

ALTERNATIVE NIGHTLIFE IN PRAGA PÓŁNOC

Alternative nightlife zone in a post-manufacturing district of Warsaw in
the experiences of nightlife entrepreneurs

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Executive Summary

Praga Północ has been for many decades an area associated with neglected urban tissue, social deprivation, pathology, and crime. As a historically working class and post-manufacturing district, separated from the city center of Warsaw by the river, it was not immediately exposed to upgrading possibilities which opened after the change of political system in 1989. Its stereotypical reputation persists until today, although to a smaller extent. This has been due to the process of re-imagining of the district through the artistic and creative activity since late 1990s. Praga Północ is still one of the poorest districts in Warsaw but it increasingly integrates with the rest of the city and receives more interest from the public and investors. It is currently referred to as the cultural district of Warsaw and the first symptoms of gentrification can be identified too.

In recent years Praga became a very popular nightlife destination. The characteristic feature of the nightlife in Praga is the alternative style of the venues and the interaction of the venues with various dimensions of their urban surrounding: built tissue, public spaces, local residents, and the members of the cultural and artistic community of Praga.

The current thesis investigates the nature of the nightlife zone in Praga Północ through the experiences of nightlife entrepreneurs. The case study conducted with qualitative methods involved a series of semi-structured interviews with nightlife producers. It sketches the silhouettes of the entrepreneurs and their motivations for running alternative clubs, showing that there exist close links between the personal backgrounds of the owners, the means of production and regulation of nightlife, and the conditions which Praga Północ offers.

The outcomes of the research identified the venues as entrepreneurial, individual, and locally based. The interactions between the nightlife producers and nightlife consumers have been described as informal and proved to create spaces or interactive and authentic social encounters.

The experiences of the interviewees helped to establish the following aspects of the interaction between the nightlife establishments and the district of Praga Północ:

- the adaptation and use of the old premises,
- discourse on space with local community,
- exclusionary and non-exclusionary practices of the nightlife producers with regards to local community,
- implications on the re-imagining of Praga Północ by the nightlife producers, and
- the social role of Praga's nightlife for the cultural district.

Interviewees were eventually asked to assess the impact of their activity on the neighborhood. They agreed univocally that they contribute directly and indirectly to the process of regeneration of Praga Północ by facilitating the re-imagining of the area and through a constant dialogue with the local residents.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Across the Vistula River, however, Praga is emerging as the standard-bearer of the city's night life and culture. Under Communism, former convicts, alcoholics and other undesirables were corralled in Praga, a lawless pressure-cooker. Today, Warsaw offers incentives to entrepreneurs and artists who settle in Praga, the way Berlin encouraged gentrification of its eastern neighborhoods after the Wall came down.

-Michael Joseph Gross, *New York Times*

With these words Goss speaks of nightlife in the district of Praga Północ in his article "Once-Lawless Area Starts Its Way Up" published in *New York Times* in 2006. The article implies that the historically working-class, deprived, old neighborhood of Warsaw commenced a culture-led transformation observable earlier in post-industrial cities, or alternatively, as in case of East Berlin, the process of upgrading old neighborhoods to a post-socialist reality through arts and entertainment. Indeed, the scientific literature established the integrity and meaning of nightlife in contemporary city (Malbon, in Skelton et al., 1998), the means of production, regulation, and consumption of nightlife (Chatterton, 2002), and the variety of nightlife forms (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002). It is also known that nightlife contributes to economic development of cities (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998; Thomas and Bromley 2000; Florida, 2002), can serve as a regeneration tool (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998; Thomas and Bromley 2000; Campo and Ryan, 2008; Porter and Shaw, 2009) and drive the process of gentrification (Hae, 2011). A more abundant set of studies on the role of arts and culture in urban economy and revitalization of deprived neighborhoods relates to evening entertainment (Montgomery, 2003; Zukin and Breslow, 2011) or directly connects culture and nightlife into a revival force (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998; Hae, 2011). The associated with nightlife issues of fear and safety have been chosen by the authors interested in the influence of fear on the nightlife experience (Thomas and Bromley, 2000), nightlife surveillance (van Liempt and van Aalst, 2012) or governance (Chatterton, 2002; Hae, 2011).

The relatively new development of alternative nightlife taking place in Praga Północ, Warsaw, has been given so far little attention in the field of urban geography. The present report presents the study providing the in-depth, dominantly bottom-up perspective on the development in question and is hoped to encourage further research. The research becomes involved with alternative profile of evening and night venues located in Praga Północ, historically a working-class and manufacturing district and, as already mentioned, contemporarily a disadvantaged neighborhood in change. The research based on a case study combines the investigation of historical and geographical factors, which determined the present conditions favorable for the development of non-mainstream evening economy and nightlife, with a qualitative research conducted among the establishers and managers of the premises in question. The main objective of the research is to demonstrate the functioning of alternative forms of nightlife in a very specific context of Praga Północ. As the most complex, though subjective, source of the relevant information are the owners and the managers of the clubs, they have been

invited to participate in in-depth interviews which constitute the empirical part of the research and imply the perspective chosen for the study. A variety of factors included in the analysis is discussed later on in appropriate sections.

After having been stigmatized for decades in times of socialism, Praga Północ at the early stage of its upgrading experienced initially a significant influx of artists and culture animators (throughout past decade) and only at a later stage, the multiplication of non-mainstream evening and nightlife venues. Thus, the project partially inquires about the relation between the development of arts and culture environment in Praga and the occurrence of the single specific kind of nightlife. A relatively strong relation could be the case, as high culture and fine arts might go in pair with non-mainstream entertainment, creating altogether a mutually supportive social and economic environment (Crewe and Beaverstock, 2000). Also, an attempt is made to determine whether the clubs and club-cafes interact with one another and the extent to which they interact with the urban surrounding in which they are located, mainly with its physical and social aspects. Praga, as already mentioned a former working-class and manufacturing area, is being continuously re-discussed on local and municipal scales in terms of regeneration schemes. Such context encourages a deeper evaluation of the activity of the night clubs in terms of their cooperation with local social environment and their potential impact on the district.

1.1 Research Aim and Research Questions

The main objective of the study is to explore, through the experiences of the nightlife producers, the origins and nature of the alternative nightlife venues in Praga Północ and the ways in which the nightlife zone which they create interacts with the neighborhood. The study takes into consideration several aspects and interactions which are assumed from the established literature or become apparent for this particular case study during the conduction of the research. Therefore, one of objectives of the study is also to reveal a set of aspects of the functioning of alternative nightlife in this specific environment:

- The starting point are the premises themselves: the origins and motivations, the character of these places, and the plans of the managers.
- The following aspects concern the interactions with those of the related actors who participate in the bottom-up development of the nightlife zone. The ongoing discourse surrounding Praga concerns the processes of revitalization and regeneration and various ways in which these two can be achieved. As the debate continues, the lack of knowledge about the role of nightlife for Praga's communities and in the anti-stigmatization transformation becomes apparent. Therefore, the further aim of the research is to fill in the gap in scientific and public information about the origins, role and functioning of the nightclubs and club-cafes in Praga and the ways in which they interact with their surroundings. The culture district which has been shaping in Praga for more than a decade constitutes an important sub-context and needs to be taken into consideration.

Basing on the research aims, the main research question is formulated in the following way:

- *What is the nature of the non-mainstream nightlife venues in Praga Północ and in what ways, drawing from the experiences of their owners and managers, do they interact with the neighborhood?*

Accordingly to the above mentioned aims, the question visibly consists of sub-parts, the first two ones being more descriptive in nature, whereas the later one more analytical, going deeper in the various elements of the nightlife's scope of activities and functions performed in the area. First two issues to be analyzed concern the character of the nightlife venues and the conditions offered by Praga Północ in terms of nightlife production and regulation. The third part analyzes the interaction between nightlife and its surrounding trying to identify the role played by nightlife in the district.

The differentiation below organizes the component sub-questions according to the corresponding aims of the main research question:

- *Q1: Who are the nightlife producers?*

Here, the question asks about the personal background, previous experiences and motivations of the entrepreneurs.

- *Q2: What is the character of the studied venues and how are they regulated?*

Here, the modes of production, regulation and consumption of nightlife will be discussed in order to characterize the clubs and club-cafes.

- *Q3: How can Praga Północ be described in terms of conditions for alternative nightlife?*

This part investigates push factors and both, supportive and problematic aspects of running the premises in Praga Północ in the experience of the entrepreneurs in relation to their location. The concentration of the nightlife venues in Praga is treated as one of the aspects of the location and the relations between the studied venues will be included in this question.

- *Q4: In what ways does the nightlife production interacts with physical space?*
- *Q5: What are the experiences of the nightlife producers in terms of the relations with local community?*
- *Q6: What is the relation between the nightlife zone and the artistic and cultural environment in Praga Północ?*

The experiences shared by nightlife producers should indicate how the functioning of their venues interacts with the neighborhood. Three questions cited above distinguish

between the three involved environments: the nightlife producers themselves, artists and cultural producers, and the residents of Praga.

