

## Abstract

The thesis examines autobiographical prose works by the modern Chinese writer Xiao Qian (1910-1999), which are inspired by Beijing or in which Beijing is thematized or represented. Relevant short stories from the 1930s and essayistic prose from the 1980s and 1990s are set in the context of the author's life and work. The core of the thesis is the presentation of the linguistic and literary representation of the city and the ways in which a specific identity of the literary space is constructed. The connecting motif of all the works discussed is the motif of life in the *hutongs* – the typical streets of Beijing – during the 1920s and 1930s. The depiction of life in the *hutongs*, to which the author had a strong emotional attachment, is linked to several motifs that repeatedly occur in his fiction. These include local delicacies, Beijing dialect, street vendors, children's games, and local customs or festivals. Finally, the thesis also draws attention to the critical tone of some of the works, especially the essayistic prose of the 1980s and 1990s, in which Xiao Qian deals with the city's hasty modernization.