Further Thoughts on the Feast of W3gj
BACKGROUND

As part of her then ongoing decipherment and interpretation of the Old Kingdom papyri archives Paule Posener-Kriéger turned to the always interesting as well as instructive nature of the festivals celebrated in the various temples of the day. Basing herself first upon the material from the funerary temple of Neferirkare she later expanded her viewpoint owing to the discovery of Raneferef’s archive. As is so often the case, although the primary material has aided scholars in analyzing the data of this bygone era with respect to the calendrical organization of religious celebrations, the new information raised considerable difficulties. The necessity of separating the Old Kingdom material from later epochs, especially that of the New Kingdom, is a desideratum that most of us follow. Nevertheless, it remains the case that sources from this early epoch are temporally located within a radically different economic-cultic setup than, for example, the heyday of the Empire with its Amun cult. It also goes without saying that we must grant a different economic system in the Egyptian state of the third millennium BC than what existed later in the Eighteenth–Twentieth Dynasties.

However, the issue for us is not the economic substructure of the major mortuary and sun temples of the Third–Sixth Dynasties but rather the contemporary ‘reflections,’ so to speak, on the various feasts, those written by the accountants and thus representing a ‘workaday’ nature of the religious questions. It is for this reason that one can trust the material better than, for example, the well-known arrangements of festivities written in the contemporary tombs of the day. Hence, we can address the issue of dating these important celebrations within a context of a religious corporation, which fits them perfectly, and with an assured

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3 In general, see W. HELCK, Wirtschaftsgeschichte des alten Ägypten im. 3. und 2. Jahrtausend vor Chr., Leiden-Cologne 1975, pp. 3–133. Chapters 5–6 cover the temple ownership and income. There is now the recent overview of H. PAPAZIAN, Domain of Pharaoh: The Structure and Components of the Economy of Old Kingdom Egypt, Hildesheim 2012. I feel, however, that much detailed scholarship remains to be done with regard to the economy of the Old Kingdom temples. H. Goedicke’s analysis (Cult-temple and ‘State’ during the Old Kingdom in Egypt, [in:] E. Lipinski (Ed.), State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East I, Leuven 1979, pp. 113–131) is a valiant attempt to pierce the veil of Maya. But we can add the more detailed study of P. POSENER-KRIÉGER in the same symposium, ‘Les papyrus d’Abousir et l’économie des temples funéraires de l’Ancien Empire,’ on pages 133–151. The interested reader will find an excellent overview in B. KEMP, Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization, Abingdon 2006 [= Ancient Egypt], Ch. 7. We can now add H. VYMAZALOVÁ, The Economic Connections between the Royal Cult in the Pyramid temples and the Sun Temples in Abusir, [in:] N. & H. Strudwick (Eds), Old Kingdom, New Perspectives: Egyptian Art and Archaeology 2750–2150 BC, Oxford-Oakville 2011, pp. 295–303.

reliance owing to the bureaucratic outlook of those who entered the notations.\(^5\) In her first study of the matter, P. Posener-Kriéger noted the following feasts: Sokar, Hathor, divine emblems, and Min. No doubt the scanty material that is extant has limited the number of such events to a great degree. Nonetheless, the importance of Sokar and Min need not be stressed here; indeed, they are both present in the standard Old Kingdom private feast lists and were of considerable importance throughout Egyptian history.\(^6\) Yet it is unfortunate that the lengthy Niussere ‘calendar of feasts’ is so fragmentary that any attempt at reconstruction falls far from the mark.\(^7\) Furthermore, we can easily place the Sokar festival to IV 3ḥit 25–26 in the Civil Calendar. Hathor’s presence is more difficult, but it was most certainly \textit{not} celebrated for the inundation as argued.\(^8\)

Although it would extend the boundaries of this discussion quite far, the following remarks concerning the latter event are in order.\(^9\) In the Civil Calendar Hathor is the name of month three. Earlier, it was the name of lunar month IV, but with the one month décalage its position had altered at the time the Civil Calendar was introduced. The feast associated with the deity, and that connected to Mut, I can add, was an eponymous one, and normally occurred \textit{around} day one of month IV, if not set, civilly, on that day, and not \textit{around} day 2 of month III.\(^10\) Even the late \textit{Tanis Geographical Papyrus} reflects the correct arrangement.\(^11\) With regard to the Sokar festival, we can add little since U. Luft’s definitive study of the religious events covered in the Illahun and Kahun papyri.\(^12\)