1.2 Chosen perspective

The majority of the research questions relate to the circumstances and ways of interacting between the alternative nightlife producers and various actors, such as artistic and cultural entrepreneurs, customers, or local residents. It must be marked, therefore, that the study is designed to be mostly one sided – it is based on the experiences of the persons involved only in the production and regulation of the alternative nightlife, not as much in the governance, and not at all from the consumer perspective. The larger research among these actors is beyond the scope of the present study, although it would be highly recommended for the future projects. The single external actor that has been actively consulted for the purpose of the research is the district council. Consultation helped to clarify the position of the local authorities towards the development of nightlife in the center of their area and precise the outlooks on the future standing.

1.3 Research Relevance

The research is highly relevant from socio-political and scientific perspectives. As a capital city of a post-socialist state, Warsaw has been continuously undergoing dramatic changes in various dimensions. With Praga Północ being one of the oldest districts, with preserved pre-war urban tissue and in a highly disadvantaged socio-economic and physical condition, the district requires interventions in the area of physical revitalization, as well as social and economic regeneration. Different alternative scenarios could be followed. Some investments are already being done, from revitalization of singular dilapidated tenements to big scale developer investments in old post-industrial factories. The challenge lies in reinvigorating the area without neglecting its history and charm which constitute the positive essence of the place. The place of nightlife, being after arts and some creative industries one of the pioneers in adaptive use of old tenements and former manufacture places in Praga, has not been yet studied and acknowledged in this debate.

Points of relevance can be distinguished on few levels for the study of alternative nightlife in Praga Północ, Warsaw:

- International urban studies: Cultural and entertainment economy is not an often topic in Polish urban geography. Seen other way around, case studies of Polish urban systems, especially in the field of culture and nightlife, are extremely rare in international literature.
- National urban research: Considering the on-going economic and societal transformations in Poland, the management of deprived and post-industrial areas of city through cultural and entertainment management are new and unexplored not only for the policy makers, but also for the scholars. The development of arts and entertainment in Praga Północ is relatively new (approximately 10 years for

arts, around 5 years for evening and night time venues) and no serious studies have been done yet in this subject. Therefore, there exists certain gap in the literature to be filled in.

- Implications on local scale: The development of nightlife in this historical and post-manufacturing neighborhood is a new phenomenon in Warsaw. The study on the role and functions of the nightlife zone for the district is innovative and meaningful. This seemingly marginal part of the service sector in Praga might occur to be more important, socially and economically, than it is publicly believed. Direct or indirect regenerative impact and the change of Praga's reputation are the two main effects which are expected to come up. Knowledge in this subject is of the highest relevance to policy makers, not solely in the area of entertainment but also in corresponding branches of economy, like arts, creative industries, or tourism.

1.4 Research plan and methods

The research planned in form of a case study envisages two main elements of preparatory work and the empirical part conducted with qualitative methods. The research aims at describing the nature of the clubs and club-cafes in question and their place in, and the interaction with, the direct environment. For the purpose of data analysis, it is crucial to familiarize oneself with the variety of ways in which the subject of nightlife in general and more specifically in the context of deprived city neighborhoods has been approached. The starting point for the report is the literature review. Since previous studies show that the development and functioning of nightlife in particular locations in cities, similarly as in case of culture districts, are closely related to their urban environment, an extensive part of the research is assumed for the study of historically-geographical conditioning of Praga Północ. This part demonstrates step by step how Praga has been changing throughout centuries and how it has evolved into a deprived, neglected neighborhood. Also, it explained to a certain extend the origins of occurrence of the conditions which supported the creation of alternative nightlife zone. Finally, crucial data is obtained in the empirical part of the study in which a group of entrepreneurs – the owners and managers of different kinds of evening venues: night clubs, club-cafes, and pubs – is interviewed, each participant separately. The closer reasons for choosing individual interviews in semi-structured form are explained in chapter 6.

1.5 Structure of the report

Following the introduction, the second chapter is devoted to literature review. The place of nightlife in contemporary city is explained with the reference to the leading authors. Different approaches to nightlife in city are discussed, including the typology of night clubs and the formation of entertainment zones. Problematic issues related to nightlife governance occurred to be of little significance in the present study, since often occurring in previous studies problems related to alcohol consumption or fear have been scarcely

raised by the interviewees. This subject is, therefore, raised very shortly. Moreover, nightlife is discussed as a tool or a bottom-up catalyst in the process of upgrading disadvantaged urban spaces. A section is devoted to the formation and functioning of culture and arts districts in cities. This adds important information to the present study, as cultural development has been noted in the studied area during past decade and it is expected to constitute a significant context. Finally, a short paragraph introduces the notion of gentrification which is not being brought up in the empirical part of the research but will be raised in the conclusions. Chapter 3 specifies the urban setting. It includes the presentation of geographical location of the district, urban tissue, infrastructure, population dynamics, and criminality. Chapter 4 explains the history of Praga Północ up until the system transformation in 1989. It consists of two main sections: the early history and the socialist governance. The 5th chapter discusses the most recent fates of Praga: current socio-economic condition, reputation and ongoing changes. This chapter gives also the most recent background for the empirical part of the research: the artistic and cultural developments in Praga which took place throughout last decade.

The last chapters of the report are devoted to the empirical research and its verification through references to previously discussed theories and facts related to Praga. Chapter 7 is the part of the report which demonstrates the outcomes of the empirical research of the study. The information obtained in the research conducted in Praga is discussed here in detail. This is to say, the origins and nature of the alternative evening and night time entertainment businesses are revealed through the experiences of the owners and managers and the interaction with the neighborhood is being explored. The final, 8th chapter, reviews the results of the research presented in chapter 7 and presents conclusions with further recommendations.

Chapter 2: Related theories and previous studies

The objective of the current study is to investigate the development and functions of a non-mainstream nightlife zone in a disadvantaged district of Warsaw. Particularly on the background of problematic issues surrounding Praga Północ and its stereotypical opinion of being unpleasant and unsafe, this development appears to Warsaw's public as uneasy to explain. The geographical literature, however, is well acquainted with related cases.

The main objects of the empirical research are non-mainstream night clubs, club-cafes, and pubs which involve in their activity the elements of entertainment and culture. In the current report they are approached as an assembly of similar venues and termed altogether a 'nightlife zone'. The closer specification of the terms used in the empirical research will result from the literature review and is presented in Chapter 6. By then, the most important concepts and processes in the subject of nightlife are outlined and explained in the following sections.

Considering the main research question, literature on nightlife constitutes the theoretical stem but appears not fully sufficient for the purposes of this project. An extensive artistic network that has acclimatized in Praga Północ during the past decade constitutes an important factor which should not be omitted. An introduction to the theory of creativity and culture districts, therefore, seem to be relevant in understanding the processes that occur in Praga and handy in elaborating the results of the empirical study. Some implications can be derived from the experiences of other cities showing that alternative entertainment spaces, such as non-mainstream nightclubs, concert venues, or music pubs, tend to multiply/gather in the areas of city where cultural infrastructure or artistic activities are strongly present in local economy and social life.

2.1 Contextual approach

A contextual geographical approach is chosen for the project in order to place the research in a theoretical approach through which the subject is considered. This should facilitate also the understanding of the perspective chosen by the author.

In their study, Campo and Ryan (2008) propose everyday urbanism as a platform for study on contemporary entertainment zones. Everyday urbanism is a theoretical approach which advocates the importance for cities to evolve dominantly organically (Campo and Ryan, 2008). The authors advocate that the conceptualization of entertainment zones stems from this contextual approach, as opposed to big-scale, commercial, evening and night entertainment projects which develop in a top-down way. Alexander et al. (1977) expressed strong conviction that piece-meal development is more favorable for the creation of lively environment and disliked the involvement of laws and master plans (p.3). Jacobs (1961) also advocated for natural evolution of cities, mix of uses, and direct connectivity of streets and functions of buildings, in residential and retail premises. She put forward the idea of old ideas in new buildings and new ideas suitable for old buildings. This idea is very adequate to the studied phenomena as it proves true in

cases where tenements or former manufacturing spaces host nightlife venues. Both authors expressed dislike for large buildings and favored dense, middle and small scale urban tissue- the kind of tissue that can be encountered in Warsaw almost uniquely in Praga. Appreciating the argument that the process of city creating constitutes "human and social discourse (Crawford, 1999, p. 9)", the author of the present study recognizes the value of the non-planned character of nightlife areas which is being the object of the present study. One of the crucial characteristics of a bottom-up course of events in the domain of entertainment, for this study, will be that the vitality associated with it diminishes the distance between professionals and users (Crawford, 1999, p.12). In their solid research of theories emerging for the entertainment zones, in which nightlife is the main component, Campo and Ryan (2008) propose everyday urbanism as the core theoretical background for the development of non-planned nightlife zones. Their research pinpoints what has been necessary for such to be shaped in the city which the authors studied (Milwaukee): "flexible, low cost, modest-sized spaces in [already] existing buildings, together with a general lack of planning and development schemes (p.308)". These conditions are, indeed, aligned with the assumptions of everyday urbanism.

