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Poets and Primates: Wang Yanshou's Poem on the Macaque

The central poem is the poem of the whole, …
And in bright excellence adorned, crested
With every prodigal, familiar fire,
And unfamiliar escapades: whirroos
And scintillant sizzlings such as children like,
Vested in the serious folds of majesty,
Moving around and behind, a following,
A source of trumpeting seraphs in the eye,
A source of pleasant outbursts on the ear.

Wallace Stevens, "A Primitive Like an Orb," VII-IX

In *The Temple and Other Poems*, Arthur Waley included translations of all three of Wang Yanshou's 王延壽 extant *fu* 賦, noting that "all three are in a style markedly individual and vivid."[1] I share Waley's appreciation for the Later Han poet, son of the *Chuci* 楚辭 (*Chu Verse*) compiler Wang Yi 王逸 (d.165 AD?) and a native of the ancient land of Chu, who is reported to have drowned in his early twenties (in the early 160s) – predeceasing his father in a death that in his own day must have raised cultural memories of the first drowned Chu poet, Qu Yuan 屈原.[2] Waley's rendition of Wang Yanshou's poem about a nightmare titled "Meng fu" 夢賦 ("Dream *fu*") led me to study Wang Yanshou's poetic craft more closely. My hypothesis that Wang Yanshou "meant the poem to be read as a representation of the very dream he suffered" while at the same time "a poem ostensibly about a nightmare doubled

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[1] Arthur Waley, *The Temple and Other Poems* (New York: Knopf, 1923), p. 52.

[2] Kominami Ichirō 小南一郎, "Ō I *Soji shōku* o megutte: Kandai shōku no gaku no ichi sokumen" 王逸楚辭章句をめぐつて漢代章句の學の一側面, *THGH* 63 (1991), p. 111, wonders about the factuality of statements regarding Wang Yanshou's drowning, noting the almost too perfect coincidence that Wang Yi's son should die in the manner of the legendary Qu Yuan. For a sketch of Wang Yanshou's life based on extant sources, see Donald Harper, "Wang Yen-shou's Nightmare Poem," *HJAS* 47 (1987), p. 241, n. 4; and David R. Knechtges, trans., *Wen xuan or Selections of Refined Literature* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1982–) 2, p. 364.

as the nightmare-dispelling incantation" formed the basis for an examination of magico-religious elements in the Han *fu*.[3]

Wang Yanshou's "Wangsun fu" 王孫賦 ("Princeling Macaque *fu*") is usually read as a jocular portrait of a macaque. There were several words for the macaque (*Macaca* spp.) in Han times, commonly called *mihou* 獼猴;[4] but "Wangsun fu" constitutes the first occurrence of *wangsun* – literally "king's grandson" or "king's descendant" – to denote the macaque. In Han speech *wangsun* was also used as a polite epithet for a gentleman, hence my rendering "princeling macaque" in the poem's title.[5] I reserve further comment on the denotation "macaque" for later, but note now that *wangsun* was probably one of the words for macaque in the Chu cultural sphere. Wang Yanshou purposely exploited the coincidence of the honorific *wangsun* with the Chu animal name *wangsun* to fashion a poem that speaks of many things. Although jocular, the poem is composed in praise of the macaque/princeling. This article argues that the poet's use of *wangsun* is self-referential: Wang Yanshou is also the *wangsun* of the poem; that is, the portrait of a macaque is simultaneously the portrait of a poet, and the language used to capture the macaque's monkeyshines may also be read as a statement about poetry.

I defend my interpretation, following the translation of "Wangsun fu." The reading I reconstruct for the poem has been either not noticed or ignored in later sources that refer to it. For example, Zhang Qiao 章樵 (fl. 1208), editor of *Guwen yuan* 古文苑 (*Garden of Old Literature*), which I use as the base text of "Wangsun fu," states that the poem "uses the category of the macaque as an analogy for the facile cunning and malleability of the petty man, who, once he reveals his greedy heart, ends up being controlled by other men."[6] Perhaps in Tang times the typical reader or hearer perceived the message of the poem similarly. Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 (773–819) "Zeng wangsun wen" 憎王孫文 ("Essay Disparaging the Macaque") portrays the macaque as the "bad monkey" in contrast to the gibbon (*yuan* 猿) as the "good monkey" (with obvious

[3] Harper, "Wang Yen-shou's Nightmare Poem," pp. 253–54.

[4] Guo Fu 郭郛 et al., *Zhongguo gudai dongwu xueshi* 中國古代動物學史 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1999), p. 103, lists names for the macaque (*Macaca* spp.) based on the early lexicon *Erya* 爾雅. See also, R. H. van Gulik, *The Gibbon in China: An Essay in Chinese Animal Lore* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), pp. 35–37.

[5] The most famous Han use of *wangsun* "princeling" is in the *Chuci* poem "Zhao yinshi" 招隱士, discussed below. For other Han citations, see Morohashi Tetsuji 諸橋轍次, *Dai Kan-Wa jiten* 大漢和辭典 (Tokyo: Taishūkan, 1957–60; hereafter, *DKWJ*) 7, no. 20823.720, definition 1.

[6] Zhang Qiao, ed., *Guwen yuan* (21 *j.*), in Qian Xizuo 錢熙祚 (1801–1844), comp., *Shoushan ge congshu* 守山閣叢書 (rpt. of woodblock edn., pref. dated 1841; Shanghai: Bogu zhai, 1922) 6, p. 8b.

human analogues).[7] A tendency to distinguish between the gibbon and the macaque already existed in Han times; the gibbon was more aloof and mystical in its solitary lifestyle whereas the macaque was known to create a nuisance. But the dichotomy between the virtuous gibbon and the vile macaque is a post-Han literary trope that does not occur in Han period literature.[8] While fickleness and vulgarity were defining characteristics, the Han image of the macaque included its place in popular entertainments. In my reading of "Wangsun fu," the macaque and poet share an identity as entertainers.

In addition to proposing a hypothetical "original" reading, "Wangsun fu" has an intrinsic value as the composition of a Han poet whose three surviving *fu* each testify to Wang Yanshou's mastery of the poetics of his day and to his extraordinary exploitation of language and script. I know of no other Han *fu* that approaches "Wangsun fu" for its detailed description of a single floral or faunal subject, free of stock allusions and stereotypes. Wang Yanshou vividly conjures up the macaque itself – its facial expressions, its movements, and its moods.[9] The regularity of the verse modulates the antic portrayal of the subject: every line but the last has six graphs – hence six syllables – and the fourth graph is always a grammatical function-word (leading Waley to speak of the poem's "five beat lines").[10] Bisyllabic compounds abound on either side of the caesura formed by the function-word, often occupying four of the six syllables.[11] More than half of the bisyllables are attested only in "Wangsun fu," many of them written with graphs that occur

7 Gulik, *Gibbon*, p. 58, translates "Zeng wangsun wen" (p. 109 provides the Chinese text).

8 Gulik, *Gibbon*, pp. 37–41, surveys references to the gibbon and macaque in Zhou, Qin, and Han sources, which portray the primates differently but do not disparage the macaque. Wu Hung, "The Earliest Pictorial Representations of Ape Tales: An Interdisciplinary Study of Early Chinese Narrative Art and Literature," *TP* 73 (1987), pp. 98–103, examines evidence of demonic associations with gibbons and monkeys in Han tomb decor, including exorcistic scenes of "monkeys or apes being attacked by either humans or dogs" (p. 101). This aspect of the gibbon and macaque is best treated as a separate motif in ancient Chinese animal lore.

9 In the medieval period, poetry that treated of individual objects was designated "verse on things" (*yongwu* 詠物); see David R. Knechtges, "Culling the Weeds and Selecting Prime Blossoms: The Anthology in Early Medieval China," in Scott Pearce et al., eds, *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200–600* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), pp. 219–21. Some Han *fu*, especially shorter compositions of which "Wangsun fu" is an example, are often classified as *yongwu*.

10 Waley, *The Temple*, p. 16. The last line of "Wangsun fu" (couplet 32, second line) has seven graphs/syllables. Rather than treat the last line as an exception to the regular prosodic structure of the poem, I propose to identify the nominalizing word *zhe* 者 in *guanzhe* 觀者 "onlookers" as an unstressed syllable that does not add a beat to the line; hence the line is not irregular. See George A. Kennedy, "Metrical 'Irregularity' in the *Shih ching*," in Tien-yi Li, ed., *Selected Works of George A. Kennedy* (New Haven: Far East Publications Yale University, 1964), pp. 10–26, for analysis of the same phenomenon in the *Shijing* 詩經.