Subsequent to her definitive publication concerning the archive of Neferirkare P. Posener-Kriéger then turned to the then newly discovered papyri fragments from the mortuary temple of Raneferef as well as reviewing and expanding her considerations with regard to

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\(^5\) Cf. KEMP, Ancient Egypt (Ch. 4: ‘The bureaucratic mind’), pp. 163–192.

\(^6\) In general, see R. KRAUSS, Sothis- und Mondaten: Studien zur astronomischen und technischen Chronologie Altägyptens, \textit{HÄB} 20, Hildesheim 1985 [= Sothis- und Mondaten], pass., but almost every page deals with Egyptian feasts; and U. LUFT, Die chronologische Fixierung des ägyptischen Mittleren Reiches nach dem Tempelarchiv von Illahun, Vienna 1992 [= Die chronologische Fixierung].

\(^7\) The reader should be aware that W. HELCK’s attempt (Die ‘Weihinschrift’ aus dem Taltempel des Sonnengebäudes des Königs Neuserre bei Abu Gurob, \textit{SAK} 5, 1977, pp. 47–77), is in many cases totally fanciful. I observed that he admitted to a ‘working hypothesis’ on page 50 concerning the ‘Day of the Periplus of Re in Ṣṣp- jb- ṛˁ,’ SH. EL-SABBAN, Temple Festival Calendars, Liverpool 2000, pp. 1–8, is not an exacting analysis. In any case, he failed to come to grips with the lunar-dated feasts. But he, as W. Helck earlier observed, saw that there were two separate texts, cf. N. STRUDWICK, Texts from the Pyramid Age, Atlanta 2005, pp. 86–91.

\(^8\) P. POSENER-KRIÉGER, Les archives de Neferirkarê, pp. 557–558 and n. 4 in particular.

\(^9\) The \textit{argumentum} presented here follows upon which I have presented in a developed argument concerned with the origin and the dating of the Civil Calendar in: The Beginning of the Civil Calendar, [in:] M. Bárta, J. Krejci, F. Coppens (Eds), Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2010/2, Prague 2012, pp. 723–735, and Time and the Egyptians: Feasts and Fights [= ‘Time and the Egyptians], \textit{in press}, Ch. I (‘Calendarics; An Introduction’), II (‘Richard Parker and Calendars’), and III (‘The Results of the Civil Calendar’).

\(^10\) W.M.F. PETRIE, Two Hieroglyphic Papyri from Tanis, London 1889, Pl. XII. In general, see S. SCHOTT, Altägyptische Festdaten, Mainz a/Rhein 1950, p. 89.


\(^12\) Die chronologische Fixierung, pp. 179–181. The earlier lengthy presentation of K.A. KITCHEN and G.A. GABALLA (The Festival of Sokar, \textit{Or} 38, 1969, pp. 1–67) is also recommended.
Neferirkare’s ‘bundle’. In 1970 came the first evidence of this preoccupation; namely her worthwhile study concerned with the event of ‘the night of Re.’ As this religious occurrence will be covered by M. Verner at a later date, I merely signal it here and note that since the night is referred to it must indicate a rebirth in the morning. Could this not indicate every day rather than once per year? Indeed, a recent study of Ph. Derchain is appropriate to cite in this context. On IV $smw$ was celebrated the premature preparations for the coming New Year’s Day, and this event was associated with the deity Mut who is connected with the ‘return of the déesse lointaine’. This deity often functionally overlaps with Sechmet and Hathor in this context. Do we therefore have the final keystone that will enable us to set the ‘Night of Re’ on the penultimate day of the outgoing year? Or is the ‘night of Re’ in Neferirkare’s papyri to be set in the night of IV $smw$ 30?