2.2 Nightlife in post modern city

2.2.1 Introduction: Placing nightlife in changing economies

A significant number of studies document the impact that the last decades of the 20th century exerted on urban systems. Processes such as post-industrial transformation, globalization, increased importance of communication, and the emergence of ICT revolutionized people's leisure and work as well as modes of economic production and consumption. Post-industrial economy created different labor demands, reshaped the society, and keeps transforming the physical aspects of the city. This new economy bases on information, knowledge, creativity, and flexible means of production. Post-modern city is characterized, among others, by growth and dominance of the formerly marginal service sector, along which work and leisure are increasingly aligned. In Western countries this transformation started already in the 1970s. The East of Europe incorporated in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics opened for changes only after the fall of the iron curtain in 1989, meaning that the transformations here can be treated as relatively new and in progress. Academics agree that in today's inter-city competition, cities make amends in their 'soft infrastructure' by involving creative cultural and leisure amenities (Scott, 2000), associated also with landscape transformation (Gospodini, 2006). New urban economies are "nourished by cultural and leisure industries, while the appearance of new types of urban redevelopment, renewal and regeneration is encouraged by the creation and expansion of new cultural, leisure and consumption spaces (Gospodini, 2006, p. 312)". High consumption of culture becomes to a certain extent an indicator of the societal well-being. Economizing culture gives economic and social benefits and often adds a new dimension to revitalization opportunities in degraded areas of city. The growing middle class group of 'creatives', young professionals, and experts, interplays with new economies and new use of urban spaces.

Nightlife as a part of the service sector develops as well in this context gaining new functions and new meanings. The notion of 'nightlife' transformed into the term 'nightlife economy' in the early 1990s in the UK. 'Nightlife economy' refers to the "dominant policy formulation of urban nightlife" which addresses "expanded provision, interaction and consumption of leisure activities and experiences associated with patterns of collective night-time sociability and entertainment (Rowe and Bavinton, 2011)". Such conceptualization emanated from related to the earlier mentioned processes change of modes and rhythms of work and, simultaneously, rhythms of leisure. The current research, however, relies less on 'nightlife economy' and more on the notion of 'nightlife' itself. Nightlife is understood here as *dynamic social interactions taking place in the evenings and at nights in the establishments which produce and regulate various forms of means of these interactions, such as entertainment, music, dance, events, or forms of gastronomy.*

Studies which focus on evening economy and nightlife solely have been rather separated from the context of cultural economy and arts in the domain of urban research (Campo and Ryan, 2008; Hae, 2011). Other way around, some studies devoted to cultural quarters treated nightlife as minor supporters of the larger cultural economy (Montgomery, 2003). Different kinds of entertainment develop in response to changing lifestyles. This has been the case when nightlife is considered, in terms of popularization of evening and night time venues as much as in diversification of offered styles. The place of nightlife in cultural quarters (Montgomery, 2003), creative centers (Florida, 2002; Pratt, 2011), and arts districts (Zukin and Breslow, 2011) has been stated, but not elaborated extensively, especially from the bottom-up perspective of the nightlife producers themselves. Reflections on night clubs and club-cafes in environmental sociology and local geographies have been considered rather in terms of social-environmental problems they create, such as alcohol abuse, criminality or fear, and interventions related to these problems (Roberts, 2006). However, economic geographers emphasize the role of night-time economy in extending the duration of daily cycle of city life beyond the so-called '5pm flow (Lovatt and O'Connor, 1995)'. Moreover, self-developed nightlife zones and corporate and themed entertainment projects proved to be helpful in the processes of regeneration of degraded areas. Most of the above-mentioned studies have been developed in the US, the UK, or other Western European cities. The extent to which culture, creativity, or entertainment have impact on environmental, social, or economic conditions in chosen areas depends largely on circumstances: country, city, history of the area, physical condition, uses of space, infrastructure, residents, policies, local culture, and social interventions.

Separate studies treat on arts and culture quarters, their functioning and local impacts, and the origins and functioning of night-clubs and club-cafes in similar urban contexts. The simultaneous development of nightlife and culture in some cities suggest that the two can develop together in a disadvantaged area, where similar circumstances could be favorable for both and the two kinds of economic activity could re-enforce one another (Hollands and Chatterton, 2002). In Berlin, the post-industrial spaces in a post-socialist context have been adapted to form an extensive network of night-clubs, attaching a new function and reputation to the area. A similar context exists in Praga Północ, one of the East-bank districts of Warsaw. Here, the culture and arts were first to find their

way to engage with space. Not to the extent compared to Berlin, but of a similar edgy nature, club-cafes and nightclubs which opened in Praga Północ soon after the artistic invasion began created the first of this kind alternative nightlife destination in Warsaw.

2.2.2 Typology of nightclubs

The study by Chatterton and Hollands (2002) is unique in its specific focus on typology of clubs and various aspects of production, regulation, and consumption of nightlife playscapes. Their study constitutes a basic source of the characterization of the kind of nightlife studied in the present project. The authors establish a reference framework for distinguishing types of nightlife: mainstream, residual, and alternative.

- **Mainstream** spaces are referred to as branded, themed, often corporate companies, locating their premises in larger cities, orientated at highly commercial, upgraded style and "cash-rich groups" such as professionals, high and middle level service sector workers, and students (p.99).
- To the group of **residual** spaces authors include traditional premises, such as pubs, ale houses, and taverns, which traditionally played important role in community integration. This specification appears to have been described for the British context.
- Finally, **alternative** clubs are defined as: "smaller, more differentiated, usually independently run 'alternative' nightlife spaces which cater for more specific and specialist youth cultures, and tastes, and are primarily organized around identities such as ethnicity, sexuality, politics or certain styles related to music and dress (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, p.99)".

Table 1 juxtaposes the categories of nightlife distinguished by the authors outlining their specific features. The table by Chatterton and Hollands (2002) has been complemented with examples of corresponding styles of venues from Warsaw.

Global or national brands find strong place in path dependencies of entertainment economy due to their corporate character, economies of scale, bigger capital, and stronger stability on the market. It should be noted that not all mainstream night venues operate on national or bigger scales. In Warsaw, the vast majority of mainstream evening and night venues involves the mainstream-style offer but is not part of larger chains. Through appropriate regulation, creation of commercial atmosphere, and public relations, however, they can be included in the discourse on commercialization and branding. They create strong brands and even if not long-lasting and attached to singular venues, mainstream establishments do prove stronger in urban economy and more resistant to changes (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002). In the situation where residual and alternative venues are being pushed off by mainstream undertakings, adhering to the main stream becomes an alternative to decline. In terms of urban and cultural economy, alternative places constitute weaker engines of financial flows but are likely to have more local and individual impacts. The more locally-focused economic activity can contribute to the

reimagining of the location, bring entertainment to groups which would otherwise not seek such in mainstream locations, and attract other sectors of urban economy through this re-imagining of physical and social dimensions. Due to their less commercial character, they often involve cooperation with cultural producers and consumers.

The main argument of the quoted study by Chatterton and Hollands (2002) is that current tendencies in production, regulation, and consumption push out the residual and alternative establishments favoring mainstream nightlife. It is emphasized that commercialization and branding tends to eliminate residual milieus which are left to decline. This tendency is assessed for the UK and it can be assumed that the dominance of nightlife styles is different for specific urban locations, in varying developmental situations, economies, or cultures. Nonetheless, commercialization of culture and entertainment cannot be undermined as, indeed, it carries potential to become a worldwide tendency, and the struggle between mainstream and non-mainstream venues can be recognized in many urban settings (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002; Zukin and Breslow 2011). This evolutionary model which assumes the eventual dominance of the stronger units and pushing out of more vulnerable ones has been confirmed by the stories of nightlife-led gentrification (Hae, 2011) and the evaluation of the nightlife branding strategies (Hanningam, 2003). In such scenarios, alternative venues adhere to the mainstream trends in alternative to a total decline under the influence of the changing urban settings in which they function.

Table 1: Types of nightlife spaces. Adapted from: Chatterton and Hollands, 2002.

	Type of nightlife space		
	Mainstream	Residual	Alternative
Production	Corporate brand Profit oriented Global/national [Hard Rock Café]	Community Need-orientated National/regional [Pub "Wieżyca]	Individual Entrepreneurial Local ["Skład Butelek"]
Regulation	Entrepreneurial CCTV etc.	Stigmatized Formal (police)	Cautious Informal
Consumption	Profit-oriented Divided consumer- producer Relations brand- lifestyle Up-market	Community-oriented Traditional consumer- producer relations Down-market	Creative-oriented Interactive consumer- producer relations Alternative, resistant
Location	Dominate centre	Underdeveloped center	Margins

Both, mainstream and non-mainstream types of nightlife demand appropriate settings for their development. The residual units require least specific conditions, as due to their primary social function they can be inscribed in most localities. The Tower Pub (*Wieżyca*) located in one of the bridge towers on Poniatowski Bridge offers not more than beer and simple snacks. It is hidden in the stone walls of the tower and not easily seen. However, due to its strong residual character it functions already for many years. Mainstream venues function best in well accessible locations and within larger consumption scapes. Thus, they usually locate in city centers hoping for a constant presence of consumers who desire to affiliate with an openly commercial offer. Luxurious night club or a mainstream club-café would not be expected in a deprived neighborhood or a marginal area of city. A Hard Rock Café placed in the table as an example of a mainstream venue is located in Warsaw in the very city center, in famous shopping mall Golden Terraces (*Złote Tarasy*). Similar dependencies between nature of a club and conditions it requires can be found in case of alternative venues which are the focus of the current research and will be closer elaborated upon in the following section.

