

# HAMMURABI'S CODE: A PLAY IN 3 PARTS

Task: Your task is to choose three of the laws from Hammurabi's Code and make them come to life. To do this you will have to stage a play that enacts the crime that was committed, the trial, and the punishment.

Code #1: Create a "mini-play" that acts out	What do you need?	Points Offered	Points Earned
	The crime.	10	
Code #2: Create a "mini-play" that acts out	The trial	10	
	The punishment	10	
	The crime.	10	
Code #3: Create a "mini-play" that acts out	The trial	10	
	The punishment	10	
	The crime.	10	
	The trial	10	
	The punishment	10	
	At least two props	10	
	A minimum of two minutes	10	
	Every group member must be in the play	10	
	Peer grading	20	

120

# Laws covered

The laws covered such subjects as:

## Slander

Ex. Law #127: "If any one 'point the finger' at a sister of a god or the wife of any one, and can not prove it, this man shall be taken before the judges and his brow shall be marked. (by cutting the skin, or perhaps hair.)"[23]

## Trade

Ex. Law #265: "If a herdsman, to whose care cattle or sheep have been entrusted, be guilty of fraud and make false returns of the natural increase, or sell them for money, then shall he be convicted and pay the owner ten times the loss."[23]

## Slavery

Ex. Law #15: "If any one take a male or female slave of the court, or a male or female slave of a freed man, outside the city gates, he shall be put to death."[23]

## The duties of workers

Ex. Law #42: "If any one take over a field to till it, and obtain no harvest therefrom, it must be proved that he did no work on the field, and he must deliver grain, just as his neighbor raised, to the owner of the field."[23]

## Theft

Ex. Law #22: "If any one is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death."[23]

## Trade

Ex. Law #104: "If a merchant give an agent corn, wool, oil, or any other goods to transport, the agent shall give a receipt for the amount, and

compensate the merchant therefor. Then he shall obtain a receipt from the merchant for the money that he gives the merchant."[23]

## Liability

Ex. Law #53: "If any one be too lazy to keep his dam in proper condition, and does not so keep it; if then the dam break and all the fields be flooded, then shall he in whose dam the break occurred be sold for money, and the money shall replace the corn which he has caused to be ruined."[23]

## Divorce

Ex. Law #142: "If a woman quarrel with her husband, and say: 'You are not congenial to me,' the reasons for her prejudice must be presented. If she is guiltless, and there is no fault on her part, but he leaves and neglects her, then no guilt attaches to this woman, she shall take her dowry and go back to her father's house."[23]

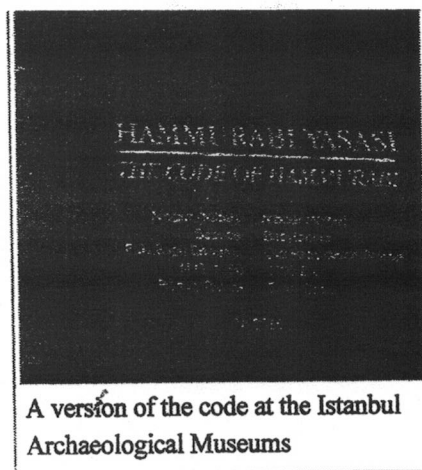
One of the best known laws from Hammurabi's code was:

Ex. Law #196: "If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye. If one break a man's bone, they shall break his bone. If one destroy the eye of a freeman or break the bone of a freeman he shall pay one gold mina. If one destroy the eye of a man's slave or break a bone of a man's slave he shall pay one-half his price."[23]

Hammurabi had many other punishments, as well. If a son strikes his father, his hands shall be hewn off. Translations vary.[24][25]

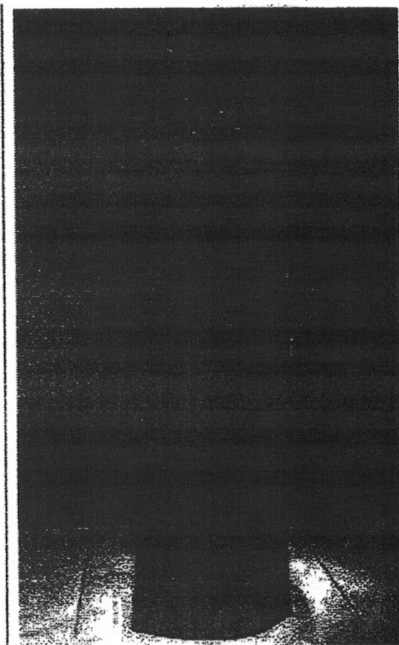
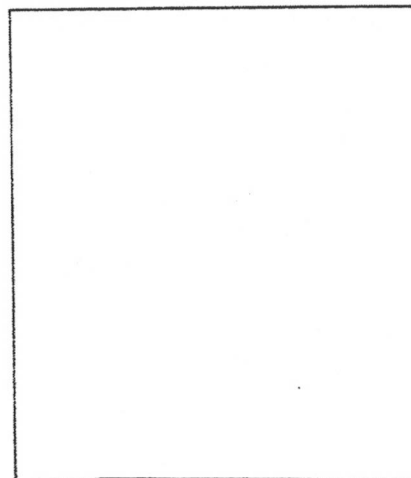
## See also

- Babylonian law



A version of the code at the Istanbul Archaeological Museums

## External video



Law Code Stele of King Hammurabi, 1792-1750 B.C. ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_w5NGOHbgTw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_w5NGOHbgTw)), Smarthistory