid them to give to the slaves cane brandy in place of the subsistence mentioned in the previous article.

XXIV.

We similarly forbid them to unburden themselves of the food and subsistence of their slaves by permitting them to work a certain day of the week for own ends.

XXV.

Each year masters will have to furnish each slave with two outfits of canvas or 4 aulnes of canvas, at the master's discretion.

XXVI.

The slaves who are not fed, clothed and supported by the masters according to what we have ordered by these articles will notify our attorney of this and give him their statements, based on which and even as a matter of course, if the information comes to him from elsewhere, the masters will be prosecuted by him and without cost, which we want to be observed for the cries and barbarous and inhumane treatments of masters towards their slaves.

XXX.

Slaves will not be allowed to be given offices or commissions with any public function, nor to be named agents by any other than their masters to act or administer any trade or judgement in loss or witnesses, either in civil or criminal matters; and in cases where they will be heard as witnesses, their dispositions will only serve as memorandum to aid the judges in the investigation, without being the source of any presumption, conjecture or proof.

XXXI.

Nor can slaves be party, either in judgement nor in civil suits, either as plaintiff or defendant, neither in civil or criminal suits ...

XXXIII.

The slave who will have struck his master or the wife of his master, his mistress or their children to bring blood, or in the face, will be punished with death.

LV.

Masters twenty years old will be able to manumit their slaves by all deeds or by cause of death, without being required to provide the reason for this manumission, neither will they need the permission of parents, provided that they are minors twenty-five years of age.

LVI.

Children made universal beneficiaries by their masters, or named executors of their testaments or tutors of their children, will be held and regarded as manumitted.

LVII.

We declare their manumissions enacted in our islands to serve in place of birth in our islands and manumitted slaves will not need our letters of naturalization in order to enjoy the advantages of our natural subjects in our kingdom, lands and countries under our obedience, although they be born in foreign lands.

LVIII.

We command manumitted slaves to retain a particular respect for their former masters, their widows and their children; such that the insult that they will have done be punished more severely than if it had been done to another person: we declare them however free and absolved of any other burdens, services and rights that their former masters would like to claim, as much on their persons as on their possessions and estates as patrons.

LIX.

We grant to manumitted slaves the same rights, privileges and liberties enjoyed by persons born free; desiring that they merit this acquired liberty and that it produce in them, both for their persons and for their property, the same effects that the good fortune of natural liberty causes in our other subjects.

This we give and command to our loved and loyal supporters the persons holding our sovereign council established in Martinique, Gadeloupe, Saint Christophe, that they read, publish and register ....