11 "Bisyllabic compound" and "bisyllable" are used in this article to designate a word for-

nowhere else. I suspect that the medieval Chinese reader of the poem was already hard-pressed to catch the visual and aural effects of graphs, syllables, and words. My translation is at best a skeletal likeness of the original.[12]

TRANSLATION OF THE "PRINCELING MACAQUE *FU*"

1 原天地之造化	Sourcing the creative transformation in heaven and earth,
實神偉以屈奇	Fleshing out the divine nonesuch with[13] curious marvels,
2 道玄微以密妙	Tracing the tenebrous[14] tenuity in occult miracles,
信無物而不爲	Trusting in nothingness and non-action –

mation that is increasingly labeled "binome" or "descriptive binome" in studies of Han *fu*. As a combination of two graphs/syllables, each "bisyllable" or "binome" expresses a sense that is best interpreted within the context of the work in which it occurs, and with awareness of the practices of the poet. Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 2, pp. 2–13, gives a useful overview of the word formation and the strategies for translation. I acknowledge the imprecision in my choice of terms, which could apply to any formation consisting of two graphs/syllables. However, I prefer to avoid "binome," which in my judgment gives the freely formed bisyllables in Han *fu* the appearance of being fixed while drawing attention away from a primary characteristic: their sound.

12 The translation is based on the text in Zhang Qiao's *Guwen yuan* 6, pp. 8b–10a; the *Shoushan ge congshu* edition includes a final chapter of collation notes by Qian Xizuo. The only other complete text of the *fu* is in Xu Jian 徐堅 (659–729) et al., comps., *Chuxue ji* 初學記 (Taibei: Dingwen, 1972) 29, pp. 721–22. There are excerpts in Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557–641) et al., comps., *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985) 95, p. 1653; and Li Fang 李昉 (925–996) et al., comps., *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (rpt. of Song woodblock edn.; Beijing: Zhonghua, 1960) 910, pp. 4b–5a. Zhang Qiao's prefatory note states that in collating the text he uses sound glosses for some words from the *Chuxue ji* edition, but that the *Chuxue ji* does not include explanatory commentary. I judge the *Guwen yuan* edition to be the best representation of "Wangsun fu." In the transcription of the Chinese text that accompanies the translation, I occasionally adopt an alternate reading as identified by Zhang Qiao in his commentary (the emendations are noted at the appropriate place in the translation; I generally do not cite variant readings in other editions of "Wangsun fu"). Zhang Qiao's commentary identifies the general sense of many of the bisyllabic compounds, and is often the basis for my translation. There is also a 9-*j*. edition of the *Guwen yuan* bearing the name of Han Yuanji 韓元吉 as compiler (pref. dated 1179). I use the edition in Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 (1753–1818), comp., *Dainan ge congshu* 岱南閣叢書 (rpt. of 1785–1831 woodblock edn.; Shanghai: Bogu zhai, 1924). I have numbered the couplets (1–32) for ease of reference. The rhyme scheme is presented in the appendix.

13 The *Chuxue ji* edition has *zhi* 之 in place of the *yi* 以 in the *Guwen yuan*, which would give the translation "fleshing out the curious marvels of the divine nonesuch." Either reading is acceptable.

14 *Shoushan ge congshu* replaces *xuan* 玄 "tenebrous" with *yuan* 元 in observance of the Qing taboo on use of *xuan* 玄, which formed part of the personal name of the ruler Kangxi 康熙 (r. 1662–1722).

3	有王孫之狹獸	There is the princeling macaque, an artful[15] creature,
	形陋觀而醜儀	With a form coarse in appearance and foul manners.
4	顏狀類乎老公	His face is like an old gaffer,
	軀軆似乎小兒	His body resembles a child.
5	眼睚睅以眈䘏	Eyes bob and jiggle,[16]
	視䁝睫以映睦	And gaze – blinking furiously[17] – from sunken sockets.[18]
6	突高匡而曲頞	Eye-rims jut high,[19] nose-bridge curves in;
	矘瞁歷而隳離	A startled glance,[20] a look of fear, and he scampers away.
7	鼻鮭齁以齀齅	Nose snuffles – ke-kaw, hup-kup;[21]
	耳聿役以適知	Ears wiggle to show he knows.[22]
8	口嗛呥以鹼齺	Mouth gobbles and masticates;[23]
	脣被嗜以㪚䏰	Lips purse and suck,[24] then curl out.
9	齒崖崖以齴齴	Teeth are bared in uneven banks,
	嚼咥唻而囁唲	Biting, chattering,[25] gibbering, jabbering.

15 I follow Zhang Qiao, reading *xia* 狹 as *xia* 狎. The latter is attested in the sense of "skilled or artful performance" in several pre-Han and Han sources; see *DKWJ* 7, no. 20329.22.

16 The pair of bisyllabic compounds in this line is discussed in detail below.

17 The translation "blinking furiously" for the bisyllabic compound *jijie* 䁝睫 is based on *jie* 睫 "blink"; see *DKWJ* 8, no. 23469, definition 2.

18 *Jue* 映 is attested in Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 55–ca. 149), *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字; see Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735–1815), ed., *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注 (rpt. of 1872 woodblock edn.; Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981; hereafter, *SW*) 4A, pp. 10b–11a. *Jue* occurs among words for eye ailments, which is the basis for Duan Yucai's explanation that *jue* refers to "sunken eye." Given that explanation, I surmise that the graph 睦 is to be read as *sui* 眭 in the sense of "deepset eyes"; see *DKWJ* 8, no. 23502, definition 4, and no. 23276, definition 1.

19 I read *kuang* 匡 as *kuang* 眶 "eye socket, eye-rim." The compound *gao kuang* 高匡 is attested in Zhang Heng's 張衡 (78–139) "Xijing fu" 西京賦 ("Western Metropolis *fu*") in the same sense of a protruding eye-rim; see *Wenxuan* 文選 (rpt. of Song Huke 胡刻 woodblock edn.; Kyoto: Chūmon shuppansha, 1971) 2, p. 20b (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 1, p. 221, l. 560).

20 *Bian* 矘 is glossed in *SW* 4A, p. 2a, as "when a child is first born and the eyes are shut." In "Wangsun fu," I read the graph as a variant orthography for *qiong* 睘, glossed in *SW* 4A, p. 5b, as "eyes gazing in startlement."

21 The pair of bisyllabic compounds in this line is discussed in detail, below.

22 "To show he knows" translates *shi zhi* 適知, literally to "meet, conform with knowing." *Shi* 適 is identified by Zhang Qiao as an alternate reading for the graph 嘀 in the *Guwen yuan* edition (I do not follow Zhang's sound gloss, according to which both graphs have the same pronunciation as *zhe* 摘); the *Chuxue ji* and *Yiwen leiju* edns. also read *shi* 適.

23 The translation "masticate" for *zhanzou* 鹼齺 is based on *zou*, glossed in *SW* 2B, p. 20b, as "bite off with the teeth" or "bite."

24 A medieval gloss of *xi* 嗜 as "sound of withstanding cold" is the basis for my translation of the bisyllabic compound in which it is the second syllable; see *DKWJ* 2, no. 4191.

25 "Chattering" is my invention for *renran* 咥唻.

10 儲糧食於兩頰	He stores food in both cheeks,
稍委輸於胃脾	Which he slowly dispatches to stomach and spleen.
11 踡兔蹲而狗踞	He crouches in a rabbit huddle and a dog squat,
聲歷鹿而喔咿	Making raucous sounds and cackling.
12 或嗝嗝而嚛嚛	Now he screeches and spits,
又嘀嗅其若啼	Now he makes sniffling snorts[26] like wailing.
13 姿僭傔而抵贛	His demeanor is crass and gruff;[27]
豁盱鬩以瑣醠	Open glaring turns to sour scowling.
14 眙睕瞍而瞶賜	Coy stares become furtive glances;[28]
眈瞫曘而踧𢓊	He sneers and smirks, capering about.[29]
15 生深山之茂林	He lives in dense forests of deep mountains,
處嶄巖之嶔崎	And inhabits the pinnacles of craggy cliffs.
16 性猋猜以獶疾	By nature he is mercurial and uproarious,
態峯出而橫施	With a temperament of spire-like upthrusts and reckless abandon.[30]
17 緣百仞之高木	Climbing a tree hundreds of feet high,
攀窈裹之長枝	He clings to long, tendril-cord[31] branches.
18 背牢落之峻壑	His back to a gaping, steep chasm,
臨不測之幽溪	He overlooks an unfathomable, dark gorge.
19 尋柯條以宛轉	Spiraling among the tree boughs,
或捉腐而登危	Now he grabs rotten wood and rises to perilous heights.
20 若將頹而復著	Just when he seems about to crash he regains his hold,
紛紬紬以陸離	A carefree, tumbling jumble.[32]

26 *Xiu* 嗅 "sniff, snort" is identified by Zhang Qiao as an alternate reading for the graph 嗅 in the *Guwen yuan* edn.

27 Medieval glosses of the two bisyllabic compounds are the basis for my translation "crass and gruff"; see *DKWJ* 1, no. 1128.16; and 5, no. 11921.32.

28 "Furtive glances" to translate *mishi* 瞶賜 is based on a medieval gloss; see *DKWJ* 8, no. 23636. *SW* 4A, p. 8b, glosses *shi* 賜 as "look quickly."