2.2.3 Non-mainstream nightlife

i. Production, regulation, and consumption

Alternative clubs and club-cafes are usually individual or partnership initiatives of an entrepreneurial character (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002). As counter-spaces, they attract customers who seek refuge from standardized culture and to a certain extent strive for uniqueness. Freedom of expression and facilitated social interaction are often associated with this type of entertainment. Chatterton (2002) confirms this specification: “[...] alternative venues often have a different set of parameters which include a more liberal approach to dress codes, a blurring of the consumer-producer divide and, rather than the use of formal door security, self-regulation through customer identification with the ethos of the premises (p.45)”. The blur of consumer-producer divide and self-regulation are interconnected. They result from a more open attitude and less selective politics towards guests. This characteristic changes the experience of the customer: self-expression, amusement, and social interaction come in the first place, putting the consumption dimension of a visit to a background. This can be assessed either close or far to democratic and participatory form of coordination. More liberal approach to form and regulation indeed creates the atmosphere of freedom of expression and opens up space for the fulfillment of the natural or contra-mainstream. At the same time, a non-mainstream venue can accommodate one or more specific lifestyles. The participation might then remain open or limit down to the created lifestyles, becoming more exclusionary.

ii. Combining residual and alternative features

Chatterton and Hollands (2002) discuss British industrial cities where residual ale houses or taverns developed strong social functions due to the history related to water trade and industries. If Warsaw is considered, residual nightlife spaces are rooted in a different

cultural context. Often, they include bars and pubs with local snacks and alcoholic drinks. Due to a strong local context, residual and alternative can intertwine here, combining gastronomy, social space, and entertainment, where one supports another. The adequacy of space (location, rent, condition of the building, size) and presence of groups which are not provided for in the city center dominated by mainstream and pop-cultural playscapes, attract mixed forms of residual and alternative offers in deprived, underused, hidden, or marginal places in the city (Hollands and Chatterton, 2002; Campo and Ryan, 2008). An example of such in Warsaw used to be the nightlife backyard on Dobra street, located conveniently on the East riverside, nearby the very city center and in close neighborhood of university campus, but hidden in an unused backyard. Stuffed with metal barracks which served as clubbing premises, the place became a top destination for off-environments, artists, fun seekers, young musicians and event organizers. The dynamics of the place where fueled by openness, direct contact between owners and guests, and spontaneous actions, as in the case of open painting of the walls of the venues or outside gatherings on lying chairs (Szymaniak and Flint, rp.pl, 2009). The assembly, which closed down fully in 2009, was a prime example of the mix of residual and alternative characteristics, with liberal regulation and blur between production and consumption.

iii. Social functions

As clearly indicated above, the informal regulation and management of the alternative and residual venues encourages the emergence of certain social functions. Without undermining the economic potential of nightlife for urban economy, authors agree that nightlife can develop also a strong social power. The impact of the social aspect ranges from creating and re-creating local identity to building up professional networks. Therefore, it can be said that nightlife can simultaneously constitute social and business-related playground for individuals and influence place geography in social and economic terms. These aspects are consecutively discussed below.

- Identity alteration, creation, or strengthening

Chatterton and Hollands (2002) recognize social functions and strengthening of identities mainly in residual units. Such premises are popular on a local scale, with the owners and guests living and working nearby or coming back to a place due to other activities carried out regularly in a neighborhood. They can vary from 'everyone knows everyone' pubs to refuge destinations for anonymity seekers, dependently on context. Lovatt and O'Connor (1995) speak about night-time entertainment which offers transgression for contemporary urban society. Visitors of clubs, club-cafes or pubs can abandon roles played in day time and are able to take upon the identities they desire, or simply act informally. This is possible through the affiliation with groups to which they can otherwise not adhere or through loosening of customary forms of behavior or dress-code, which is enhanced by the more liberal regulation typical for non-mainstream venues. Either through attending residual nightlife venues or through breaking up the daily social forms at alternative events, nightlife participants use space offered for identity alternation, creation, or

strengthening. "This invitation to transgression is now central to contemporary society", comment Lovatt and O'Connor (1996, p.162). Crewe and Beaverstock, (1998) speak about the nightlife's role in a cultural and creative quarter in the following way: "As we saw in case of fashion, the spaces, places and scenes where people come together to eat, drink, dance or listen to music are important markers of self-identification (p.302)"

In terms of Lefebvre's spatial triad (Lefebvre, 1991), the places in question are characterized by proximity between different dimensions of space. Spatial practice (perceived space) is not far from representational space (the social element, the lived space). In other words, the way the place was planned to function is not much different from how people perceive it and use it in case of alternative clubs and club cafes. These are designed and attended in aligned ways - in their principle they create interiors in form which leaves the room for untypical forms of behavior or use of space. Thus, the non-customary, non-formal and open acting is the situation envisaged by the entrepreneurs and received from visitors. Again, it corresponds with the blur between production and consumption, flexible regulation, and encourages the transgression.

- Social setting

Entertainment and cultural consumption are parts of urban lifestyles favored by the group which Florida (2005) names 'the creative class'. The presence of the creatives is advantageous for cities because it strengthens the service sector, knowledge base, and creative industries within urban economy, facilitating the post-industrial adaptation. Therefore, Florida's argument involves nightlife into his theory by attributing to it social and lifestyle functions which are connected, in fact, to building up a friendly environment for specific urban economy to be fueled. Exchange of knowledge and establishing professional connections does not always happen in formal setting. Nightlife and evening venues mix relax and entertainment functions with grounds for establishing informal professional links and gaining contacts. Night music and dance scenes, pubs, and cafes are "attractants" for creative class (Florida, 2005, p.99). Particular brands of nightlife can assemble social environments which correspond to particular branches of cultural industries: creativity, artists, media, designers, stylists etc. Cultural and economic geographies of particular areas can, therefore, interlink. Altogether they might create a core for improved urban competitiveness (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998).

2.2.4 Nightlife as a marker of post-modern city

The remarkable role of nightlife in post-modern cities has been argued by many authors. As already discussed before, studies reveal that urban economy changes in a way which allows for cultural and entertainment economy to grow. Firstly, then, it should be said that the post-modern city which re-orientates itself from industry to services and to a different model of consumption creates 'space' for people's participation in nightlife. Secondly, the growing in importance creative class and important for cities creative branch of economy which this class represents are encouraged by vibrant and lively post-modern environments of which nightlife constitutes a component. Thirdly, nightlife can help to trigger urban regeneration, through either envisaged or bottom-up processes. An

often outcome of nightlife-led regeneration is so-called “yuppification” and, ultimately, continues with the process of gentrification.

i. Urban regeneration

Multiple studies report stories in which nightlife contributed to urban regeneration of deprived neighborhoods or post-industrial derelict areas in cities. Crewe and Beaverstock (1998) study the regeneration of Lace Market in Nottingham where a former industrial quarter was developed into a cultural quarter. The gap left behind by the declining industry was filled with cultural economy during day time: the quarter is rich in cultural, artistic, design, media and architecture businesses. Numerous night time venues and evening entertainment keep the area lively beyond the working hours. The authors argue that night economy supports the creative and cultural economy of the area and became a crucial tool in urban regeneration. In case of Lace Market, cultural economy and nightlife are melted into one, coherent revitalization strategy. The prolongation of evening vivacity of the area is related to a well established in the UK ‘24 hour city’ concept. The concept assumes that the continuity of economic activity not limited to day time, but prolonged to night hours, revives the place and stimulates regeneration (Thomas and Bromley, 1999). Relatively successful, the ‘24- hour’ approach evoked two main criticisms. ‘Pub and club’ culture appeals to certain groups of youth, not to the whole of local communities, and involves a limited group of participants. Simultaneously, the lack of perceived safety among customers who visit the area undergoing the process of regeneration at night has been one of the main obstacles (Thomas and Bromley, 1999). The regenerative influence of clubbing scene on inner cities has been assessed as limited by the authors who studied the nightlife solely, due to the “exclusionary and mono-cultural characteristics” of the night time venues (Thomas and Bromley, p.1408). On the other hand, the more inclusionary nightlife incorporated in culture-rich neighborhoods has been much more appreciated (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998).

ii. Gentrification

The first to use the term *gentrification* was Ruth Glass (1964), a British sociologist. In 1964, she described the aspects of change in London in which working class neighborhoods were ‘invaded’ by middle classes and the character of the districts eventually fully changed. There has been no clear consensus on conceptualizing and explaining gentrification among the authors, but the most often quoted definition is the one proposed by Smith (1982):

"By gentrification I mean the process by which working class residential neighborhoods are rehabilitated by middle class homebuyers, landlords and professional developers. I make the theoretical distinction between gentrification and redevelopment. Redevelopment involves not rehabilitation of old structures but the construction of new buildings on previously developed land (p.139)"

Ley (1986) proposed four main drivers of gentrification: demographic change, housing market dynamics, urban amenities, and changes in the economic base. An important notion in the subject of gentrification is the rent gap: "the gap between the actual capitalized ground rent (land value) of a plot and land given its present use and the potential ground rent that might be gleaned under a 'higher and better' use (Smith, 1987)".

