

THE CHAN THOUGHTS IN THE POETRY OF HAN SHAN

BY

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CONTENTS

	Page	
Aknowledgements	iv	
Abstract	vi	
Abstrak	x	
Notes	xiv	
Chapter I	Han Shan The Poet	
1.1	Name and Identity	1
1.2	Han Shan's Date of Birth	16
1.3	Han Shan's Early Life and Life As A Poet	25
Chapter II	Buddhism and Chinese Literature	39
Chapter III	Chan and Chinese Poetry	
3.1	The Combination of Chan and Poetry: Chan Poems	50
3.2	The Origin and Development of Chan Poems	58
Chapter IV	Chan Thoughts In The Poetry of Han Shan	69
4.1	The Idea of "Buddha Nature"	74
4.2	The Idea of "The Essence of Mind is intrinsically pure	91
4.3	The Idea of "Sudden Enlightenment"	101
4.4	The Idea of "True Emptiness and Condition Existence"	112
4.5	The Idea of "Aloof Realism"	125
Chapter V	The Influence of Chan thoughts in Han Shan's Style of Writing	147
Chapter VI	Conclusion	176
Bibliography		186

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ABSTRACT

Han Shan (?) or Han Shan Zi, known simply as Cold Mountain by westerners, has traditionally been regarded as a Buddhist recluse or more specifically a Chan poet. This image is justified to some degree because of the important contributions he had made to the main stream of Buddhist thoughts. He was especially admired for his Chan poems even among his contemporaries. He created a unique place for himself in Chinese literature by perfecting and enriching the genre of Chan poetry.

However, Han Shan's achievements and contributions to Chan poetry has been neglected all these years, by most of the literary critics and writers of Chinese literary history. As a result, he has not been accorded an appropriate place in the history of Chinese literature. It is for this reason I have chosen this dissertation topic as the field of my study. I have attempted to explore his Chan poems in detail and to evaluate his contributions to Chinese literature as a whole.

I have attempted to do this, within the following framework which I have divided into six chapters.

Chapter one is an introduction to Han Shan. Here I have attempted to explain the poet's name, identity, life and the times he lived in. I have also examined his development as a poet, his beliefs and their significance in the writing of his poetry. Since the poet left no chronology for proper reference, his poems will be the main source and evidence of this research.

Chapter two traces the coming of Buddhism to China and its gradual influence in Chinese literature on the whole.

Chapter three shows how Chan was brought to China by Buddhism and its apparent connection to Chinese poetry. It also explains how Chan and poetry was combined to produce a new genre of Chan poems in China.

Chapter four is a specific study of Chan thoughts in Han Shan's poetry. Poems are cited and analysed in detail, under five

main categories: (i) The idea of “Buddha nature”, (ii) The idea of “the essence of mind is intrinsically pure”, (iii) The idea of “sudden enlightenment”, (iv) The idea of “true emptiness and condition existence”, and (v) The idea of “aloof realism”. The poems were chosen for their concise and simple language and also for their deep and rich meanings. They express the poet’s own experience of Chan and provide the future generations with the means of realizing Chan.

Chapter five is an analysis of Han Shan’s style of writing. This study is supplemented by a discussion of the allusions, images, and the language used and also an evaluation of his achievements in the writing of Chan poetry.

Chapter six is the conclusion. Based on the studies done from chapter one to chapter five, I have concluded that Han Shan’s Chan poems have attained a high level of poetic achievement and have contributed tremendously to Chinese literature.

It is my hope that this dissertation will be a great help to those who are interested in the practise of Chan. I also hope it will

give a balanced view of Chan as a whole and as an important, as well as inseparable part of Chinese literature.

ABSTRAK

Han Shan atau Han Shan Zi, yang lebih dikenali sebagai Cold Mountain oleh orang-orang barat, adalah seorang penyajak Chan. Dia dianggap sebagai seorang penganut Buddha yang amat setia kepada agamanya. Ini ialah kerana sumbangannya yang amat besar kepada aliran pemikiran Chan. Dia dikagumi khususnya kerana sajak-sajak Channya. Berbanding dengan penyajak-penyajak yang lain, dia mencipta tempat yang unik untuk dirinya di dalam dunia kesusasteraan Cina, dengan menyempurnakan dan memperkayakan lagi sajak-sajak Chan ini.

