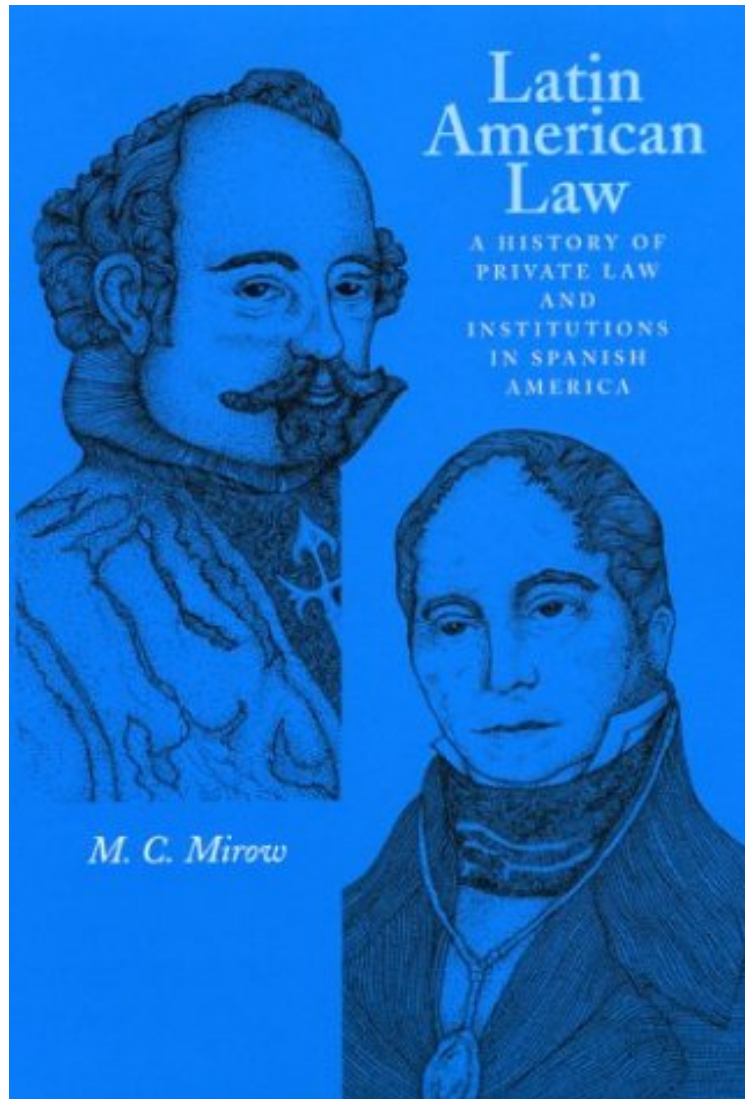


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Latin American Law: A History of Private Law and Institutions in Spanish America

M. C. Mirow

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lively, dynamic pace. I admire the way he writes sensibly about a diverse region composed of 33 nations and more than half a billion people united by powerful commonalities. I thought he handled the small section on Cuba with tact, knowledge and discretion. While this book will no doubt be of interest to aficionados of Latin-American studies, it will also interest legal scholars. Our understanding of this increasingly significant region could use an infusion of perceptive and intelligent analysis.

Private law touches every aspect of people's daily lives—landholding, inheritance, private property, marriage and family relations, contracts, employment, and business dealings—and the court records and legal documents produced under private law are a rich source of information for anyone researching social, political, economic, or environmental history. But to utilize these records fully, researchers need a fundamental understanding of how private law and legal institutions functioned in the place and time period under study. This book offers the first comprehensive introduction in either English or Spanish to private law in Spanish Latin America from the colonial period to the present. M. C. Mirow organizes the book into three substantial sections that describe private law and legal institutions in the colonial period, the independence era and nineteenth century, and the twentieth century. Each section begins with an introduction to the nature and function of private law during the period and discusses such topics as legal education and lawyers, legal sources, courts, land, inheritance, commercial law, family law, and personal status. Each section also presents themes of special interest during its respective time period, including slavery, Indian status, codification, land reform, and development and globalization.

"M.C. Mirow has set himself a difficult task, to contribute a one-volume introduction to Latin American law in English, and he has succeeded admirably." (Law and History) "The impressive scope of this book makes it a major contribution to Latin American legal history. . . . This is an excellent starting place for anyone interested in the legal history of the region, and it is essential reading for those seeking to understand the roots of contemporary Latin American politics and society." (Lauren Benton, New York University, author of *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400-1900*) "The impressive scope of this book makes it a major contribution to Latin American legal history. . . . This is an excellent starting place for anyone interested in the legal history of the region, and it is essential reading for those seeking to understand the roots of contemporary Latin American politics and society." (Lauren Benton, New York University, author of *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400-1900*) About the Author M. C. MIROW is Associate Professor of Law and a founding faculty member at Florida International University College of Law in Miami.