Hackworth and Smith (2001) distinguish four waves of gentrification. The first wave, before the economic recession in the early 1970s, was sporadic and state-led. Funded by the public sector, the investments were "highly class specific" and did not improve significantly the living condition of the urban working class. The second-wave gentrification in the 1980s, still mostly state-led, "was characterized by the integration of the gentrification into a wider range of economic and cultural processes at the global and national scales (Hackworth and Smith, 2000, p.468)." During this wave, the alternative scene of SoHo and Lower East Side in New York experienced the upgrading of the neighborhoods and eventual displacement. Later in this section, the process related to the role of cultural producers in initiating urban regeneration will be discussed with some references to gentrification. The third wave, observed in the 1990s, started with recession-related stagnation and ended with intensifying and taking up new conditions. The authors notice four main ways in which gentrification changed: it spread from inner-city areas to more outer parts, encouraged the orchestration by larger developers, the state became involved much more than in the second wave, and the resistance to gentrification declined.

Zukin and Breslow (2011) show the relation between the orchestration of gentrification and cultural economy developing in deprived or post-industrial neighborhoods. Real estate developers and public authorities rely on the cultural prosperity of post-industrial or dilapidated locations "to establish new place-identities, rebranding them as "creative" and increasing their economic value (Zukin and Breslow, 2011, p.132)". Hae (2011) investigates nightlife-led gentrification in New York City. The city witnessed multiple cases of nightlife or culture-led urban revival, mainly in run-down working-class areas and former manufacturing places. The world famous SoHo lost its manufacturing role in the 1950s and 1960s and was soon after inhabited by alternative artists and musicians. The later presence of artists in SoHo and NoHo in 1960s contributed directly to revalorization of the real estate and upgrading the profile of the district. A dramatic increase in property prices forced the artistic environment to move. East Village experienced similar transformation in the 1980s, when formerly counter-mainstream performing arts occupying the district evolved into the mainstream. Soon after, the process of gentrification re-created the area and changed its social structure. A set of derelict buildings was rented in Lower East Side in the mid 1990s to catering businesses and "counter-cultural" clubs (Hae, 2011, p.1). At this time, real estate developers did not demonstrate interest in the area. Through the creation of a "hipster vibe", the place attracted young professionals and eventually had its character totally changed.

The author investigates also the 'anti-nightlife vs. pro-nightlife binary' observable in New York's districts, in which conflicts of interest emerged among different interest groups. Entrepreneurs, residents who complained about nuisance, public governance, and

private investors had different scenarios for the increasingly trendy locations. Residents desired improvements in their environment; entrepreneurs aimed at continuing their businesses; developers sought real estate investment possibilities; whereas local authorities showed contradictory intentions. On the one hand, vibrant evenings and nightlife were used openly as attractants for regeneration. On the other hand, the very same venues became a problem for residential development: "Nightlife establishments, the presence of which had raised the bar of cultural capital in the neighborhood, were now seen as a prime obstacle, causing the devaluation of property values (Hae, 2010, p.7)".

In the end, the studied areas were gentrified and the counter-mainstream nightlife was gradually 'closed', with alternative venues transforming to gentrified, mainstream premises. It is concluded that gentrification leads to "the embourgeoisement of nightlife, a process through which the nightlife that nurture diverse and alternative sub-cultures has been largely displaced and through which neighborhoods are left with a simulacrum of urban vibrancy (p.13)". The process described by Hae (2011) confirms the evolutionary model suggested by Hollands and Chatterton (2002) and is presented in a conceptual model:

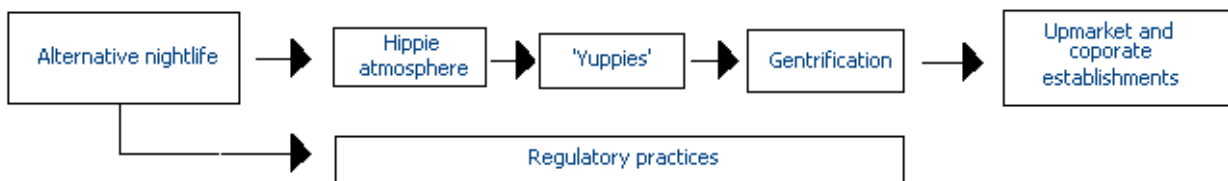


Figure 1: Conceptual model of nightlife-led gentrification. Based on: Hae, 2011.

2.2.5 Entertainment zones

Concentration of night time entertainment in a formerly or presently deprived neighborhood, often combined with cultural facilities, can be the result of an envisaged master plan, usually a cultural or creative 'island' in city, combining private investment and public governance and support, introduced for the purposes of regeneration. Opinions on the effectiveness of mega-projects carried out by cities have been divided. Master plans attribute new functions to run-down or underused locations, firstly changing totally their physical condition and appearance. There have been few successful stories of cultural quarters, such as Lace Market in Nottingham or Temple Bar in Dublin. However, from the perspective of everyday urbanism, master plans aiming at creation of cultures for a specific place do not carry potential for vivid urban spaces properly integrated in the locality. Indeed, some argue that planned and design nature of big flagship projects are somehow artificial and miss viability which the organic entertainment zones possess, as these are born in places that are naturally predisposed for such developments (Campo and Ryan, 2008; Huxtable, 1997).

Campo and Ryan (2009) propose the following conceptualization of informal entertainment district: "Entertainment zones [...] are concentrated nightlife districts occupying the margins of downtowns in former commercial and industrial areas,

underutilized retail corridors or underdeveloped waterfronts (p.292)". The authors presented a meaningful study with a very detailed elaboration of the various aspects of the nature of entertainment zones which provide important insights for the present study. The current research project is conducted in the area where nightlife of a counter-mainstream nature has developed in a working class, post-manufacturing neighborhood and - in line with author's typology - on the margin of city center. It has also developed in a non-orchestrated manner. Thus, the concept of unplanned nightlife zone should be discussed in more details.

The main attribute of this type of entertainment district is lack of planning and regulatory interventions during its development. The whole of the system of development and regulatory functions within evening and night entertainment zone is conceptualized as "the self-organizing ecology": "The self-organizing ecologies of entertainment zones emerge as the product of many individual actors who transform small pieces of the urban landscape without drastic physical interventions or a unifying plan (p.293)." The researchers sum up their study of a naturally developed entertainment zone (bars, cafes, pubs, nightclubs and performance sites in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with evidences from other mid-size American cities) and observe the influence of entertainment zones on marginal areas of inner cities. These zones developed without any interference of government, special planning, zoning, or design. Informal entertainment zones demonstrate vitality and individuality which tends to be missing in planned entertainment districts. When commerce and culture gather in the city centers, some of their parts attract the development of 'non-high-end' night entertainment. In Milwaukee, the new urban nightlife is more basic: "middlebrow partying for young city dwellers and suburbanites who want to drink, dance, watch sports and have fun (p.292)". In Philadelphia, a similar development has been observed in the Old City. Another characteristic of informal entertainment zones is the impermanence of the locations of the premises. The location and form are likely to change, for example, in response to evolving engagement of entrepreneurialism and creativity in the area (Campo and Ryan, 2008).

2.2.6 Regulation: violence, alcohol and fear

Problems of violence, alcohol abuse and perceived and experienced lack of safety at night are the serious problems related to nightlife. The subject, however, revolves largely on possible means of nightlife policing of which review is not involved in the current study. The current research is to demonstrate the experiences of the nightlife producers. The lack of a special nightlife policy in this respect for the area of Praga Północ has been confirmed by appropriate informants in the district council (the Head of Culture Department, personal communication), so no discussion has been expected in this subject matter from the entrepreneurs. Since the subject of violence and fear has not been raised to a significant extent in the empirical part of the research, it will be introduced only shortly.

Due to their non-mainstream character, many alternative spaces tend to "attract suspicion and suffer from criminalization from the local state, police and judiciary (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002, p.45)". Thomas and Bromley (1999), in their study on

real and perceived safety of nightlife in two British cities: Swansea and Cardiff conclude that perception of safety or its lack has a strong impact on people's destination choices. Respondents revealed more negative impressions and fears than true experiences of threat. The authors advice simultaneous safety measures and promotional initiatives in order to "re-image" the night time in studied areas. Van Liempt and van Aalst (2012), in their study on nightlife surveillance, start from the realization that nightlife areas are expected to be safe and exciting and stimulating in the same time. This, of course, is difficult to be achieved. They conclude that there must be a balance in policing the nighttime economy "between maintaining order and giving enough space to the very conditions that attract so many customers (p.290)".

