



Martyna Miernecka

University of Warsaw,
Institute of Polish Culture

The goal of my project is to examine the cultural phenomenon of the Houses of Creative Work [Dom Pracy Twórczej], a special kind of accommodation facility created in the Soviet Union in the 1920s which was supposed to assure adequate conditions for the creative work and leisure of artists.

In my research I focus on the case of Obory, near Warsaw, where the first House of Creative Work for Polish writers was opened in 1948. The analysis is based on three categories of sources: literary texts, archival materials and interviews (oral history). I try to explore the memory of the house in Obory through those different narratives.

Mutual relations between the
place, narratives and memory

Spatial perspective in literary
studies + narrative perspective
in the study of places



I am primarily interested in the idea of this kind of institution as the utopian place that shapes the writing process and creates an united community; a place where the artist's problematic tear between public and private, and between the relationship with the community and the dream of autonomy, is blurred.



During my presentation in Prague I wanted to set this institution as a social project in a broader, Central and Eastern European context. Were there similar literary institutions in other communist countries after 1945? If so, what kind of narratives do they evoke? Those questions – not analyzed in Polish culture so far – also refer to the threads related to the category of a professional writer, images and roles

in the society, and how we perceive them at different times.

It is important to point out the multiplicity of tensions arising in connection with the concept of such institution as Houses of Creative Work in Central and Eastern Europe. The fellowship at Charles University was a perfect opportunity to carry out a comparative analysis. Interdisciplinary character of this initiative allowed us to explore

various relationships regarding fragmentary, fractional, ephemeral memory of those institutions and exchange our comments and experiences.

House of Creative Work in Obory