Still, it had to have been the intricate argumentation presented in the work concerned with the $w\text{rgj}$ festival that P. Posener-Kriéger excelled herself. Therein, was, for the first time, amply independent information concerning an event that did not occur, as many would argue, on its expected civil date of I $\text{Jh}$ 18. This troubled her a great deal, especially as the evidence concerned with $w\text{rgj}$ and dated to the Old Kingdom, save the private feast lists, was nil. Her conclusions once more became intertwined to the hypothetical ‘second lunar calendar’ but was particularly valid in that she noted the combination of festivals ‘Thoth-$w\text{rgj}$’ in the Raneferef papyri. In addition, she did not fail to remark on the triad:

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13 She herself preferred this reading of the king’s name. It has become standard.

14 P. POSENER-KRIÉGER, ‘La nuit de Re’, RdE 22, 1970, pp. 131–137. The problem with this early analysis is that there is a confusion with the assumed ‘second lunar calendar,’ as hypothesized by R.A. Parker in his Calendars, pp. 53–54. But there is no evidence for any new intercalary month that would ‘control’ this second moon-based calendar. Furthermore, there is nothing to indicate that it – if it existed – was even called ‘Thoth.’ Finally, who, among modern scholars, uses this assumption to prove, rather than to speculative and/or affirm? No one. I discarded the second lunar calendar in: Month Representations, CdE 70, 1995, pp. 110–122. I had an even a stronger feeling in ‘Time and the Egyptians’. There were also problems associated with her discussion on ‘Jour de l’An’ on page 137. See now H. FISCHER, Varia Nova, Egyptian Studies III, New York 1996, pp. 191, 230–231. In her conclusion P. Posener-Kriéger opted for the ‘night of Re’, i.e. ultimate night of the year – I re-cover the information in Chapter III of ‘Time and the Egyptians’ (‘The Results of the Egyptian Calendar’), see supra, n. 9.


16 POSENER-KRIÉGER, Les archives du temple funéraire II, p. 553 with her earlier study, ‘La nuit de Re’. On page 336 of the latter one will find her thoughts concerning this event and the cases of in the Niuserre ‘festival calendars’; cf. HELCK, SAK 5, 1977, p. 50.

17 Many years ago U. Luft reminded me of the reading $w\text{rgj}$. This was earlier employed by R. Krauss (Sothis- and Monddaten, in particular pp. 86–94) and later by U. Luft himself (Die chronologische Fixierung, in particular pp. 150–152). This reading I have followed. Most do not. Yet the Middle Kingdom evidence is conclusive.

18 P. POSENER-KRIÉGER, Remarques préliminaires sur les nouveaux papyrus d’Abousir, [in:] Ägypten: Dauer und Wandel, Symposium anlässlich des 75-jährigen Bestehens der Deutschen Archäologischen Institute Kairo am 10. und 11. Oktober 1982, Mainz a/Rhein 1985 (= Remarques préliminaires), pp. 35–43. The importance of the order, the main thrust of this discussion, shall be covered later.

19 Concerning the fixed, civil speaking, feast of Thoth, always known from I $\text{Jh}$ 19, see A. SPALINGER, Thoth and the Calendars, [in:] A. Spalinger (Ed.), Revolutions in Time: Studies in Ancient Egyptian Calendrics, San Antonio 1994 (= Revolutions), pp. 45–60; for the second: In., A Chronological Analysis of the Feast of $\text{Thj}$, SAK 20, 1993, pp. 289–303, set permanently in the Civil Calendar on I $\text{Jh}$ 20.
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w3gj-Thoth-thj as encompassing the end of the second decade of the first Egyptian civil year.20 But it is significant that the final event, one of intoxication, licentiousness and so forth, was apparently never celebrated at Renefere’s funerary temple.21 But we should not be surprised, most certainly thj was as public as it was egregious; a true ‘social inversion’. But of crucial importance was her realization the feast of wigj was apparently not in its ‘normal’ or expected position, one that occurred, civilly speaking, one day before the celebration to the Egyptian moon god Thoth.