2.3 Related concepts

Studies on nightlife contain often direct linkages with cultural economy, creative industries, or processes such as culture-led urban regeneration. Authors relate nightlife to the process of nightlife-led revitalization (Campo and Ryan, 2008) and gentrification (Hae, 2011), development of cultural quarters (Crewe and Beaverstock, 1998; Montgomery, 2003), or wider arts -led regeneration (Stern and Seifert, 2007). Night-time economy corresponds in social and economic dimension with corresponding daily economies. In case of Praga Północ, it is plausible that the alternative nightlife sprouted on the fertile ground of already developing arts district. Simultaneously, the area attracts some creative industries. Therefore, interaction between culture, creativity and nightlife cannot be omitted in theoretical discussion, as it might have some implications for the empirical part of the research. Thus, before proceeding to chapter which introduces in detail the case study of the present research, creative industries, culture, and arts related dynamics are shortly discussed to provide a fuller theory base for the discussion on empirical results.

2.3.2 Creativity , culture, and arts: conceptualization

Although the project does not involve a detailed study investigating and framing theoretically the origins and the stage of development of artistic and cultural activities in Praga Północ, these are beyond doubt present and will surely be raised in the empirical part of the study on nightlife entrepreneurship. The knowledgeable incorporation of the cultural context of Praga will be possible while sourcing from nightlife experiences if appropriate means of discussion relating to the subject of arts and culture in deprived neighborhoods will be previously established. Thus, this section distinguishes creativity, culture, and arts in framework of urban creative and cultural economies and relates them one to another through appropriate theories and conceptual model.

- i. Creativity: creative industries and creative class

In urban geography, the term 'creativity' has been approached in two distinct ways. Initially, it strictly referred to culture. This approach used interchangeably terms 'culture' and 'creativity', treating creative economy in cities as cultural activities and interventions (arts included), often carried out to improve the quality of city's economy and life.

Comunian (2011) reminds that 'creative city' concept was initially contextualized in cultural industries and regeneration in the UK in the late 1980s and 1990s. She emphasizes the interactions between artists and community, and the regeneration through cultural production and consumption. In more recent literature, however, 'creativity' relates to creative industries and the notion of the 'creative class' according to theory proposed by Florida (2002). Florida (2002; 2005) elaborates the significance of creative and innovative industries for contemporary urban economy. The growth of creative industries is associated with presence of related employees, skilled and knowledgeable professionals - the "creative class". Florida's understanding of 'creativity' extends far beyond culture, encompassing: "people in science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, and/or new creative content, [but also] the creative professionals in business and finance, law, healthcare and related fields (Florida, 2002, p. 8)". Creative economies, therefore, include a big share of cultural economy, of which arts constitute a part. Conceptual model below illustrates this classification (Figure 2). In this sense, creative city is a city where creative industries are encouraged, concentrated and supported. Comunian (2010) emphasizes the difference between creative industries and creative class, with the former one representing regulations and implications of economic production, whereas the latter one representing people of particular lifestyles and preferences of actions in specific urban settings and networks.

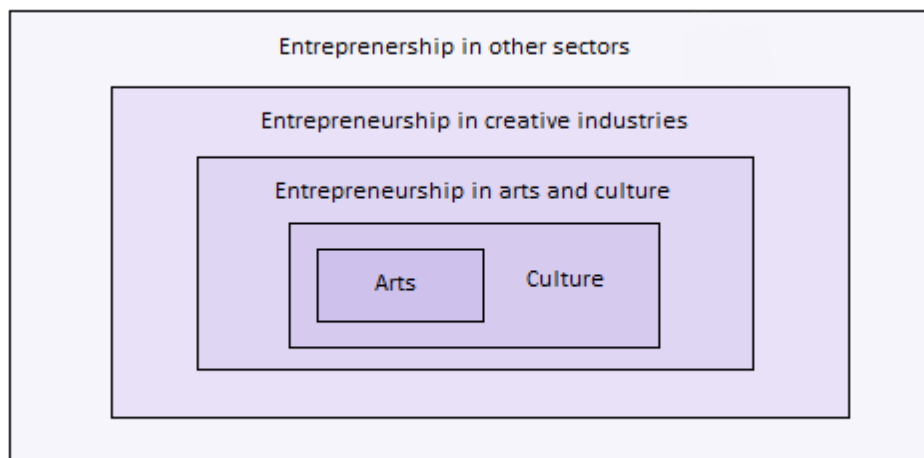


Figure 2: Conceptual model of notions related to creativity, culture, and arts.

Florida clearly attaches the highest economic effectiveness to innovative industries such as high-tech or science and research, but also draws attention to inseparable urban surrounding that supports the accumulation of creative people: the atmosphere of tolerance, openness, and richness in culture and entertainment. This is where culture and entertainment become an integral part of the creative system. "What they look for [the creative class] in communities is abundant high-quality experiences, an openness to diversity of all kinds, and above all, the opportunity to validate their identities as creative people (Florida, 2005; p.36)" - such validation is possible not only on professional

grounds, but also within social space, and can be realized through cultural means, dialogue, and networking. As discussed in section 2.2.3, non-mainstream nightlife can constitute a ground for such identity discourse. Nightlife is not a branch of creative industry, but its occurrence in creative 'centers' or 'islands' is not coincidental: nightlife supports the assemblage of 'yuppies' and group which Florida names 'Bohemians', and through contributing to a favorable work and living environment indirectly supports the creative industries which stimulates local economy.

ii. Culture and arts: cultural quarters and arts districts

Both, creative industries and services have strong potential in stimulating local economy. It can be concluded from the previous section that culture is both produced and consumed by the creative class and is an integral part of the creative infrastructure of cities. In this sense, culture stimulates the economy from two sides: enhances production and encourages consumption. However, the creativity discourse seems to be rather exclusionary. It involves skilled and more affluent people on both of these sides. Multiple disadvantaged groups do not participate in the high cultural economy but are limited to popular culture (tv, radio, pop-music, magazines) or even fully excluded.

A more inclusionary approach to culture is represented by the discourse surrounding urban regeneration. Studies treat of regeneration of post-industrial or otherwise deprived neighborhoods through creation or revival of cultural activities (Montgomery 2003; Evans and Shaw, 2004; Miles, 2005). Two forms emerge from the review of the related literature: cultural quarters and cultural or arts districts. Both stimulate cultural production and consumption and can have effects on local economies (Montgomery, 1995; Zukin and Breslow, 2011), but differ with respect to their planned or unplanned character and use functions.

- *Cultural quarters* are places with enhanced cultural activity where culture economy has been the policy objective. They are created through master plans with the regeneration of a deprived or underused area as a main goal. Beside this prerequisite of accumulated cultural activity in general, both cultural production and consumption should be taking place. Cultural quarter should also involve complementary daily venues, such as cafes or restaurants, and evening venues like performing scenes or night clubs (Montgomery, 2003). The examples of cultural quarters involve: Temple Bar in Dublin and Lace Market in Nottingham.
- *Art/cultural districts* are unplanned spatial concentrations of artistic activity. The process of regeneration or gentrification is usually an unanticipated consequence. They are characterized by presence of artists such as painters, drawers, writers, photographers, or musicians. Galleries, workshops and private homes serve as places or production and social interaction. Presence of cinemas, museums or theaters is associated rather with planned cultural quarters than with arts districts which mix cultural spaces with residential functions, such as it was in case of New

York's cultural districts in SoHo and East Village in New York City, or famous Montmartre in Paris.

Zukin and Breslow (2011) describe the life cycle of New York's 'cultural zones'. Nightlife is not outlined as one of the main components in the study, but some forms of evening and entertainment venues are visible in the publication as creators of a specific 'ambiance' or nodes of social interaction. This life-cycle is related to what Hae (2011) discussed in his publication: cultural activity and presence of alternative nightlife is connected to re-imagining of an area and contributes to a change of 'identity'. The change of reputation 'rebrands' the area and increases the economic value of properties which attracts investors with real estate development programs and encourages gentrification. At this stage of the process, life and work in the location in question become unaffordable for cultural producers. "More affluent members of the creative class move into luxury loft – apartments which were poor artists' studios; they become the main patrons of the cultural district's restaurants, boutiques and bars (Zukin and Breslow, 2011, p. 132)". An interesting distinction is introduced here by the authors. Gentrifiers and 'poorer' artists are juxtaposed as members of the creative class, so both find place in the creative economy advocated by Florida, but their needs and lifestyles differ enough to place them on two opposite ends of the tension. Two important implications for the present study follow from this observation. Firstly, both, 'off' artistic environment and the better-off, young professionals are affiliated with the specific ambiance of the cultural zones and artistic modes of living and working. Secondly, artists (Zukin and Breslow, 2011) as much as the affluent creatives (Florida, 2005), are allured by vibrant nightlife.

