

## **A popular scientific description of the research conducted as part of the dissertation**

The aim of the study is to examine the ways of dwelling East Prussian which came into the possession of Masurian State Farms (Państwowe Gospodarstwa Rolne, PGR, colloquially "pegeery") after World War II. Following PGR workers, I focus on the period from 1945 to the present, treating the socialist transformation in the use of the palaces (I call them "pałace-pegeery" [PGR-palaces]) and its post-socialist epilogue as a whole. The periodization of the presented project is based on the recognition that the moment the Red Army entered East Prussia, it marked an immediate change in the function of the Junker palaces and announced a new social order, which was confirmed in 1946 with the appearance of State Land Properties (Państwowe Nieruchomości Ziemskie, PNZ) in these spaces and fully institutionalized in 1949 with State Farms. Also in 1945, southern East Prussia (including Masuria) became part of the People's Republic of Poland. As for the contemporary caesura of the research, it is rooted in earlier fieldwork that showed that for former PGR workers, the period of economic and political transition and its *longue durée* is as important a topic as working and living on State Farms. In other words, the memory of PGRs does not exist without a contemporary context.

Within the presented project I examine four sets of processes and practices of dwelling experienced by the inhabitants of State Farms: (1) the immediate post-war dwelling of a new social, economic, political space, the taming of the palace and the cultural and plant landscape being as an emanation of the former East Prussia, (2) institutional dwelling – the ways in which the palace space was organized by State Farms, official scripts for the use of the palace, the activities of care and cultural institutions in the palace, (3) spontaneous dwelling of the palace – agricultural workers trampling the space for themselves, microgestures in the neighborhood of the palace (including flower beds, extensions, beehives), caring practices towards the palace, (4) weaning of the dwelling – fencing of the palaces by the new private owners, practices of dissent. I first examine each of these issues from the perspective of PGR workers (biographical interviews, competition diaries, memoirs) and juxtapose them with what I call the cultural history of State Farms and the history of the cultural landscape of former East Prussia.

I look at the processes under discussion from two perspectives: (1) the social memory of the practices of dwelling in the palaces managed by PGRs, which finds its outlet in language – the story constructed for the biographical interview, the competition diary, the written memoir – and the muscle memory of PGR inhabitants and the accompanying affects, (2) the material traces of practices of dwelling in the cultural and plant landscape. I analyze cultural texts (novels, reportages, feature films and documentaries, photographs, newspapers) that focus on State Farms, the cultural landscape of former East Prussia, and Masurian State Farms using the tools of the anthropology of words, the anthropology of visual culture, and performativity. For the past three years, I have been conducting field research in several selected villages in Masuria: biographical interviews with workers and inhabitants of PGRs, and participatory observation.

By describing the practices, materialities, discourses, and affects realized in the reality of State Farms in Masuria, I will propose an alternative way of telling the history of PGRs: as a space of agency and the emergence of new social entities. All of this adds up to a potential history of State Farms.