

保暖、炫耀與權勢—— 明代珍貴毛皮的文化史

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紫貂、海獺、猞猁等珍貴毛皮，是明人夢寐以求的奢侈品，但制度上僅限定皇家、文武官員、太監可以享用。明代珍貴的毛皮主要來自女真及蒙古地區，但其年輸入量僅僅數萬，遠遠無法與清代相比，故特別稀罕。就如珠寶一樣，貂皮也引發富裕者向上模仿的慾望，十五、十六世紀之交，北京若干士人、富商、貴婦、名妓、豪奴，開始逾越身分穿著，朝廷曾頒布禁奢令禁止。不過，與不斷禁止穿著絲綢相比，其在整個明朝僅有四次，相差極為懸殊。隆慶四年以後，隨著明帝國與蒙古達成封貢，毛皮輸入管道較前多元，穿著貂皮之記載有所增加，由前此的北京、南直隸，擴及山東、河南、山西、陝西、浙江、湖廣等地。十六世紀後半，一件貂裘需銀百兩或更高，即使是官員亦非人人有之。萬曆末年以後，遼東的優質毛皮，因奴兒哈赤起兵，輸入量越來越少，毛皮價格隨之日增，穿得起者更少。從氣候的角度看，南直隸、浙江、湖廣地處南方，不必然需要保暖性佳的優質毛皮，但富裕者還是穿來炫耀，而位處長城沿線寒冷邊區的百姓，卻多半僅穿著綿衣或羊裘過冬。由於貂皮珍貴，故常成為賄賂權臣與巨璫，及奉承出巡邊關官員的好物件，甚至用貂皮製作窗幔，或以之為馬桶坐墊，或鋪在地板之上。

關鍵詞：貂皮 炫耀 奢侈消費 禁奢令 賄賂

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Warmth, Ostentation, and Power: A Culture History of Valuable Furs in the Ming Dynasty

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Sable, sea otter, and lynx furs, as well as other valuable pelts, were much sought after luxury items during the Ming dynasty. Unfortunately, due to the regulations of the time, the use and enjoyment of these furs was limited to the royal family, government officials, and eunuchs only. During the Ming dynasty, valuable furs were mainly imported from Manchurian and Mongolian regions. However, because only a few tens of thousands of furs were imported every year, an amount far smaller than that imported during the Qing dynasty, these furs were especially rare. Like jewelry, sable furs created in the rich the desire to imitate those persons of greater power or higher stature than themselves. At the turn of the sixteenth century, a number of Beijing's literati as well as wealthy merchants, noble ladies, famous prostitutes, and powerful servants began to dress above their class, and the imperial government even had to issue sumptuary laws to forbid this practice. However, when compared with the government's continual issuance of laws prohibiting the use of silk clothing, it is obvious that fur apparel was targeted much less frequently as sporting furs was forbidden only four times during the Ming.

After 1570, following a tributary arrangement arrived at by the Ming and Mongolian governments, avenues for fur importation became more diverse, and records of people donning sable apparel also increased. Fur clothing spread from previous fur centers like Beijing and Nan Zhili to the Shandong, Henan, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Zhejiang, and Huguang regions as well. However, by the second half of the sixteenth century, a sable coat cost at least one hundred taels of silver, a price even some government officials could not afford. After 1610, fewer and fewer high quality Manchurian furs were imported due to attacks lead by the Manchurian leader Nurhachi. This caused frequent increases in fur prices, and, as a result, even fewer people could afford to wear fur items.

When viewing the issue from a climatic perspective, we can see that because the Nan Zhili, Zhejiang, and Huguang areas were located in the south, valuable fur coats, known for their ability to provide warmth, were not, in fact, necessary in these regions. However, richer classes still wore these furs as a means by which to flaunt their wealth. On the other hand, the greater portion of the common people in the bitter cold border regions along the Great Wall wore only cotton or lambskin coats to pass the winter. Due to sable's high value, it became a prime tool with which to bribe powerful officials or eunuchs as well as a means by which to flatter officials inspecting border passes, and some furs were even made into curtains, toilet seat covers, or floor spreads and rugs.

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