29 The bisyllabic compounds are translated in keeping with Zhang Qiao's commentary that the words refer to an "appearance that is mischievous and base."

30 The pair of bisyllabic compounds in this line is discussed, below.

31 "Tendril-cord" translates *yaoniao* 窈裹. *Niao* is glossed in *SW* 8A, p. 66b, as "lead a horse by a cord." *Niaoniao*, also written 嫋嫋, is well attested in the sense of the graceful movement of something slender; see *DKWJ* 3, no. 6614.3; and 10, no. 34509.4. Wang Yanshou's choice of *yaoniao* must be related as well to *yaotiao* 窈窕 to describe graceful beauty; see *DKWJ* 8, no. 25463.14.

32 Zhang Qiao notes that *chuchu* 紬紬 has the alternate reading *chuchu* 紬黜. I interpret the

21 或犀跳而電透	Now a lazy[33] leap is followed by lightning disport;
乊瓜懸而瓠垂	Hooked by a foot, he hangs like a melon, like a gourd drooping.
22 上觸手而挐攫	Up he thrusts his hand to grab and pull himself up;
下値足而登跸	Down he sets his foot and bounds[34] upward.
23 互攀攬以狂接	Both hands cling and clutch as he wildly rushes;
夐儵䏷而奄赴	A hasty survey[35] and he darts away.
24 時遼落以蕭索 乍睥睨以容與	At times, in solitude, he seems bleak, Then he peeps around smugly.
25 或蹢趺以跳迸	Now his feet stamp, leaping and frolicking,
又咨陬而攢聚	Now pensive,[36] he collects himself.[37]
26 扶嶔崟以陳椽	Propped on a craggy outcrop, he plans his evasion;[38]
躡危臬而騰舞	Shinning a towering tree-pole, he dances a jig.
27 忽踊逸而輕迅 羌難得而覿縷	Suddenly he leaps and is gone in a trice – Blast! The difficulty of following his convoluted track.[39]
28 同甘苦於人類	He shares with humankind the tastes of sweet and bitter;
好餔糟以歠醨	He loves to sup on lees and sip the brew.[40]

bisyllabic compound as similar in meaning to *chuman* 黜嫚 "unrestrained"; see *DKWJ* 12, no. 48076.26–27.

33 Zhang Qiao identifies the alternate reading 犀 for 羣 in the *Guwen yuan* edition, which I understand as *chi* 遲 "lazy."

34 Zhang Qiao reads the graph 跸 as *fu* 趺, glossed in *SW* 2B, p. 25b, as "bound quickly."

35 "Survey" translates *xiong* 夐, glossed in *SW* 4A, p. 1a, as "search the surroundings."

36 *Zizou* 咨陬 is the same term as *zizou* 咨諏 "take counsel"; for the latter, see *DKWJ* 2, no. 3538.16.

37 I differ with Zhang Qiao in my interpretation of this line, which he thinks describes a band of macaques who finally *ju* 聚 "regroup"; my interpretation is based on my understanding that the entire "Wangsun fu" is about a single macaque.

38 Zhang Qiao identifies *chenyuan* 陳椽 as an alternate reading for 樄𣝗 in the *Guwen yuan* edn. The term is the same as *chenyuan* 陳掾, which is attested in *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1959) 129, p. 3263, and glossed in the "Suoyin" 索隱 commentary (by Sima Zhen 司馬貞 [early 8th c.]) as "gallop about engaging in reconnaissance."

39 The graph 覿 is a variant for *luo* 覿; see *DKWJ* 10, no. 34980. *Luolü* 覿縷 refers to the "twists and turns" that render something difficult to grasp; see *DKWJ* 10, no. 34962.1. Zuo Si 左思 (ca. 250–ca. 305) appears to have borrowed the line from "Wangsun fu" in his "Wudu fu" 吳都賦 ("Wu Capital *fu*"), *Wenxuan* 5, p. 6b; trans. Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 1, p. 383, l. 160, as "Oh, how hard to unravel all its mysteries."

40 This line is discussed, below.

29 乃置酒於其側	So when wine is set by his side,
競爭飲而跼馳	He races forth[41] to contest the beverage.
30 醺陋酗以迷醉	He crashes, vilely intoxicated and blind drunk,
矇眠睡而無知	And falls into stuporous sleep, insensate.
31 蹔拏鬘以纍縛	Quick they come to clutch his mane and tie him up,
遂纓絡而羈縻	Then fix a halter round his neck.
32 歸鏁繫於庭廄	Home they go and tether him in courtyards or stables,
觀者吸呷而忘疲	Where onlookers gasp and gulp, forgetting weariness.[42]

Couplets 1 and 2 are typical of *fu* that celebrate items in nature, often musical instruments constructed of bamboo or wood whose pristine origins account for their wondrous properties. Wang Bao's 王褒 (first century BC) "Dongxiao fu" 洞簫賦 ("Panpipe *fu*") begins with the same word as Wang Yanshou's poem, *yuan* 原:

Sourcing the birthplace of that panpipe's stalks, O!
It is in the desolate wilds of South-of-the-Jiang (Jiangnan 江南).[43]

Whereas "Dongxiao fu" states its subject immediately, "Wangsun fu" delays the revelation until couplet 3. The finest manifestation of nature's inventiveness, the creature most attuned to the subtle rhythm of the cosmos is: the macaque, whose appearance is "coarse" and manners are "foul." The punch line is unmistakable, yet it hinges on a compound of two syllables, *wangsun* 王孫, whose meaning is ambiguous: to understand the joke we must begin with *wangsun*.

Wangsun is attested in the meaning "king's grandson, king's descendant" and as a surname in pre-Han sources, and was also used as a personal *zi* 字 "cognomen" during the Han.[44] The honorific usage ("princeling")

41 Qian, comp., *Guwenyuan*, "Collation notes," p. 9b, corrects the graph 地 to *chi* 馳 "race" (Qian notes that the correct reading is in the 9–*j. Guwen yuan* edn. of 1179).

42 The final two words of "Wangsun fu" are missing in Qian, comp., *Guwen yuan: wang pi* 忘疲 "forget weariness." There is a blank column following the last word/graph *er* 而, and it is evident that 忘疲 should have been printed there (the missing words are not noted in Qian Xizuo's "Collation notes," making the defect in the printing of the *Shoushan ge congshu* all the more evident). The words appear in the 9–*j. Guwen yuan* edn. of 1179 and *Chuxue ji*.

43 *Wenxuan* 17, p. 10b (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 3, p. 233, ll. 1–2).

44 For "king's descendant," see *Zuozhuan zhushu* 左傳注疏 (SSJZS, rpt. of 1815 woodblock edn.; Taibei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1955), Ai 哀 16, *j.* 60, pp. 4a and 5b; for the surname, see *Zuozhuan*, Ai 11, *j.* 58, p. 26a. For Han usage as cognomen, see the example of Dou Ying 竇嬰, cognomen Wangsun, in Michael Loewe, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Qin, Former Han and Xin Periods (221 BC–AD 24)* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), p. 79.

is not attested before the Han – most notably in the *Chuci* 楚辭 poem titled "Zhao yinshi" 招隱士 ("Summoning the Reclusive Gentleman"), where the eponymous recluse is twice addressed as *wangsun*.[45] Wang Yi's attribution of "Zhao yinshi" to poets at the court of Liu An 劉安 (d. 122 BC) in Huainan 淮南 and the likelihood that Wang Yanshou took inspiration from the poem are discussed below. For the moment, let it be noted that *wangsun* was a familiar word in Han times, and that the standard usages did not include "macaque," for which the only attestation in extant Han literature occurs in "Wangsun fu." There is no explanation in later sources of the derivation of *wangsun* as "macaque." By medieval times the compound "*husun* 胡孫" ("barbarian grandson") was in use; and it later received a folk etymology comparing the macaque to the progeny of a *hu* "barbarian."[46]

I do not doubt that when he composed "Wangsun fu," Wang Yanshou used an already accepted word for macaque; that is, we should not credit Wang Yanshou with inventing an animal name. There is indirect evidence that the word was current in the south, in the old region of Chu. Yang Xiong's 揚雄 (53 BC–18 AD) *Fangyan* 方言 (*Regional Words*) records the word *wangsun* 蛖孫 as the name used in "southern Chu" (*nan Chu* 南楚) for "cricket" (also written 王孫; the lead word in the *Fangyan* list of names for the cricket is *jinglie* 蜻蛚).[47] Why the cricket and the macaque share the name *wangsun* does not have a satisfactory explanation, but its occurrence in *Fangyan* as a Chu word for "cricket" suggests that *wangsun* "macaque" is also a Chu word.[48] Although *Fangyan* records only the insect name, there are early examples of insect names derived from the names of other creatures.[49] I would be tempted to regard the

[45] Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1090–1155), ed., *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注 (SBBY) 12, p. 2a and 3b.