Chapter 3- Introduction to the case study

The literature establishes certain specific grounds on which arts, culture, and entertainment can concentrate in chosen areas of cities and develop into functional zones. The economic and social benefits of such concentration can have a regenerative influence, but also cause controversies and problematic issues. The specificity of the urban setting in the subject is crucial. The cultural and physical conditions in which entrepreneurs decide to locate their businesses have proper historical roots. The presentation of geography and history which relate to development and dilapidation of urban tissue, social dynamics, and changes in industrial structure of the area, is crucial for the understanding of the accumulation of artistic businesses in the studied area and the eventual place taken by nightlife in this context.

3.1 Warsaw

Warsaw began to perform the functions of the capital city of Poland at the turn of 16th and 17th centuries, thanks to its central geographic position, good water trade connections through the longest river in the country, and proximity to Eastern neighbors. Throughout history, Warsaw suffered numerous military invasions, lasted through three partitions (1772, 1793, and 1795), and participated in both World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-45). During the interwar period, Warsaw could be freely managed by the Polish for the first time after 119 years of not existing on a political map of Europe. Many improvements were made and city boosted with life. However, the II World War, particularly the bombardment of the city during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, left behind mainly ruins. Approximately 84% of the West-side city had been destroyed. Together with the East side, destruction amounted to around 60% (Getter, 2004). Between 1945 and 1989, the city remained under the influence of the Soviet Union and its socialist system which had a great impact on shaping the society and city itself. Currently, Warsaw is the capital city of the country and of the Masovian Voivodship (*Województwo Mazowieckie*). It is also the biggest city of Poland with more than 1 720 000 residents. It stretches on 517, 24 square



Figure 3: The map of Poland.

kilometers, on both sides of Vistula River. The present administrative division counts 18 districts diversified in their history and roles within the urban system (see figure 3). Praga Północ, one of the districts, has been chosen as a case study for the current project and will be further discussed in the following section.

3.2. Praga Północ

Today's Praga is divided into two administrative units: Praga Północ (Northern Praga) and Praga Południe (Southern Praga). The two districts are closely related, socially and through interrelated urban tissue and infrastructure. Historically, the life of the residents of the 'East side' was centered in these two areas, with the very centre in Praga Północ, around the streets Targowa and Jagiellońska, exactly where the current study is conducted. The two Pragas demonstrate also distinctive features which decide about their slightly different characters. The current project is based in Praga Północ.

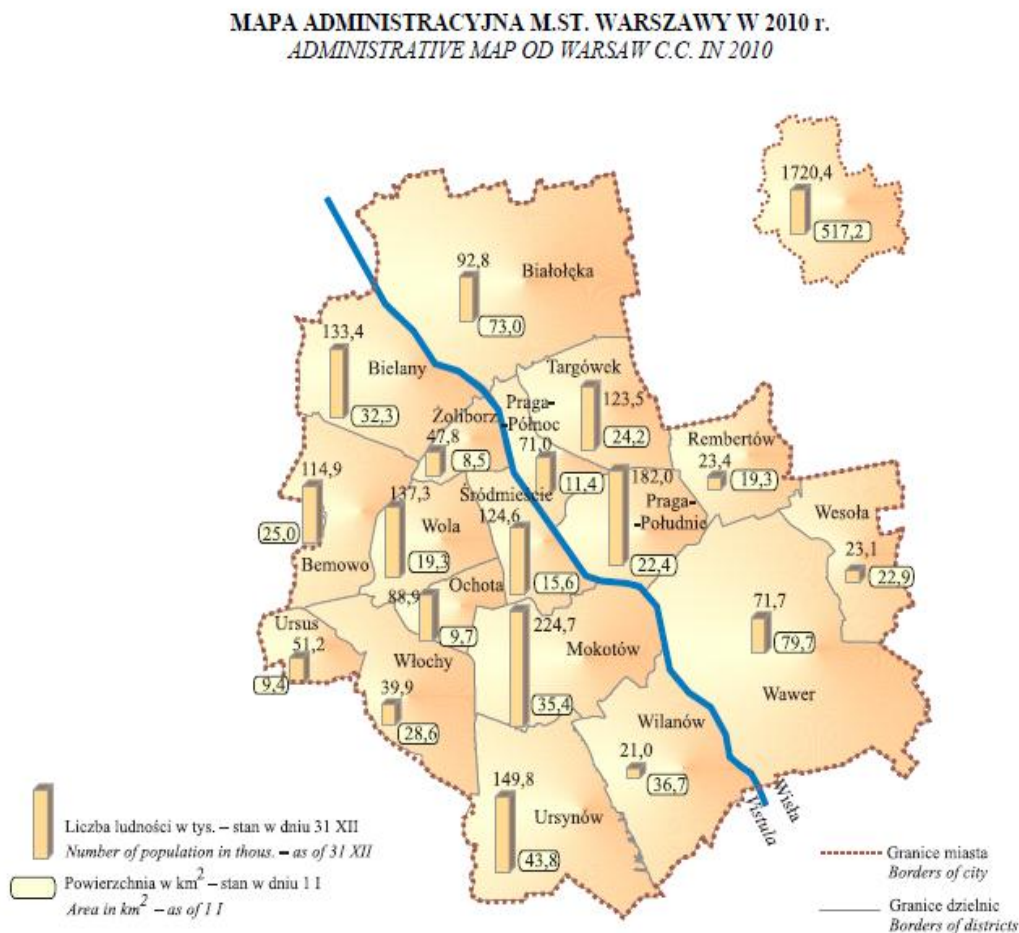


Figure 4: The administrative map of Warsaw with the population and size figures. Source: Gawryszewski, 2009.

3.2.1 Location

Praga Północ is one of the 18 administrative districts of Warsaw. The total area amounts to 11.4 km². According to City Information System (*Miejski System Informacji*), it is divided into 4 regions: Pelcowizna, Nowa Praga, Stara Praga, and Szmulowizna (see figure 5). The names of Stara Praga (Old Praga) and Nowa Praga (New Praga) are indicative for the historical order of appearance and the commencement of the wider settlement in these two locations. The West borderline of the district is designated by the river. The main axes of the area are streets Targowa, Jagiellońska, and perpendicular to them Solidarności avenue. As Śródmieście and surrounding districts of the left-side Warsaw are the economic and social core of the city, it is important that the two banks are connected by bridges. In fact, the proximity of the city center located in Śródmieście is a significant potential asset of Praga Północ, not fully realized yet due to historical conditioning, social and economic differences when compared to other capital districts, as well as stereotypes related to the area which will be discussed later on. Describing the location of Praga Północ, therefore, one could argue that although geographically close to the heart of Warsaw, it somehow reminds a far away destination in many people's minds.

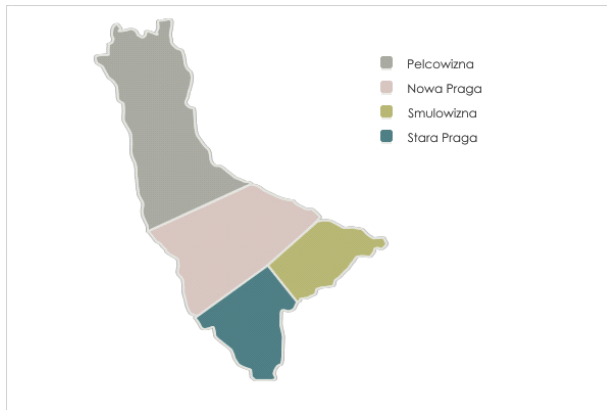


Figure 5: The regions of Praga Północ. Source: MSI.

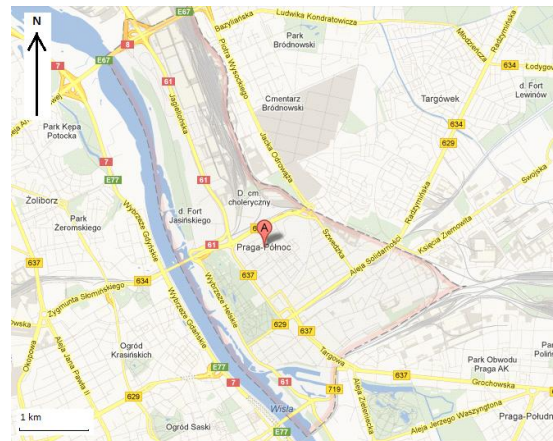


Figure 6: The map of Warsaw, the infrastructural situation of Praga. Source: google maps.

