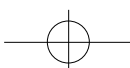
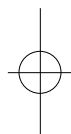
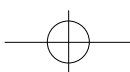
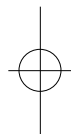
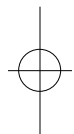
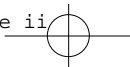


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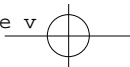
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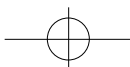
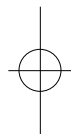
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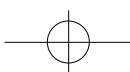
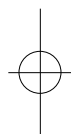
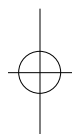
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To Whitney (15) and Carl (13)





Contents

Preface	xi
Map	xiii

PART I OVERVIEW, JUSTICE, ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

Chapter 1 Introduction	3
§1.01 Overview	3
§1.02 The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant	15
§1.03 Chapter Summary	17
Chapter 2 Ancient Egyptian Concepts of Justice & Jurisprudence	19
§2.01 Introduction	19
§2.02 <i>Ma'at</i>	20
§2.03 Justice & Jurisprudence	23
[A] Overview	23
[B] Tradition & Security	24
[C] Rhetoric	25
[D] Impartiality & Social Equality	26
§2.04 <i>Ma'at</i> , Justice, & Jurisprudence in <i>The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant</i>	28
[A] General	28
[B] Judges & Decisionmaking	29
[C] The Role of Rhetoric	30
[D] Man's Control of Nature & Nature Itself	31
[E] Gods	33
[F] Humans	34
[G] Boating	35
§2.05 Chapter Summary	36

viii · CONTENTS

Chapter 3 Legal Organization & Personnel	37
§3.01 Introduction	37
§3.02 Court Structure in the Old & Middle Kingdoms	38
[A] Old Kingdom (c. 2700–2200 B.C.)	38
[B] Middle Kingdom (c. 2050–1674 B.C.)	41
§3.03 Court Structure in the New Kingdom (c. 1552–1069 B.C.)	43
[A] Introduction	43
[B] Pharaoh & the Courts	44
[C] Deir El-Medina	47
[D] Special Courts	49
§3.04 The Office of Vizier	50
§3.05 Judges	52
§3.06 Other Court Personnel & Law Enforcement Officials	56
§3.07 Adjudication by Oracle	58
§3.08 Chapter Summary	61
 Chapter 4 Legal Procedure	 63
§4.01 Introduction	63
§4.02 Adherence to Precedent	66
§4.03 Outline of Litigation Procedure	68
§4.04 Pretrial & Trial Procedure	72
§4.05 Evidence	77
[A] Introduction	77
[B] Witnesses & Oaths	77
[C] Documents & Other Types of Evidence	82
§4.06 Procedure in the Special Courts	84
§4.07 Appeal	87
§4.08 Legal Procedure in The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant	89
§4.09 Enforcement	93
§4.10 Chapter Summary	94

PART II
SUBSTANTIVE LAW

Chapter 5 Property	99
§5.01 General	99
§5.02 Some Significant Principles of Property Law	109
§5.03 Sale & Lease of Land, Deeds, & Recordation of Real Property	112
[A] Sales	112
[B] Leases	114

§5.04 Taxation of Property	115
[A] Introduction	115
[B] Administration	118
[C] Tax Exemptions	121
§5.05 Chapter Summary	122
Chapter 6 The Family	125
§6.01 Introduction	125
§6.02 Marriage	126
§6.03 Divorce	132
§6.04 Roles of Parents and Children	134
§6.05 Chapter Summary	135
Chapter 7 Inheritance & Succession	137
§7.01 Intestate Succession	137
§7.02 Testate Succession	140
§7.03 The Concept of a Trustee for an Estate	147
§7.04 Inheritance of Office	148
§7.05 Chapter Summary	149
Chapter 8 Crime & Tort (Damage to Persons & Things)	151
§8.01 Introduction	151
§8.02 Punishment: An Overview	152
[A] General	152
[B] Incarceration	157
§8.03 The Landscape of Egyptian Crime & Tort	158
§8.04 Theft/Conversion	161
[A] General	161
[B] The Great Tomb Robberies	165
[C] International (The Report of Wenamun)	168
§8.05 Conspiracy/Treason & Homicide	169
§8.06 Sexual Conduct: Homosexuality; Prostitution; Rape; Adultery	172
§8.07 Judicial Misconduct	175
§8.08 Extortion by Officials & Tax Collectors	176
§8.09 Miscellaneous Wrongs	177
[A] Battery	177
[B] Trespass to Land	178
[C] Trespass to Chattels/Vandalism (Criminal Mischief)	178
[D] Defamation	179
§8.10 Crime & Tort in The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant	180
§8.11 Chapter Summary	186