It was U. Luft who improved greatly upon this difficulty. In a short chapter he immediately saw the lunar connection to these ‘odd’ w3gj dates, and used that basis for his attempt to provide absolute dates for Egyptian chronology.22 All hinged upon the reason why the non-civil w3gj took place. This U. Luft explained, and it seemed clear to him that this religious event was not at all parallel, at least in its systematic chronological setting, to the eponymous feasts that were transferred from the original lunar to the Civil Calendar in Egypt. Hence, we cannot make an exact parallel between the moveable wAgj and lunar-determined celebrations placed within a civil setting such as Mut or the original Choiak festival. This second group, often called ‘eponymous’, can be summarized as follows. The following two subsections are taken from a forthcoming study on the matter.23

1) Wp rnt = name of civil month XII, wp rnt = day one of the first civil month,
2) k3-hr-k3 is the name of civil month IV, but the k3-hr-k3 festival could take place in civil month V,
3) The celebration of rnwtt occurred in civil month IX, yet it is the name of civil month VIII.

These anomalies – there are more – can be explained owing to the transference of the original lunar month names to the Civil Calendar. Here are some cases in point:

1) The feast of wp rnt took place in lunar month I and not in lunar month XII. With the transference of month names Wp rnt was then applied to civil month XII.
2) The feast of k3-hr-k3 took place in lunar month V, but with the transference of month names K3-hr-k3 was then applied to civil month IV.
3) The festival of Ernouthis, or rnwtt, still occurred in civil month IX in historical times; but the name of civil month VIII was Pharmuthi, obviously derived from rnwtt, the important religious event.
4) The civil month Hathor, III, has a name obviously derived from the eponymous feast hwt-Hr which took place in the fourth civil month.
5) The feast of rkh wr is once located on day one of civil month VII, but the name of civil month VI was Rkh wr.

20 Posener-Kröger, Remarques préliminaires, p. 40.
21 I followed upon my first study on the thj feast in ‘Egyptian and Greek Timeframes: the Date of the Kronia Festival’, [in:] M. Bárt, H. Kümmer (Eds), Diachronic Trends in Ancient Egyptian History: Studies dedicated to the memory of Eva Pardey, Prague 2013, pp. 109–118.
22 Luft, The Date of the W3gj Feast, [in:] Spalinger (Ed.), Revolutions, pp. 39–43.
23 See, e.g. my Time and the Egyptians, passim.
But let me now return to the major point concerning the date of this movable $w\overline{3}gj$. U. Luft’s contention did not go unchallenged. Two ripostes may be mentioned here, the first of which appears to me to have the better argument. Soon after U. Luft published his result, R. Krauss disagreed, setting the date to a lunar ‘day 17’ instead of one day later.24 The presentation is intricate, but is the result correct? As with all seekers after absolute chronology, one would like to see the calculations, know what precise tables were used and, perhaps of greatest importance, what probabilistic factors must be introduced into the evaluation of the arithmetical formulae employed to determine these problems of Celestial Mechanics. The latter is a subfield of practical or applied physics and, dare I say, of engineering? R. Krauss’s conclusion seems to belie the data of the civil $w\overline{3}gj$. After all, was it not set on a ‘day 18’? And we should expect the lunar one, the determination of which surely took place many years before the introduction of the Civil Calendar, to have been carried over to its newer companion by adhering to the same day, that is the eighteenth? Yet, as U. Luft indicated and I followed him, in the detailed and Old Kingdom feast lists $w\overline{3}gj$ not merely followed Thoth, but it did so by two places: $wp\ \overline{r}npt$, Thoth, $tpj\ \overline{r}npt$, and finally $w\overline{3}gj$. Then came the festival of Sokar. For U. Luft, and I felt at that moment no reason to disagree,25 the difficult term $tpj\ \overline{r}npt$ originally signaled the heliacal rising of Sothis. In this context alone $tpj\ \overline{r}npt$ could not indicate the first day of the fifth civil month because the Sokar festival was located after $tpj\ \overline{r}npt$. The latter’s subsequent association with $I\ \overline{p}rt\ 1$ need not concern us here.26

CONTROL FACTORS IN ASSESSING DATA

The necessity of modern scientific training in conjunction with a rigorous statistical analysis in order to control the validity of the results dependent upon statistics is a desideratum that all scientists employ. The recent studies of R. Gautschy go far in this direction without, however, providing any definitive proof with regard to the absolute chronology of the Middle Kingdom.27