Namun begitu, pencapaian serta sumbangan Han Shan telah diabaikan oleh para pengkritik sastera dan penulis-penulis sejarah kesusasteraan Cina untuk satu jangkamasa yang lama. Dia tidak diberikan tempat yang sepatutnya di dalam sejarah kesusasteraan Cina. Ini menjadi sebab saya memilih topik ini untuk dijadikan bahan kajian. Saya ingin cuba mengkaji secara terperinci sajak-sajak Channya dan juga menilai sumbangan-sumbangannya kepada dunia kesusasteraan Cina.

Rangka kajian ini dibahagikan kepada enam bab seperti di bawah:

Bab pertama ialah pengenalan kepada Han Shan. Di sini, saya telah cuba menjelaskan nama sebenar, identiti, cara hidup serta zaman kehidupannya. Saya juga telah mengkaji perkembangannya sebagai seorang penyajak, kepercayaannya dan juga pentingnya kepercayaan-kepercayaan ini di dalam penulisan sajak-sajaknya. Sajak-sajaknya menjadi sumber utama dan juga bukti utama kepada kajian ini kerana dia tidak meninggalkan sebarang kronologi untuk dijadikan bahan rujukan.

Bab kedua mengesan kedatangan Buddhisme ke negara China dan pengaruhnya yang perlahan ke atas kesusasteraan Cina secara keseluruhannya.

Bab ketiga menunjukkan bagaimana pengaruh Chan meresap masuk ke negara China melalui agama Buddha dan hubungannya dengan sajak-sajak Cina. Ia juga menjelaskan bagaimana Chan dan sajak telah digabungkan untuk menghasilkan sebuah genre baru dalam penulisan sajak yang dinamakan sajak-sajak Chan.

Bab keempat ialah kajian terperinci tentang pemikiran Chan di dalam sajak-sajak Han Shan. Sajak-sajak ditulis dan dianalisa dengan terperinci di bawah lima kategori yang utama: (i) Idea “Buddha nature”, (ii) Idea “the essence of mind is intrinsically pure”, (iii) Idea “sudden enlightenment”, (iv) Idea “true emptiness and condition existence” dan (v) Idea “aloof realism”. Sajak-sajak yang dipilih adalah kerana penggunaan bahasanya yang mudah serta tepat dan juga kerana maksudnya yang kaya dan mendalam. Sajak-sajak ini juga menunjukkan pengalaman penyajak dalam Chan. Ia juga menyediakan bahan kepada para pengkaji yang ingin mendalami Chan, di masa hadapan.

Bab kelima ialah analisis terhadap gaya penulisan Han Shan. Perkara-perkara yang dikaji meliputi alusi, imejan dan bahasa yang digunakan. Saya juga menilai pencapaiannya dalam penulisan sajak.

Bab keenam ialah kesimpulan. Berdasarkan kepada kajian-kajian yang dilakukan dari bab satu hingga bab lima, saya menyudahi disertasi ini dengan menekankan bahawa sajak-sajak Chan yang ditulis oleh Han Shan telah mencapai suatu tahap yang amat tinggi

dan telah memberi sumbangan yang amat besar kepada kesusasteraan Cina.

Saya berharap disertasi ini akan dapat membantu orang yang berminat dalam pembacaan Chan. Saya juga berharap ia akan memberi pandangan yang seimbang mengenai Chan secara keseluruhannya dan juga sebagai sebahagian daripada kesusasteraan Cina.

NOTES

I would like to acknowledge here that the poems in English translation are taken from different books. Which are respectively:

- (i) Henricks, Robert G. *The Poetry of Han Shan: A Complete, annotated Translation of Cold Mountain*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1990.
- (ii) Watson, Burton. *Cold Mountain*. Boston: Shambhala, 1992.
- (iii) Snyder, Gary. *From "Cold mountain" Poems*, in *Anthology of Chinese Literature*. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1965.
- (iv) Waley, Arthur. *Chinese Poems*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1983.

The symbol * is used in the beginning of each poems to let the readers know where the translations are taken from. For example: there are no symbols provided for poems cited from book (i). Symbol * is used for the poems cited from book (ii). The symbol ** is for book (iii) and symbol *** marks the poems cited from book (iv).

When a poem is cited in the text, the Chinese version of the poem is given in the lines below. When materials are quoted from any Buddhist Sutrā or Sayings, besides English translations, the Chinese characters are also provided.

The system of "Hanyu Pinyin" (汉语拼音) is adhered throughout all Chinese names and places in China, with the exception of those which have been used by the person concerned and are universally accepted, such as Confucius, Taoism and etc.