x · CONTENTS

Chapter 9 Trade, Contracts, & Commercial Law	187
§9.01 Trade	187
§9.02 Business Organizations	190
§9.03 Contracts	192
§9.04 Foreign & International Aspects	201
§9.05 Commercial Law: Credit, Security, & Standard Media of Exchange	204
§9.06 Customs Tax & Tax on Municipal Office	207
§9.07 Chapter Summary	208
 Chapter 10 Personal Status	209
§10.01 General	209
§10.02 Women	210
§10.03 Middle Class	213
§10.04 Peasant-Serfs and Slaves	214
§10.05 Chapter Summary	216
 Bibliography	219
General Index	225
Index of Names	239

Preface

This book is intended to serve as a general introduction to law in ancient Egypt. Professional Egyptologists may consider much of this material too general, and they may find fault with my reliance on sources in English (rather than French and German). If so, I hope that its breadth, organization, and simplicity provide a clarity and scope that make up for its shortcomings. In this type of work one always strives to strike a delicate balance between exhaustive specificity on the one hand (to keep the scholars happy) and simplistic generality on the other (to keep the general readers happy). For good or ill that is the balance that I have tried to achieve. This may be as difficult a task as the deceased Egyptian had in pursuing a balance between his soul and the justice of *Ma'at*. Nevertheless, I decided that the game was worth the candle. Therefore, I have endeavored to present a work that is both sufficiently detailed and extensive to interest and assist scholars and also sufficiently general yet simple enough to educate and enlighten students and generalists. In short, I hope that Egyptologists, historians, legal historians, students, and educated layreaders find this book beneficial.

Several individuals have helped me in the preparation of this book. Dr. Janet Johnson of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and Dr. Richard Jasnow of Johns Hopkins University read an early draft and provided me with helpful comments and criticisms. My father, Bob VerSteeg, read the manuscript when it was near completion, and set me straight on many matters of prose style, grammar, punctuation, and the like. I did an appreciable amount of my work while on sabbatical at the University of London's Institute for Advanced Legal Studies in the Fall of 1999. There the staff and librarians were quite helpful. It was in London also that my son, Carl, encouraged me and kept my spirits afloat even when my laptop went to visit Osiris. To all these people (and many more I'm sure) I owe a great deal of thanks.

More than once the Board of Trustees of New England School of Law and Dean John O'Brien provided funding through Honorable James R. Lawton Summer Research Stipends. This book would not have been possible without those stipends, and I thank the Board and Dean O'Brien for

xii • PREFACE

their generous support. Portions of this book have previously appeared in journal articles (or parts thereof). Much of the material relating to *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* appeared in *Law in Ancient Egyptian Fiction*, 24 GEORGIA J. OF INT'L & COMPARATIVE LAW 27 (1994). Most of Chapter 3 is taken from *The Machinery of Law in Pharaonic Egypt: Organization, Courts, & Judges on the Ancient Nile*, CARDOZO J. OF INT'L & COMPARATIVE LAW (2001). And most of Chapter 4 is taken from *Legal Procedure and the Law of Evidence in Ancient Egypt*, 9 TULANE J. OF INT'L & COMPARATIVE LAW 233 (2001). I appreciate the editors of those journals allowing me to reuse material originally published by them for the present work.

For the sake of consistency and clarity I have standardized most of the spellings of ancient words and names (even in quoted material and titles of works). For example, I have preferred "Horemhab" to "Har-em-hab". Similarly, I have referred to Egyptian dynasties (even changing quoted material) with Arabic ordinal numerals (e.g., 4th Dynasty) rather than either Roman numerals (e.g., Dynasty IV) or spelled-out (e.g., Fourth Dynasty). For dates and chronology I generally followed those given by Nicholas Grimal in his *A HISTORY OF EGYPT*.