24 R. Krauss, Wenn und unab: das $w\overline{3}g$-Fest und die Chronologie des Alten Reiches, GM 162, 1998, pp. 53–63.


26 One detailed analysis of $tpj\ \overline{r}npt$ with ‘special writings’ discussed as well, was in: Calendars: Real and Ideal, [in:] B. Bryan, D. Lorton (Eds), Essays in Egyptology in Honor of Hans Goedicke, San Antonio 1994, pp. 297–308. This was an attempt to improve on Parker, Calendars, pp. 61–62. For $tpj\ \overline{r}npt$ within Niuserre’s calendar, note Helck, SAK 5, 1977, p. 60 with Pl. II, column 4: very tentative, I must say. But for the equation, in historically verifiable texts, of $tpj\ \overline{r}npt = I\ \overline{p}rt\ 1$, see my remarks in Spalinger, The Date of Amunhotep II’s Accession, SAK 40, 2011, pp. 391–392. They cover the previous work of S. Voß, Ch. Leitz, myself, and others.

A perhaps simple example of this need may be exemplified by the use of a theodolite in former times. Before GPS instruments became available, a surveyor would prefer taking into the field an optical theodolite which had a measurement accuracy of 1″ (second) of arc. Its use would require nothing more than making a measurement of a direction three times in the forward direction and three times in the reverse direction of the telescope’s vertical motion in order to eliminate the horizontal screw backlash and using the standard statistical procedure to compute the average reading with its standard deviation as the error limit. In that manner, one could express the answers to within less than 1″ of arc.

A less precise theodolite might, for example, only read angles to an accuracy of 1’ (minute) of arc, not 1″ (second). Nevertheless, with such an instrument it is still possible to obtain measurements that are accurate to within a few seconds of arc, rather than a minute. This is achieved simply by making more observations or measurements per direction than the standard 3. This was well known in the surveying community, a problem which does not arise today, of course. R. Wells, for example, having only a 1’ arc theodolite on loan from the Swiss Institute, made 18 measurements at Amarna per direction (including backlash compensation measurements) — i.e. three times as many as a 1″ theodolite would require. The standard statistical averaging of that many observations gave a result accurate to better than 0.1’ of arc, or better than 6” when carried to the appropriate number of decimal places.

I should briefly explain the meaning and effect of the term ‘backlash’, which is introduced by the clearance needed for mating gears to have in order for the gears to be able to rotate. This slight clearance means that the reading hairline in the measurement dial does not begin to move immediately when the telescope itself starts to rotate. In order to compensate for backlash in the horizontal screw about which the theodolite telescope rotated or moved in the vertical direction, one had to make a direct measurement in the forward direction, i.e. with the azimuthal circle at 0 degree, or whatever the azimuth reading happened to be. And then one had to make the measurement over again in the reverse direction, i.e. with the azimuthal circle at 180 degrees to the previous azimuth reading whatever it was. This latter step forces the theodolite telescope to be moved around the horizontal screw in the opposite direction to the first measurement. This procedure nullifies the backlash in the horizontal screw. In addition, the telescope is never aligned onto the target directly, but instead is moved passed the target and then reversed back onto the target before a reading is taken. The same applies to the azimuthal gear train.

In R. Wells’s case at Amarna in order to achieve high accuracy he actually made 18 measurements per direction as already noted. This is not 9 in the forward followed by 9 in the reverse; but 1 in each of the forward and reverse, and then the second set repeating that. That is in the 18 measurements, the forward and reverse directions are alternated per

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28 I must thank Dr. Ronald Wells for the detailed information supplied. It is contained in this study in order to elucidate the severe need for all chronographers, celestial or book-ridden, to employ checks.
one set of measurements before proceeding to the next until all 18 sets were obtained. Recalling the need for also overshooting the target and then backtracking to it in the reverse direction before even a reading is made, the reader can now perceive the necessity of statistical control over calculating and measuring instruments.\(^30\)

This example of field practical calculations is proffered as an example in which the results, relying upon mathematical calculations, are dependent upon some type of control, in this case with operations encompassing physical constraints. One equally would like to know what limitations are present in modern day lunar-based calculations.