[46] Li Shizhen 李時珍 (1518–1593), *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 (Taibei: Hongye, 1985) 51, p. 74, lists both *wangsun* and *husun* among names for the macaque, and gives the folk etymology of *husun*. Tao Gu 陶谷 (d. 970), *Qingyi lu* 清異錄 (Beijing: Zhongguo shangye chubanshe, 1985), p. 94, records an anecdote about a recluse whose trained *husun* 猢猻 had such impeccable manners that it was known as the *wei junzi* 尾君子 "gentleman with a tail."

[47] See Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777), ed., *Fangyan shuzheng* 方言疏證 (SBBY) 11, p. 2b.

[48] At one point in my investigation of the name I was led towards identifying an origin in Proto-Miao-Yao due to similar forms of the Proto-Miao-Yao words for "macaque" and "great grandson" in Wang Fushi 王輔世 and Mao Zongwu 毛宗武, *Miao Yao yu guyin gouni* 苗瑤語古音構擬 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995). Although it is plausible that speakers of Proto-Miao-Yao inhabited the region of Chu, and that Chinese speakers might have borrowed words from that language (for example, by using Chinese *wangsun* as a punning translation of Proto-Miao-Yao homonyms for macaque and great grandson), Martha Ratliff (communication of May 16, 2003) advised me of a serious error in the Wang and Mao reconstructed form for great grandson, which precludes this line of speculation.

[49] An example came to my attention recently in bamboo-slip medical recipes from Zhoujiatai 周家臺 tomb 30 (burial dated ca. 200 BC). One recipe, a magical recipe for tooth decay, uses *niu* 牛 "cow" in the treatment, which is specifically identified at the end of the recipe as

denotation macaque as earlier than the denotation cricket were it not for an insect name recorded in *Erya* 爾雅 (*Approaching Cultivated* [*Speech*]) that is lexically similar to *wangsun*: *wangfu* 王蚥, which pairs *wang* with a word that suggests *fu* 父 (father). *Wangfu* 王父 means "grandfather" (*wang* is an honorific used for deceased grandparents).[50] A second name for the insect is *butiao* 不蜩, and Guo Pu's 郭璞 (276–324) *Erya* commentary notes "identity unknown 未詳" for both names. However, Hao Yixing 郝懿行 (1757–1825) argues convincingly that the insect is a kind of *tiao* 蜩 "cicada," and that both *bu* (related to *pi* 丕) and *wang* have the sense of "large."[51]

In sum, the origin of *wangsun* as "macaque" remains unknown. The evidence still points to a Han-time usage in the Chu region. However, given only one attested usage – in Wang Yanshou's poem – *wangsun* "macaque" cannot be said to have been a widely used name either in the Chu region or in other parts of the Han realm. Roughly a half dozen other words for macaque are well attested in Han literature, including the *Chuci*.[52] Were his poem solely about the macaque as a member of the animal world, we must ask why Wang Yanshou does not use one of the more commonly known names. In my view, he does not use them because *wangsun* is the only word that establishes a double persona: the princeling macaque. Further, as a scion of the Wang family, Wang Yanshou is a Wang *sun* "descendant"; that is, the princeling persona intended by Wang Yanshou is the poet himself, and *wangsun* embeds his signature in the poem.

The latter speculation is not idle. Both of Wang Yanshou's other extant *fu* give evidence of a young poet who likes to write himself into his poetry. Intentional self-reference is obvious in his "Meng fu," which masquerades as an account of the nightmare he experienced while simultaneously functioning as an exorcistic incantation against nightmare demons. Wang leaves graphic traces of his name Yanshou and perhaps his cognomen Zishan 子山 near the end of "Lu Lingguang dian fu" 魯靈光殿賦 ("*Fu* of the Numinous Radiance Basilica in Lu"), in the summation of the architectural wonder:

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the name for a "head bug" (*tou chong* 頭虫). See *Guanju Qin Han mu jiandu* 關沮秦漢墓簡牘 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2001), p. 129.

[50] Hao Yixing 郝懿行, ed., *Erya yishu* 爾雅義疏 (rpt. of 1865 woodblock edn.; Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1983), *j.* 3–3, p. 7b (insect name); *Erya yishu*, *j.* 1–4, p. 1b (grandfather).

[51] *Erya yishu*, *j.* 3–3, p. 7b; see also, Guo, *Zhongguo gudai dongwu*, pp. 81–82, which gives the identification *Cryptotampana atrata* (black cicada).

[52] *Mihou* 獼猴 occurs in *Chuci buzhu* ("Zhao yinshi") 12, p. 3a.

> [It] secures extended longevity (*yan shou* 延壽) and is conducive to sons and grandsons (*zi sun* 子孫). If its ennoblement be like this – who would speak and yet not prize it?[53]

The self-reference in the words *yan shou* does not need comment. I conjecture a connection between *zi sun* and Wang's cognomen Zishan based on Han rhyming practice, which frequently mixes words classified in the *zhen* 真 (*-ən) and *yuan* 元 (*-an) rhyme categories (*sun*/*suən and *shan*/*ṣan).[54] Extended longevity (*yan shou*) and sons and grandsons (*zi sun*) are stock auspicious compounds, but Wang Yanshou's (cognomen Zishan) use has personal significance.

I have been focusing on a personal code underlying Wang Yanshou's use of *wangsun* that may or may not have been obvious to the second century AD reader or hearer of the "Wangsun fu." However, a *wangsun* in a wilderness setting would have immediately evoked the *wangsun* "princeling" of "Zhao yinshi." As a Chu native and son of Wang Yi, whose *Chuci zhangju* 楚辭章句 (*Chu Verse in Sections and Phrases*) was compiled between the 120s and 140s, Wang Yanshou would have imbibed the cultural heritage of Qu Yuan in his own intellectual, spiritual, and artistic development.[55] Wang Yi does not ascribe "Zhao yinshi" to Qu Yuan, but rather to poets at the court of Liu An at Huainan who were known to Wang Yi as the *xiao shan* 小山 "small mountain." Wang Yi's preface to the poem identifies the "reclusive gentleman" with Qu Yuan, correlating Qu Yuan's condition – dead but his virtue forever shines forth – with the ideals of the recluse.[56]

The didactic tone of Wang Yi's preface is mirrored in the "Zhao yinshi" commentary, which is composed entirely in verse. Other

[53] *Wenxuan* 11, p. 21a (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 2, p. 277, l. 209).

[54] For discussion of the similarity between the two rhyme categories in Han speech, see Luo Changpei 羅常培 and Zhou Zumo 周祖謨, *Han Wei Jin Nan Bei chao yunbu yanbian yanjiu* 漢魏晉南北朝韻部演變研究 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1958), p. 36. For Later Han reconstructions of words I am indebted to Axel Schuessler, who gave me a copy of his "Later Han Chinese (LHan)" (unpub. ms.: September, 2000) and who in private correspondence provided further information about specific words in "Wangsun fu." I am also grateful to Edwin G. Pulleyblank for advice on matters related to Later Han Chinese. Notices of Wang Yanshou record two cognomens: Zishan and Wenkao 文考. The latter is given in *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1965) 80A, p. 2618; the former in Zhang Hua 張華 (232–300), *Bowu zhi* 博物志 (CSJC) 4, p. 25.

[55] For discussions of the approximate time when Wang Yi compiled the *Chuci zhangju*, see Kominami, "Ō I *Soji shōku*," p. 84; Zhang Baosan 張寶三, "Handai zhangju zhi xue lunkao" 漢代章句之學論考, *Taida Zhongwen xuebao* 臺大中文學報 14 (2001), p. 56, n. 45; and Michael Schimmelpfennig, "Qu Yuans Weg vom 'wahren Menschen' 真人 zum wirklichen Dichter 詩人: Der Han-zeitliche Kommentar von Wang Yi zum 'Li sao' und den *Liedern von Chu*" (Ph.D. diss., Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, 1999), pp. 27–37. Even if *Chuci zhangju* was compiled as late as the 140s, Wang Yanshou would have known of his father's *magnum opus*.

