



Through the Codes Darkly: Slave Law and Civil Law in Louisiana

Vernon V. Palmer

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A Path-Breaking and Masterly Study of Louisiana Slave Law This fascinating study offers an examination of the complex French, Spanish, Roman and American heritage of Louisiana's law of slavery and its codification, a profile of the first effort in modern history to integrate slavery into a European-style civil code, the 1808 Digest of Orleans, a trailblazing study of the unwritten laws of slavery and the legal impact of customs and practices developing outside of the Codes, an analysis that overturns the previous scholarly view that Roman law was the model for the Code Noir of 1685, a new unabridged translation (by Palmer) of the Code Noir of 1724 with the original French text on facing pages. "A very useful addition to the growing literature on the law of slavery, this book is particularly important in helping understand the complexity of the Louisiana Code Noir and its impact on American slave law. Palmer's discussion of how the Code came to be written will surprise and educate those who read this book." --Paul Finkelman, John Hope Franklin Visiting Professor of American Legal History Duke University School of Law and President William McKinley Distinguished Professor of Law, Albany Law School

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