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE THOTH-\(w^2GJ\) COMBINATION**

If we turn to L. Depuydt’s attempt to revise even more the U. Luft’s analysis, we come up against a different conundrum.\(^31\) His analysis had the advantage that a proposal for the moveable \(w^2GJ\) was now placed either on III \(\text{\texttt{ht}}\) 28 or III \(\text{prt}\) 28. Krauss’ rejoinder is conclusive.\(^32\) Since his key words have been quoted in another context, I feel free to write them down here: *Thus is seems impossible to deduce a chronological result without circular reasoning.*\(^33\) One is automatically reminded of R. Wells’ study of statistics concerning crescent visibility.\(^34\) (As an aside, no one should use H.H. Goldstein’s ‘New and Full Moons: 1001 B.C. to A.D. 1651’, as they are useless for Egyptian computations).\(^35\) *Quo vadis?*

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\(^{30}\) When measuring stars, since the earth is rotating, then one needs to make measurements rapidly but precisely, and that includes reading a time of measurement accurate to the nearest second. Of course, for an evaluation of Sirius, an aneroid barometer is needed to make pressure measurements at the time of observation. This is *de rigueur* in order to compute the atmospheric refraction. I am afraid that mere naked eye sighting is not sufficient for chronological analysis.

\(^{31}\) L. **DEPUYDT**, Sothis Chronology and the Old Kingdom, *JARCE* 37, 2000, pp. 81–90.


\(^{35}\) H.H. **GOLDSTEIN**, *New and Full Moons: 1001 B.C. to A.D. 1651*, Philadelphia 1973. The basic reason is that one needs precise data concerning immediate crescent invisibility and first crescent visibility. *Ps\(\text{\texttt{ntjw}}\)*, after all, is a *non event*. The P.V. Neugebauer tables, hard to use, are in need of a new edition.
We can progress, nonetheless, by observing the final publication of the Raneferef archive and the festivals recorded in the present collection.\(^{36}\) There is an interesting but unfortunately broken reference to expected amounts of a delivery ‘after the festival of \(\text{w3gj}\).’\(^{37}\) Note that there is no indication of an immediate Thoth celebration. I am unable to ascertain the intimate connection between the celebration of Thoth and \(\text{w3gj}\); however, in this archive the former \textit{always} precedes the latter. The deliveries as well as the assigning of phylae officials are exact on this matter. Cloth, for example, could be distributed among the phylae and the occasions were these two feasts.\(^{38}\)

In her conclusion to the study of \(\text{w3gj}\) at Raneferef’s funerary monument, H. Vymazalová returned to P. Posener-Kriéger’s speculations.\(^{39}\) I concur with her that fragment E 11, misread by L. Depuydt, definitely contained a month name that is now lost and no restoration is possible; all we can now see is III […] 28.\(^ {40}\) But at this point one also reenters the arid territory proposing a second lunar calendar, originally hypothesized by R.A. Parker. That is, a calendar in which an intercalary month existed. Would that there were evidence for its existence forthcoming! But there is none. In fact, how did it operate? Parker’s assumptions need not have held. After all, did not the Romans use one lunar based system in Republican times that had \textit{no} established system of solar-lunar regulation except an ad hoc one that had to be implemented when the twelve lunar months grew too short of the ‘solar year’. That is to say, they had no regular method of stabilizing the lunar-solar epact. Why assume Parker’s method? Even worse to contemplate is the following query: how did the original calendar of Egypt operate? It was lunar, but we do not know if there was or was not an intercalary month.

Thoth’s connection to \(\text{w3gj}\) needed careful appreciation of U. Luft’s seminal chapter on the subject, one in which, although aiming at absolute chronology, provided much more for the ever-interested reader. Namely, he stressed the association of \(\text{w3gj}\) within the entire civil year and its relationship to Sothis.\(^{41}\) Perhaps these things have been too frequently ignored by later researchers. In my opinion they should not have been.

