

中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊
第七十八本，第二分
出版日期：民國九十六年六月

明清中國萬里尋親的文化實踐

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本文主要根據方志與其他文類所記載的萬里尋親孝子傳，討論這種孝行典範在明清中國做為一種文化實踐的情形。全文分為三部分：第一部分根據方志史料，分析有關萬里尋親孝行的記載，說明在時間、地域、類型、社會身分與性別各方面的特色與變化。並舉例說明這類孝行典範由於受到士人更多的認同與讚許，故在文藝創作與文化動員上都有明顯可觀的成績，表現出這類文化實踐在明清社會中多元而豐富的生命力。第二部分說明萬里尋親孝子傳的敘述具有特定的模式，並以孝思、受苦之旅、天人交助、救贖四個主題，分析這類敘述所再現的意涵。第三部分則試圖從文本的裂縫，觀察故事的另一些面向，雖然未必是更真實的面貌，卻能提供我們對於「孝」落實於日常生活過程中所牽涉的複雜情境，以及明清帝國在獎勵萬里尋親孝行的同時所遭遇的困難，有進一步的觀察。結論部分，則透過與現代尋親報導的簡短比較，說明傳統萬里尋親孝行乃特殊文化型塑下的產物。

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“Wandering in Search of Lost Parents”: The Social and Cultural Significance of a Filial Practice in Ming-Qing China

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This article discusses the social and cultural practice of a specific filial act—wandering in search of one’s lost parents (*wanli xunqin*)—during the Ming and Qing periods. Based on 282 cases found in local gazetteers, this article first analyzes the changes in the numbers of records and the types of related practices throughout its history, as well as the geographical distribution, social status and gender of those who went in search of their parents. Some examples are also offered to explain how this specific filial act could stimulate various cultural practices and produce rich literatures in various genres. It is clear that society, in particular scholars, demonstrated a sympathetic and supportive attitude toward this filial practice. I then turn to the narrative structure of these accounts. In addition to the model narrative structure, four motifs—filial thought, journey of suffering, aid from humans and heaven, and salvation—articulate the meaning of these writings. In the third part of the article, problems arising from this filial practice are discussed, including how filial sons could shun their family responsibilities, how people could break laws in the name of filial piety, and how tensions and conflicts between filial sons and their fathers could arise. In the concluding part, I undertake a brief comparison with modern reports of similar practices, in order to highlight the specific cultural and historical characteristics of this Ming-Qing filial practice.

Keywords: filial piety, wandering in search of lost parents, Huang Xiangjian