[56] *Chuci buzhu* 12, p. 1a–b.

pieces in Wang Yi's *Chuci zhangju* whose commentary is entirely in verse include "Yuan you" 遠遊 ("Far-off Journey"), "Bu ju" 卜居 ("Divining over Position"), and "Yu fu" 漁父 ("Fisherman"). The rhymed commentary does not gloss individual words or address textual issues, but rather paraphrases the lines of the poem so as to illuminate its message.[57] Current scholarly opinion concurs that Wang Yi did not compose the rhymed commentary for any of the pieces just named (including "Zhao yinshi"), but disagrees on the issue of whether or not Wang Yi had a hand in incorporating the commentary in his *Chuci zhangju*. Kominami Ichirō 小南一郎 argues for Wang Yi's role, tracing the rhymed commentary to the literary activities at the court of Liu An, and associating it with a cultural project in the region of Chu to both transmit Chu literary works and inculcate values attached to those works.[58] Michael Schimmelpfennig agrees with Kominami that similar styles of didactic verse occur as early as the Former Han, but based on a close analysis of occurrences of rhymed commentary in *Chuci zhangju* – especially when it occurs together with other commentary types – argues that Wang Yi was not the person who incorporated the rhymed commentary into *Chuci zhangju*. Schimmelpfennig considers the incorporation to have taken place after Wang Yi, between the second and fifth centuries.[59]

Whether or not Wang Yi incorporated the rhymed commentary into his *Chuci zhangju* is an important textual issue, but is not the basis for determining the time when the didactic rhymed commentary that accompanies "Zhao yinshi" and other pieces was first in circulation. The "Zhao yinshi" rhymed commentary or something resembling it probably existed in the Later Han, and I am sympathetic to Kominami's speculation on its role in a Chu cultural project. Perhaps the best evidence for such a Chu cultural project is Wang Yi's postface to "Li

[57] Kominami, "Ō I *Soji shōku*," and Schimmelpfennig, "Qu Yuans Weg," include the most detailed analysis of the rhymed commentary in the *Chuci zhangju*. Rhyming is not limited to the commentaries of the four named pieces. For an overview of all commentary types in the *Chuci zhangju*, see Kominami, "Ō I *Soji shōku*," p. 73, table 1; and Schimmelpfennig, "Qu Yuans Weg," p. 623.

[58] Kominami, "Ō I *Soji shōku*," p. 74, argues that all four pieces, which according to Kominami share similar themes on Daoist and "spiritual transcendence" (*shenxian* 神仙) ideas, reflect the intellectual and spiritual milieu of Liu An's court; and Kominami regards the rhymed commentary as part of a hermeneutic legacy traceable to Liu An's court that Wang Yi incorporated in the *Chuci zhangju* (see especially, pp. 100–101 and pp. 106–7).

[59] Schimmelpfennig, "Qu Yuans Weg," p. 664 and pp. 686–93. The 5th-c. end-date is based on the inclusion of pieces from the *Chuci* in the *Wenxuan* 文選, compiled by Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501–531).

sao" 離騷 ("Separation and Sorrow"),[60] where Wang Yi recounts its textual history before literary activities at Liu An's court:

> Maintaining his singleness, [Qu Yuan] relied on the principles of the poet 詩人 and composed "Li sao." Above it served to air criticism; below it served as self-consolation. Having encountered a time of darkness and disorder, he was not noticed and accepted. Unable to overcome his fervid frustration, he further composed "Jiu ge" 九歌 ("Nine Songs") and other pieces, altogether forming twenty-five fascicles. The people of Chu elevated his conduct and principles, and marveled at his literary brilliance; and they taught and transmitted [his works] among themselves 以相教傳.[61]

Wang Yi's reference to teaching and transmitting the poetic tradition centered around Qu Yuan no doubt still applied in the second century AD. The image of Qu Yuan would have remained vital in the culture that Wang Yanshou and other Chu youths absorbed in the course of their education. We might imagine Wang Yanshou reciting "Zhao yinshi" along with a rhymed commentary; and any traces of a "Zhao yinshi" *wangsun* that were present in his "Wangsun fu" would have been evident to his contemporaries. Wang Yanshou's exploitation of the multivalence of *wangsun* to refashion the "Zhao yinshi" persona in the image of a macaque was, however, novel. "Wangsun fu" is both serious and humorous as the transfigured persona of the *wangsun* (princeling macaque) induces a double vision that makes us reflect on images of an antic macaque and of a man who is a poet.

To have identified Wang Yanshou's main trick does not tell us the meaning of "Wangsun fu," nor does it resolve the question of the poet's intentions. Although the evidence of Wang Yanshou's self-representation in the persona of the *wangsun* is clear, I cannot claim knowledge of Wang Yanshou himself as a poet, nor is there sufficient evidence to identify the precise literary and cultural milieu that informed his poetic sensibility.[62] Certainly "Wangsun fu" cannot be reduced to an elaboration on the theme found in "Zhao yinshi." Wang Yanshou's youth is also an important factor in considering his three

[60] My translation of the title "Li sao" follows Wang Yi's gloss of *li* as *bie* 別 "separation," which Wang Yi links to Qu Yuan's departure from the Chu court and his reclusion (*Chuci buzhu* 1, p. 2a).

[61] *Chuci buzhu* 1, p. 37b.

[62] There are other Later Han *fu* that invite speculation on the poet's intentions and the nature of self-representation. Knechtges, "Culling the Weeds," p. 221, cites Mi Heng's 禰衡 (ca. 173–198) "Yingwu fu" 鸚鵡賦 ("Parrot *fu*") as a poem that "is really about Mi Heng, not the bird." For the poem, see *Wenxuan* 13, pp. 20a-22b (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 3, pp. 49–57).

extant *fu*. He was in his early twenties when he died in the early 160s, too young to have personally experienced the disillusionment with the Han court and public life that seems to have affected many Later Han literati. His sense of himself as a poet cannot be said to have been shaped by political events in the way that one might regard his near contemporary Cai Yong 蔡邕 (132–192), whose introspectiveness in several *fu* was connected to his experiences in public life.[63]

Rather than probe Wang Yanshou's identity and intentions, I propose to examine "Wangsun fu" for its artistry. My analysis presumes an intentional twinning of the macaque and the princeling/poet, as I have argued in the preceding pages. Given the parallel between primate and poet, their respective activities must also be connected; that is, we may expect the language of "Wangsun fu" to record a macaque doing what macaques do and a poet making poetry. Readers and hearers are treated to a poem that on one reading is about a macaque and on another reading is a testament of being a poet. As the statement of one Later Han poet, "Wangsun fu" is significant evidence of changing conceptions of poets and poetry among the Later Han elite in the decades preceding Cao Pi's 曹丕 "Lun wen" 論文 ("Discourse on Literature"), written about 217, with its explicit pronouncements on literary aesthetics.[64]

I begin with a summary of the form and content of "Wangsun fu." In conformity with the rhyme scheme, we may divide the *fu* into three sections: couplets 1 through 21, couplets 22 through 27, and couplets 28 through 32 (see the appendix). In the first section, following the introduction in couplets 1 through 3, couplets 4 through 9 focus almost entirely on the princeling macaque's head. The bisyllabic compounds begin in couplet 5. Many of the bisyllables only occur in "Wangsun fu," and may be nonce words that Wang Yanshou invented. I return to an analysis of lines from several couplets shortly to illustrate the quality of language. The bisyllables render an exact likeness of the princeling macaque, with a striking emphasis on facial movements and noises culminating in couplet 9: "Teeth are bared in uneven banks,/ Biting, chattering, gibbering, jabbering." Especially the noises suggest the aural quality of the *fu* as a work that was fully realized in the act of

63 Mark L. Asselin, "'A Significant Season': Literature in a Time of Endings. Cai Yong and a Few Contemporaries" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1997), is an astute study of Cai Yong's life and literary work. On Cai Yong's introspectiveness in his *fu*, see especially the discussion of Cai Yong's "Shu xing fu" 述行賦 ("*Fu* Recounting a Journey") in Asselin, "'A Significant Season,'" pp. 77–118.

64 See Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992), pp. 57–72, for Chinese text and translation of the "Lun wen." I return to the issue of Later Han poets and poetry in the conclusion.

recitation.[65] Is it possible that we have here a glimpse of the poet "jabbering" as he works on achieving the perfect sound of his words or as he recites the finished work?

Couplets 10 through 14 continue the description of the princeling macaque, emphasizing its mannerisms and habits. Couplet 15 introduces the princeling macaque's habitat, and the remainder of the first section seems to resonate with words and phrases from "Zhao yinshi," beginning with the wilderness setting amidst "craggy cliffs" 嶄巖 in couplet 15.[66] Compare the setting described in "Zhao yinshi" as "gorges, ravines, and craggy cliffs 谿谷嶄巖." As in "Wangsun fu," there is a dense forest in "Zhao yinshi" that is described in the poem's first line:

桂樹叢生兮	Cinnamon trees grow thick, O!
山之幽.	In the mountain's darkness.
偃蹇連卷兮	Curving and coiling, O!
枝相繚.	Branches interlacing.[67]

And the "Zhao yinshi" princeling clings to cinnamon branches as he roams:

攀援桂枝兮	Clinging to cinnamon branches, O!
聊淹留.	Lingering awhile.
王孫遊兮	The princeling roams, O!
不歸.	Not returning.[68]

The rhymed commentary to "Zhao yinshi" understands the cinnamon trees of the first line as meaning that their fragrance "evokes 興" Qu Yuan's "loyalty and goodness 忠良." The interlacing branches signify that "when trust and principles 信義 mesh like branches the orderly pattern is perfected, which means that talent and virtue are lofty and bright as befits one who assists the excellent lord who is the tree trunk." Subsequently, the princeling clinging to cinnamon branches and the princeling lingering in the wilderness are read as

65 Kamatani Takeshi 釜谷武志, "Fu ni nankai na ji ga ōi no wa naze ka: Zen Kan ni okeru fu no yomarekata" 賦に難解な字が多いのはなぜか前漢における賦の讀まれかた, *Nihon Chūgoku gakkai hō* 日本中國學會報 48 (1996), pp. 16–30, focuses on oral/aural aspect of the *fu* in the Former Han as evidenced by the graphs used to record the written text of Former Han *fu*, especially the bisyllabic compounds. Having shown that the graphs in the *Hanshu* 漢書 versions of many *fu* are less regular than the same *fu* as recorded in the *Wenxuan* (and, surprisingly, the *Shiji*, which suggests later editorial standardization), Kamatani argues that Former Han *fu* poets were more concerned with the sound of the spoken word than with its graphic representation, and that the careful patterning of the written graphs as an element of *fu* composition emerges most clearly in the *fu* of Yang Xiong (Kamatani, " Fu ni nankai na ji," pp. 27–28).