But of prime importance to the aim of this study is the simple, all too frequent if not boring, Old Kingdom repetition of ‘Thoth-\(\text{w3gj}\).’ What can we make of this? Simply put, this association in Raneferef’s archive is that recorded in the mastabas of the Old Kingdom. There, we have Thoth \textit{always} following, not immediately, but \textit{after} the intervention of \(\text{tpj rnu}\), by \(\text{w3gj}\). This arrangement disappears after the Old Kingdom, as the published reports of the El Hawawish tombs indicate this in a perfect fashion. Subsequently, say after the

\(^{36}\) P. \textsc{Posener-Kriéger}, M. \textsc{Verner}, H. \textsc{Vymazalová}, The Pyramid Complex of Raneferef: The Papyrus Archive, Prague 2006.

\(^{37}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 220.

\(^{38}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 368.

\(^{39}\) \textsc{Vymazalová}, Some remarks, pp. 142–143.

\(^{40}\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 141–142. The reinterpretation of L. Depuydt was thus proven wrong. This is Document IV (for the \(\text{w3gj}\) feast) of P. Posener-Kriéger.

\(^{41}\) U. Luft clearly recognized as something more than I 3\(\text{ht}\) 1; namely, the heliacal rising of Sothis. If so, then the order \(\text{wp rnu}-\text{Thoth-tpj rnu-w3gj}\) in those private feast lists makes sense, because \(\text{prt Spdt}\), at that time, can be located after I 3\(\text{ht}\) 18 and before IV 3\(\text{ht}\) 26, the date of the Sokar festival, number five in those lists.
Sixth Dynasty, although the ‘rule’ is not a one hundred per cent one, \( w^3\text{gj} \) precedes Thoth, as it should if the arrangement in the Civil Calendar be followed.\(^\text{42}\) Given this data – and it is large – a first level conclusion seems in order. Namely, there is nothing peculiar about the evidence from the Raneferef archive. Quite to the contrary, it fits perfectly within the culture of the day and is only at odds with festival arrangements of a later day. At \textit{that} time, say the Twelfth Dynasty, the Civil Calendar was even more dominant than earlier. Eventually, I believe that \( w^3\text{gj} \) was not allowed to deviate from I \textit{\textit{3ht}} 18, except perhaps in some mythological-religious tractate, and Thoth immediately followed it.

There is a very simple counter argument that can be maintained concerning the Thoth-\( w^3\text{gj} \) combination in the Old Kingdom. Was it based on importance? Do the entries in Raneferef’s papyri reflect the overriding significance of the Thoth celebration? This position can also explain the Old Kingdom private feast lists, but only to some degree, because then we would have to maintain that a religious event, such as ‘the first of the year’, was of lesser significance than Thoth. I find it very hard to agree with this. Furthermore, within the working habitus of ‘the bureaucratic mind’, entries, deliveries or whatever, would be expected to follow a good accounting mentality wherein precise temporal factors (earlier, simultaneously, later) must be indicated in some way. The archive’s placement of Thoth before \( w^3\text{gj} \) surely ought to indicate that the first preceded, in time, the second.

Because the possibility of I \textit{prt} 1 = \textit{tpj \textit{rnpt}} can be eliminated within the context of these specifically geared accounting texts or the chronological arrangement of the Old Kingdom feast lists, I feel it incumbent to provide yet a third ‘solution’ to the conundrum of identification. Even though this ‘ideal case’ is not to be thrown out with the bathwater like the proverbial baby, we have already seen how U. Luft’s calculation led him to set \( w^3\text{gj} \) close to, but separate from, the heliacal rising of Sothis, and within, I must stress, a specific temporal framework. (This conclusion could not work at other times, for example.) But could the term \textit{tpj \textit{rnpt}} indicate the original, primordial one might say, commencement of the \textit{lunar} year? If accepted, then U. Luft’s argument would still hold. Albeit partially, as he placed the feast of \( w^3\text{gj} \) on an original lunar day eighteen following upon the heliacal rising of Sothis. Whatever choice is made it is clear from the Raneferef papyri as well as the Old Kingdom private feast lists that \( w^3\text{gj} \) – at that time – followed the Thoth celebration. Subsequently, the private feast arrangements placed \( w^3\text{gj} \) before Thoth, as we would expect from the \textit{official} dates of I \textit{\textit{3ht}} 18 and 19 respectively. But the moveable \( w^3\text{gj} \) remained separate in operation from the eponymous feasts.

\(^{42}\) Spalinger, Private Feast Lists, Ch. VI.