

## Abstract

The thesis is concerned with the life and work of the poetess Cai Yan 蔡琰 (178-239?), also known under the honorary title Wenji 文姬, and the way her life experience is later displayed in visual arts. Cai Yan's oeuvre is not too extensive and its authenticity is sometimes questioned, but her story was one of the most popular subject matters in painting since the Song Dynasty.

The first part of the thesis summarizes basic biographical information on Cai Yan based on her biography in the Book of the Later Han (*Hou Han shu* 后汉书). The author's poems and their different forms as well as the issues relating to their authenticity are introduced here, too. The first part is concluded by translation of the poem *Hujia shiba pai* 胡笳十八拍 translated traditionally as *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*.

The second part of the thesis deals with the issue of narrative painting in China and the painting inspired by the story of the poetess and her writing. The sub-themes inspired by a poem *Hujia shiba pai* attributed to Cai Yan and her biography in the official chronicle are described on the example of the most famous surviving scroll of the same name. The second part also includes a general reflection on the relationship between literature and painting. The concept of narrative painting which includes paintings inspired by the life of Cai Yan is explained here in more detail.