66 In the following discussion I use the text of "Zhao yinshi" in the *Wenxuan* because I judge the commentary to more accurately represent Wang Yi's *Chuci zhangju* than the *Chuci buzhu*.

67 *Wenxuan* 33, p. 21a.

68 Ibid.

signs of Qu Yuan's feelings of turmoil as he clambers in the wilderness, having abandoned homeland and home to dwell in seclusion. The line, "Clinging to cinnamon branches, O!/Lingering awhile," recurs near the end of "Zhao yinshi," where the rhymed commentary interprets it to mean that the princeling uses the fragrant wood to swear an oath with people of identical resolve to await a brighter time.[69]

In "Wangsun fu," the princeling macaque similarly relies on trees and their branches as he "clings to long, tendril-cord branches" while "climbing a tree hundreds of feet high" (couplet 17), and "spirals among the tree boughs" (couplet 19). One wonders exactly what Wang Yanshou had in mind. Obviously he is describing what a macaque does in its natural surroundings. We can safely add that Wang Yanshou did not compose in ignorance of "Zhao yinshi" nor was "Wangsun fu" read or heard in ignorance of it. I would further note that virtue 德 and the standard ethical concepts do not appear to be at issue in "Wangsun fu," and that their absence provides a Later Han precedent for reading the tree and branch motifs without the ethical intent elaborated in the "Zhao yinshi" rhymed commentary. This simple observation would have added significance if it could be shown that Wang Yanshou's *fu* frees the theme of the *wangsun* from the interpretive straitjacket of the "Zhao yinshi" rhymed commentary; but the evidence is lacking.

Is there a poet cavorting in couplets 15 through 21? The most definite sign occurs in couplet 16, where the princeling macaque is said to have "a temperament of spire-like upthrusts and reckless abandon." *Fengchu* 峯出 "spire-like upthrusts" describes the quick genius of the princeling macaque. In Han texts earlier than Wang Yanshou's lifetime the compound is usually written with *feng* 鋒 "spear" to describe the barbed wit of men who are clever in speech.[70] *Hengshi* 横施 "reckless abandon" only occurs in "Wangsun fu." The usual compound before Wang Yanshou is *hengchu* 横出, referring to the abandoned movements of spirits and dancers.[71] Having already used *chu* in *fengchu*, and needing a rhyme in the final position, Wang Yanshou improvised the new formation *hengshi*.

[69] Ibid., p. 21b.

[70] See the account of Dongfang Shuo's 東方朔 (2d-c. BC) talent when put to the test by other court entertainers in *Hanshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1962) 65, p. 2845: "Shuo replied automatically in instantaneous response to the sound [of the question]. His chameleonic trickery was spear-jabbing (*feng chu* 鋒出), and none could stump him."

[71] In the compound *hengchu* 横出, *heng* "span across" has the sense of "break through, unrestrained, carefree." To describe spirits, see the "Shennü fu" 神女賦 ("Divine Woman *fu*"), *Wenxuan* 19, p. 9a: "[Her] temperament, emerging unrestrained (*hengchu*), cannot be successfully recorded" (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 3, p. 349, ll. 140–41; the attribution of the "Shennü

The second section of "Wangsun fu," couplets 22 through 27, continues the portrayal of the princeling macaque in the wild, setting the stage for its entrapment in the third section. The description of its shifting moods – from "bleak" to "smug" in couplet 24 and from "frolicking" to "pensive" in couplet 25 – and the jig atop a pole in couplet 26 lead me to consider now an element of "Wangsun fu" that informs the entire composition. Whence did Wang Yanshou derive his seemingly intimate knowledge of the macaque? The notion that his knowledge came from direct observation of macaques in the wild is so unlikely that I do not give it serious consideration. Wang Yanshou might have had a pet macaque, but the custom of keeping macaques as pets in elite households is not documented for the Han period.[72] There is, however, good evidence of the popularity of macaque entertainments, including human mimicry of the macaque. The evidence merits examination in connection with "Wangsun fu," which may have yet another reading as a macaque performance.

Trained macaques already entertained the Warring States elite, as witness the *Zhuangzi* 莊子story of the macaque trainer.[73] The *Shiji* 史記 (*Scribe's Record*) attests to macaques in human dress, albeit indirectly, in a purportedly common saying about "Chu people": "People say that Chu people are just macaques wearing caps 人言楚人沐猴而冠耳."[74] In *Shiji*, the saying is used by the speaker to confirm his opinion of Xiang Yu 項羽 (232–202 BC) as incapable of being a ruler because he is more concerned with the appearance than the substance of power.[75]

More concrete evidence of Han-period macaque entertainments occurs in Zheng Xuan's 鄭玄 (127–200) commentary to the following sentence in the *Liji* 禮記 (*Record of Ritual*) section "Yueji" 樂記 ("Record of Music"): "And as well, performers and dwarves, macaque[-like], mix male and female without recognizing father and son 及優侏儒獶雜子女不知父子."[76] The sentence occurs in a critique of "new music 新樂" by

fu" to Song Yu 宋玉 [3d-c. BC] is suspect). To describe dancers, see Fu Yi's 傅毅 (ca. 35–ca. 90) "Wu fu" 舞賦 ("Dance *fu*"), *Wenxuan* 17, p. 19a: "[The dancers'] carefree poses emerge unrestrained (*hengchu*); their lovely demeanor beguilingly arises" (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 3, p. 253, ll. 94–95).

72 There is medieval evidence of pet macaques (see above, n. 46).

73 *Zhuangzi* (SBBY) 1, p. 16b ("Qiwu lun" 齊物論).

74 *Shiji* 7, p. 315; see also, *Hanshu* 31, p. 1808.

75 Sima Zhen's "Suoyin" commentary interprets the saying as a criticism of the mercurial nature of Chu people, who resemble macaques in being incapable of permanently wearing the ceremonial clothing that invests humans with dignity.

76 *Liji zhushu* 禮記注疏 (SSJZS) 39, p. 1a. My translation is based on Zheng Xuan's commentary.

Zixia子夏, the fifth century BC follower of Confucius. Zheng Xuan glosses the word *nao* 獶 as *mihou* 獼猴, and interprets the sentence to mean: "the dancing is like macaque play 獼猴戲, and confuses the hierarchical order of male and female."

Zheng Xuan's "macaque play" refers to current Han custom, and certainly refers to a category of entertainment in which macaques are the performers. At the same time, the category probably includes humans mimicking macaques, which is how Zheng Xuan understands the "Yueji" reference to performers and dwarves.[77] For Han evidence of dancing like a macaque, there is the *Hanshu* 漢書 (*Book of Han*) account of a party at an aristocratic mansion in Chang'an 長安 in about 60 BC. The guests were drunk when the music commenced and Tan Changqing 檀長卿 "danced the macaque and dog combat 舞爲沐猴與狗鬬"; he was subsequently accused of "macaque dancing before the assembled officials; failing to observe ritual decorum and being irreverent 以列卿而沐猴舞, 失禮不敬."[78] The Han elite had their own moral issues involving notions of "old" versus "new," and no doubt macaque dancing was scandalous to some. However, macaques and macaque entertainments were popular. Macaque figurines from Later Han tombs, associated with other figurines of entertainers, and depictions in tomb decor add visual confirmation to the textual evidence (figure 1).[79]

When the macaque in the *fu* dances on a tree-pole in couplet 26, we seem to be already watching the pole-top performance of a trained macaque.[80] But how does one catch the elusive macaque? Couplet 27 presents the issue, and the resolution is spelled out in the third section.

[77] For further discussion of the performers in the "Yueji" passage, see Ren Bantang 任半塘, *Tang xinong* 唐戲弄 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), p. 487 and p. 780.

