11. Roman Law and the European *Ius Commune*

The term European *ius commune* (in its historical sense) signifies that, from the fourteenth to the start of the sixteenth centuries, most of Europe shared a common legal tradition. Many local and regional variations on the law existed, but the terminology, concepts, and structure provided by elements of Roman law provided a common framework. This chapter traces how Justinian’s codification came to influence the modern world. The influence of Roman law in the modern world is immense: it constitutes the historical and conceptual basis of many legal systems throughout the world. Its impact has not been confined to those countries in Western Europe that historically formed part of the Roman Empire. Wherever Europeans went, they normally took their law (usually based to some extent on the principles of Roman law) with them.
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