[78] *Hanshu* 77, p. 3245. The reference to "macaque and dog combat" suggests the Han tomb scenes of dogs and monkeys mentioned in Wu, "Earliest Pictorial Representations of Ape Tales," p. 101. Ren, *Tang xinong*, p. 468, cites 6th-c. accounts of Wei Shou 魏收, who enjoyed the favor of his ruler for his skill in performing the "macaque and dog combat." Wei Shou was also known for his skill at *hu wu* 胡舞 "barbarian dancing." It seems unlikely that Tan Changqing and Wei Shou danced the same dance. However, the medieval reference is clear evidence of a style of dance enjoyed by the elite.

[79] See Xiao Kangda 蕭亢達, *Handai yuewu baixi yishu yanjiu* 漢代樂舞百戲藝術研究 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1991), pp. 341–42, for discussion of Han references to macaque entertainments and recent archeological evidence. The carved wooden figurine in fig. 1, which is 11.5 cm high, is one of two wooden figurines of macaques found in 1957 in a Later Han tomb at Mozuizi 磨嘴子, in Wuwei武威, Gansu (the other macaque figurine is 32.5 cm high). The same tomb contained two wooden figurines of dancers, 15.8 cm high. See Tang Guodong 黨國棟, "Wuweixian Mozuizi gumu qingli jiyao" 武威縣磨嘴子古墓清理記要, *WW* (1958.11), p. 71. The tomb was damaged before excavation; the dancers and smaller macaque probably belonged to a set of figurines of performers.

[80] This impression lacks corroborative evidence in Han textual and archeological sources; see Ren, *Tang xinong*, pp. 467–68, for discussion of the earliest references (6th c.) to macaques performing on poles.

Tellingly, couplet 28 borrows a phrase from *Chuci*, "Yu fu." In "Yu fu," the fisherman offers pragmatic advice to the would-be recluse Qu Yuan: "The crowd of men are all drunk – why not sup on their lees and sip their brew 眾人皆醉,何不餔其糟而歠其醨?"[81] The situation for the princeling macaque is different: "He shares with humankind the tastes of sweet and bitter;/He loves to sup on lees and sip the brew." The princeling macaque is no Qu Yuan; he is attracted to human society by a shared love of drink.[82] Despite the constraints of being held captive, the princeling macaque is by nature captivating; his performance achieves the ideal of entertainment – that people "forget weariness."[83] Thus concludes "Wangsun fu," with affirmation of the human need for entertainment and praise for the princeling macaque as excellent entertainer.

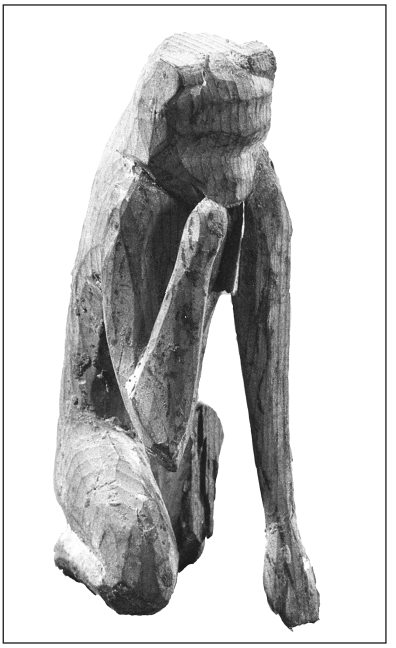

Figure 1. Later-Han Carved Wooden Figurine of a Macaque

Height 11.5 cm; from a tomb at Mozuizi 磨嘴子, *in Wuwei* 武威, *Gansu. After* Zhongguo meishu quanji: diaosu bian 中國美術全集雕塑編 *(Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1985), vol. 2 (Qin Han diaosu* 秦漢雕塑*), pl. 137.*

Who is this entertainer? In the post-Han era, the *wangsun* of the "Wangsun fu" was increasingly associated with the animal world. When it was recorded in the Tang florilegia *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (*Classified Collection of the Classics and Literature*) and *Chuxue ji* 初學記 (*Record of First Learning*), "Wangsun fu" was classified in the animal section under the heading *mihou* or *hou* "macaque," among works selected to represent the textual record

[81] *Chuci buzhu* 7, p. 2a.

[82] François Lissarague, "L'homme, le singe et le satyre," in Barbara Cassin and Jean-Louis Labarrière, eds., *L'Animal dans l'antiquité* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1997), p. 461, cites testimony of the use of wine to trap monkeys in the ancient Greco-Roman world (see pp. 463–64 for discussion of the image of the monkey as a drinker).

[83] The expression "forget weariness" (but written *wangpi* 忘罷) occurs in Zhang Heng's "Xijing fu," *Wenxuan* 2, p. 22b (Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 1, p. 225, l. 618), to describe warriors enjoying their reward following a royal hunt. Wang Yanshou has shifted the sense of "weari-

of the macaque.[84] Despite the classification and despite the negative image of the macaque in Liu Zongyuan's "Zeng wangsun wen," Tang readers and hearers might have still detected the macaque's double, the princeling/poet, in "Wangsun fu." However, the princeling/poet was no longer present to Zhang Qiao in the thirteenth century when he edited *Guwen yuan* and added his explanation of the *wangsun* as representing "the facile cunning and malleability of the petty man."[85] In the case of Wang Yanshou's "Meng fu," the *Guwen yuan* edition of the *fu* includes a preface that explains the circumstances of its composition following a nightmare experienced by the poet.[86] Lacking a preface and any form of commentary prior to Zhang Qiao's occasional glosses, the cipher of the "Wangsun fu" persona was lost.

I am confident in my identification of the princeling/poet and my hypothesis that Wang Yanshou intended the *wangsun* of "Wangsun fu" to be self-referential. My summary of the *fu* conservatively notes several passages where the description of the *wangsun* seems to me to suggest characteristics of the princeling/poet. Couplets 24 and 25 might also be construed as a description of the princeling/poet's moods; couplets 26 and 27 might be read as a reflection on the poses of the princeling/poet as he both evades and invites public notice, anticipating the "onlookers who gasp and gulp" in the final couplet. I cannot offer substantive evidence that such readings were intended by Wang Yanshou or occurred to his contemporaries as they occur to me. Yet the double persona of the *wangsun* "princeling macaque" invites multiple readings of the *fu*; and I would claim that Wang Yanshou intended "Wangsun fu" to have more than one reading.

I would further claim that one authentic reading of "Wangsun fu" is for fun; that is, the *fu* as a demonstration of the princeling macaque's talent for making people "forget weariness." Let me illustrate Wang Yanshou's linguistic legerdemain with his use of bisyllabic compounds as nonce words. Couplets 5, 7, 8, and 9 employ a technique in which most lines focus on a part of the princeling macaque's face using a monosyllablic noun as the first word of a line, which is mostly followed by a pair of bisyllables: eyes (couplet 5, first line), nose (couplet 7, first line), mouth and lips (couplet 8), and teeth (couplet 9, first line). Other facial parts are mentioned (eye-rims, nose-bridge, ears), but their syntactic presentation is different. I propose to analyze the bisyllabic

ness" and its anodyne to a different level in his conception of the value of entertainment in human culture.

[84] *Yiwen leiju* 95, p. 1653; *Chuxue ji* 29, pp. 721–22.

[85] Discussed above.

[86] *Guwen yuan* 6, p. 7a.

compounds used in the first lines of couplets 5 and 7 to accompany the eyes and nose.

First, I must admit that my analysis is guided by Zhang Qiao's glosses, which state that the bisyllabic compounds in the first line of couplet 5 describe "the appearance of the pupils being irregular 眸子不正貌" (my "bob and jiggle"); while those in the first line of couplet 7 describe "the sound of breathing through the nose 鼻息聲" (my "snuffle" followed by "ke-kaw, hup-kup"). In the first line of couplet 5, neither *yai'ou*/*ŋaih-ŋioh 睚䁥,[87] nor *xuexu*/*γwet-huit 眩卹 is attested outside the text of "Wangsun fu." In *yai'ou*, the graph that writes *ou* 䁥 only occurs in "Wangsun fu." *Yai* 睚 is well attested in Han sources in the compound *yaizi* 睚眥, usually glossed as glaring angrily.[88] Reduced to guessing a possible semantic background for *ou* 䁥, one might propose the word *ou* 齵, treated in Xu Shen's 許慎 (ca. 55–ca. 149) *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (*Explanation of Signs and Analysis of Graphs*) as part of the compound *zou'ou*/*tsioh-ŋioh 齱齵 and glossed as "teeth being irregular 齒不正."[89] While it is difficult to ascertain the divergence between the reconstruction and the words as they sounded to Wang Yanshou, it is evident that the compound for irregular teeth rhymed whereas the "Wangsun fu" compound was alliterative.

Zhang Qiao's gloss for the unattested *yai'ou* suggests that he knew the *Shuowen jiezi* gloss of *zou'ou* and understood *yai'ou* to be a related bisyllabic compound referring to an irregular appearance of the eyes. The use of 目 in the composition of *ou* 䁥 reflects Wang Yanshou's careful attention to the appearance of the written text of his poem, for which he customized certain graphs used to write bisyllabic compounds to fit particular contexts – in this case the eyes.[90] Evidence for *xuexu* meaning an irregular appearance of the eyes is more tenuous. The only other occurrence of *xue* 眩 in Han literature is in Wang Yanshou's "Lu Lingguangdian fu," in the compound *diao xue* 鵰眩, where it is glossed as *jue* 瞲 ("startled look"; whence Knechtges's translation "gaping like eagles").[91]

87 In Schuessler's reconstruction, "-h" marks Middle Chinese tone C (*qu* 去).

88 *DKWJ* 8, no. 23437.1–4, cites many Han sources for the compound.

89 *SW* 2B, p. 20b.

90 Patterning of the written text is a characteristic of Later Han *fu* (see n. 65 above). The poetic practice is an interesting case of polygraphy in the history of Chinese writing (for a general discussion of polygraphy, see Qiu Xigui, *Chinese Writing*, trans. Gilbert L. Mattos and Jerry Norman [Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China and Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2000], pp. 371–80).

91 *Wenxuan* 11, p. 19a; Knechtges, *Wen xuan* 2, p. 272, n. to l. 130. There may be a clue in the *Shuowen jiezi* gloss of the word/graph 瞀, which Xu Shen states is read like *xu*/*huit 卹 (*SW* 4A, p. 8b) and which is defined as deepset eyes. If the graphs 眩 and 瞀 write the same

The bisyllabic compounds in the first line of couplet 7, *kuihou*/*kwe-ko 鼲齁 and *xixia*/*hiəp-kep 齃齨, are in the first place perfect examples of the use of customized graphs by Later Han *fu* poets. In Han literature, these four graphs only occur in "Wangsun fu," and were fashioned by Wang Yanshou to complement the nose 鼻, whose characteristics they describe. Zhang Qiao provides the sound gloss *xi* 吸 for *xi* 齃, and Wang Yanshou certainly intended the reader and hearer to recognize the connection between the graphs and a word meaning "inhale." However, the main effect of the bisyllabic compounds is to imitate the noises made by the snuffling *wangsun*, which I attempt to suggest by providing my own nonce words to accompany "snuffle." I have found only one other occurrence of the graphs in later literature. The Tang poet Pi Rixiu 皮日休 (ninth century) uses the bisyllabic compound *houxia* 齁齨 (a variant of 齨)[92] in the final couplet of a poem about the rain shield that protects the backs of fishermen (*bei peng* 背篷):

> Deeply nestled [beneath the shield], finally there is no speech;
> Empty-handed, [he] sleeps, kaw-kup (*houxia* 齁齨).[93]

I suspect that Pi Rixiu used the "Wangsun fu" compounds to fashion his own nonce word for the sound of snoring.

Stepping back from philological investigation, let us imagine ourselves as second-century readers or hearers of couplets 5 through 9 of "Wangsun fu." Monosyllabic nouns define the basic image of the princeling macaque's face: eyes, eye-rims, nose-bridge, nose, ears, mouth, lips, teeth. Juxtaposed with these clear markers, the bisyllabic compounds generate visual and aural sensations as they make the face vividly present. As with the first lines of couplets 5 and 7, even if the bisyllables do not make immediate sense, the graphs, syllables, and words now tease the eyes with graphs not seen before, now intrigue the ears with artful sounds – many of them mimicking the princeling macaque's own sounds and gestures. Couplets 11 through 14 make similarly deft use of bisyllabic compounds in juxtaposition with easily recognized descriptive words. Yet another function is embedded in this language. The linguistic mimicry invites the poet or reader of "Wangsun fu" to act out the role of the princeling macaque as he recites or reads;

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word (see *DKWJ* 8, no. 23226), Wang Yanshou's bisyllabic compound might have sounded like *huit-huit. Perhaps the reduplicated sound expressed a sense related to a "startled look"?

[92] *DKWJ* 12, no. 48528.

[93] *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1960) 611, p. 7047. The poem is one in a cycle of five poems about fishing equipment.

the words limn a performance. Surveying the structure of the entire *fu*, there is narration too, but its function is minor compared to the omnipresence of a role whose performance is the inevitable outcome of articulating the words themselves (couplets 17 through 26 exhibit this quality as well). In short, the artistry of the "Wangsun fu" is most evident in its execution, which I think inspired both amusement and aesthetic pleasure among Wang Yanshou's contemporaries.

Having detailed my understanding of the plan of the *fu* and my strategy for reading it, I return to my claim that "Wangsun fu" can be read as a record of "a poet making poetry" and that it "is a testament of being a poet."[94] The evidence of self-representation in the name *wangsun* justifies making the claim, yet I cannot produce an argument based on my reading of the *fu* that provides conclusive proof. In place of a proof and as a form of conclusion let me consider Wang Yanshou and his *fu* in the light of the times. Stephen Owen observes that "immense changes in the nature and concept of literature were occurring in the last decades of the Han," and his summary of Cao Pi's "Lun wen" provides a useful point of reference for looking at Wang Yanshou and his "Wangsun fu":

> [E]ven though Ts'ao P'i echoed the old Han themes throughout the "Discourse," the central issues he raises surrounding *wen* were no longer the venerable Han concerns regarding the conflict between moral force and the seductive, potentially immoral forces that may be carried in writing. Literature is by no means treated as an autonomous art in the "Discourse," but Ts'ao P'i's primary concern is not ethics; rather he is interested in how personality comes to be inscribed in writing, what makes writing compelling rather than morally "good," and the immortality that a writer may hope to achieve.[95]

"Not primarily concerned with ethics," "interested in how personality comes to be inscribed in writing," and "interested in what makes writing compelling rather than morally 'good'" would seem to fit the poet of "Wangsun fu." Mark Asselin's investigation of literature in the second half of the second century AD – especially the *fu* – provides substantial evidence of the antecedents to Cao Pi's pronouncements in about 217. Two aspects noted by Asselin are particularly relevant

[94] See above.

[95] Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 58. On the changes in literary aesthetics, see also Robert Joe Cutter, "To the Manner Born? Nature and Nurture in Early Medieval Chinese Literary Thought," in Pearce et al., *Culture and Power*, pp. 53–71.

to Wang Yanshou and "Wangsun fu": "the emergence of individual sensibilities in the literary process," and "the movement of the center of literary activity from the court to private exchange."[96] A poet around 160 AD who used a poem to reflect on poets and poetry would have had a receptive audience (and readership) among an elite for whom poetry was already more personal and more an object of aesthetic appreciation than before. For Wang Yanshou to have conceived and composed the kind of poem I claim he composed in "Wangsun fu" was not an anomalous act. Read properly, "Wangsun fu" reinforces other evidence of "changes in the nature and concept of literature" (Owen's phrase). "Wangsun fu" remains, however, unlike any poem that came before or after. It is, in my judgment, a work of poetic genius.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DKWJ	Morohashi Tetsuji 諸橋轍次, *Dai Kan-Wa jiten* 大漢和辭典
SW	Duan Yucai 段玉裁, *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注

[96] Asselin, "'A Significant Season,'" p. 229.

Appendix: "Wangsun fu" Rhymes

The rhyme categories are those for the Later Han period given in Luo Changpei and Zhou Zumo, *Han Wei Jin Nan Bei chao yunbu yanbian yanjiu* (see n. 54). Later Han reconstructions of rhyme words have been provided by Axel Schuessler. All rhymes in "Wangsun fu" are open syllable words. Words belonging to Middle Chinese tone A (*ping* 平) are unmarked; tone B (*shang* 上) words are marked with "-ʔ"; tone C (*qu* 去) words are marked with "-h."

Rhyme Categories 支 *(*-ai) and* 脂 *(*-e)*

COUPLET	GRAPH	TRANSCRIPTION
1	奇	*gɨâi>gɨe
2	爲	*wâi>we
3	儀	*ŋɨâi>ŋɨe
4	兒	*ñie
5	睦(眭)	*hwe
6	離	*liâi>lie
7	知	*ṭie
8	𥇦	*ʔ-e
9	唲	*ñie
10	脾	*bie
11	咿	*ʔi
12	啼	*de
13	醯	*he
14	𡚬	*ʔ-e
15	崎	*kɨai>kɨe
16	施	*śiâi>śie
17	枝	*kie
18	溪	*khe
19	危	*ŋyâi>ŋye
20	離	*liâi>lie
21	垂	*dźyâi>dźye

Rhyme Category 魚 *(*-a/o)*

COUPLET	GRAPH	TRANSCRIPTION
22	跓(趴)	*phuoh
23	赴	*puoh
24	與	*jâʔ
25	聚	*dzioʔ
26	舞	*muâʔ
27	縷	*lioʔ

Rhyme Category 支 *(*-ai)*

COUPLET	GRAPH	TRANSCRIPTION
28	醨	*liâi>lie
29	馳	*ḍiâi>ḍie
30	知	*ṭie
31	縻	*mɨâi>mɨe
32	疲	*bɨâi>bɨe