3.2.2 Infrastructure

The connectivity between Praga and Śródmieście can be assessed nowadays as relatively good but not sufficient. Four bridges cross Vistula: Grota-Roweckiego (the North end), Gdański (the middle bridge), Świętokrzyski (the South edge of the district), and Śląsko-Dąbrowski, with the last one currently open for public transportation (buses and trams), but closed for private cars due to the construction of a new metro line. The closure of the Śląsko-Dąbrowski bridge causes problems in transportation of people and goods from and to the centre of Praga, especially around the train station Warszawa Wileńska. The bridge is usually the shortest way which connects directly city center with the main arteries and of Praga Północ. It offers also a quick connection by tram from the Old Town to the old parts of Praga (2 stops). With four bridges, including one temporarily closed for private

transportation, Praga continues to struggle with establishing a stable connection with such close to it Śródmieście area. The strategy which is expected to improve the situation is the construction of the second metro line which is to connect the Northern part the city centre with already mentioned Targowa street and Warszawa Wileńska station (see the plan of the II metro line, figure 7). The II line will allow for a smoother travel from the areas connected by the already existing line, such as Ursynów, Mokotów, and Żoliborz. This will be allowed by the possibility of transfer at Świętokrzyska, one of the central stations of the first line, to newly built National Stadion and the train stations: Warszawa Wschodnia (*East Station*) and Warszawa Wileńska in Praga. The central section of the second line should be open by the end of 2013. The on-going construction of the line becomes problematic for the residents and entrepreneurs who run their businesses in close proximity to the construction sites, where most routes have been closed off for this purpose and caused problems with accessibility. The entrepreneurs of Praga have been particularly affected having their sales decreased significantly. In a longer perspective, however, metro is expected to connect more effectively the two sides of the river. This would mean that flow of people and commercial as well as residential investments would be encouraged.



Figure 7: The Project of the second metro line in Warsaw. Source: Wikipedia.

3.2.3 Urban Tissue

"A bit of old, feudal minor houses mixed with new capitalistic constructions, lots of green spaces, old trees in Saska Kępa (currently a part of Praga Południe), and next to it factories, chimneys, and train stations".

(Kazimierski et al., 1970, p. 29).

This is how Praga was described in the first years of the I WW. 19th century tenements and constructions from the beginning of the 20th century were preserved in 71% on the East side after the II WW. This figure, compared to 16% of the old buildings preserved after the II WW on the West bank, is indicative for the age structure of urban fabric in Praga Północ. This part of the city is a mosaic of old tenements, small and medium warehouses, and some larger old factories. The streetscapes are dominated by 4-5 storey pre-war tenements with random seals of new constructions. Gates resembling little tunnels drained in the buildings lead from streets to backyards, single or double. From the backyard, one can access common stairwells, characteristic for this type of housing. Figure 8 shows the satellite view of Nowa Praga section of the district. What can be seen to the South East is a rather dense tissue, with multiple smaller buildings crowded one next to another with the typical backyards inside. These constructions come from the beginning of the last century and earlier. Westwards from 11 Listopada street, which is visible running North-South in the middle of the photograph, the image changes into rather longer blocks of flats with open, green spaces between them. These residential buildings are the legacy of social realist architecture. The former ones, dominant in the surrounding of the night venues which are the objective of the current study, were built in times of "agriculture and industry", for lower classes, and lacked basic amenities (Kazimierski et al., 1970, p.31). Only in 1936 the share of houses on the East side Warsaw where electricity was installed increased to 80% from only 20% just a few years before. However, only 20% of houses had bathrooms at the time. As the war broke out soon after, these conditions remained the same for decades. The areas of Plac Hallera, the social realist housing estate, represented much better quality.

Some of the Praga's old tenements carry damages from the war times. Many ran down because of the lack of interest they suffered throughout the years of the socialist rule. According to Municipality (District Council of Praga Północ, *Urząd Pragi Północ*), the multiplicity of post-industrial spaces, ornaments on the facades of the tenements, and old-style elements of the streetscapes such as well-preserved street pavements give the district historic value and inscribe in cultural heritage of the city. The same office expresses belief that the extent of neglect is substantial enough to make the district, despite its heritage, unattractive for residents and visitors and, therefore, seeks possibilities of (The Department of Revitalization). The conservation and revitalization of the buildings remains uneasy due to the severity of their condition which requires substantial financial input and due to confusions related to ownership rights. During the second half of the 20th century, the vast majority of real estate in Poland was nationalized. Only after the change of political system in 1989 the initial owners were able

to reclaim their properties. Due to the uneasy times of war and the consecutive socialist rule the matters of potential ownership became blurred. A share of the ownership pleadings has been already solved, but numerous investigations into the ownership claims relating to pre-war tenements are still in progress. This does not allow for privatizing particular communal apartments, as well as whole buildings which could be renovated by private funds. Indeed, many of the residential units serve as social housing. Currently in Praga Północ their number constitutes 20 % of all the units (13 841 flats in 2008; Report 2008). From all of the social flats, 80% had been constructed before 1944. The concentration of the old buildings designated for social housing mirrors the socio-economic profile of the area.

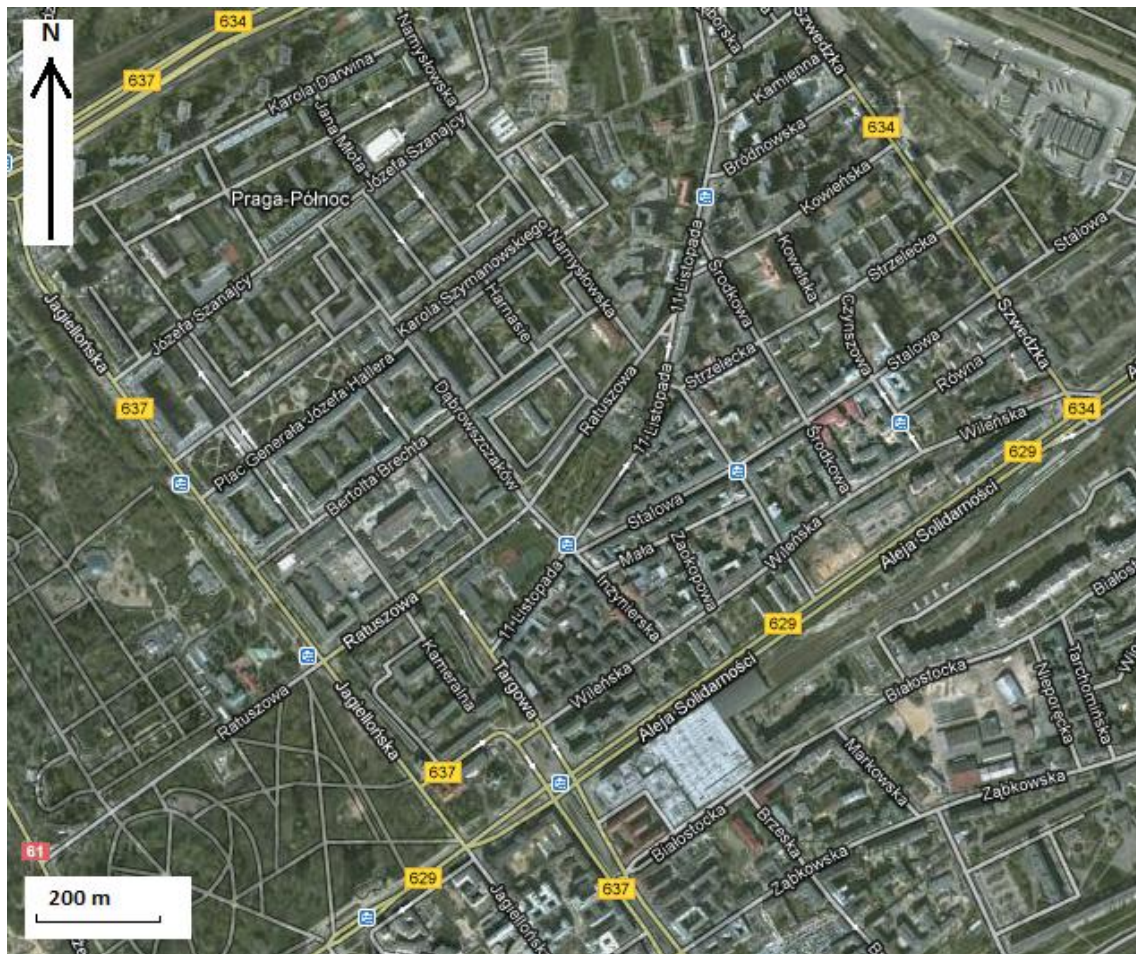


Figure 8: The satellite view on the central part of Praga Północ. Source: google maps.

3.2.4 Population Dynamics

Table 2 shows the population change in districts of Warsaw in the second half of the 20th century. In 1950, Praga Północ was, after Śródmieście, the second most populous district, with 105 805 residents amounting to 12,6 % of the whole city population. As opposed to remaining areas of the city, Praga was preserved in a relatively good condition after the II WW. Thus, the tenements of Praga offered the very first shelter for the new incomers after the war had ended. A wave of the original residents of Warsaw returned to the city.

Incomers from other places in Poland would also arrive to re-build the capital and their future homes. People resided in Praga because their homes in other districts might have been destroyed, the lack of infrastructure around the old places of residence disabled access, or they arrived in Warsaw for the very first time and Praga was one of the very few places to be. Since then, though, while in other districts the number of inhabitants fluctuated, in Praga Północ it has been steadily declining. Between 1950 and 2002 it decreased by almost 30%.

After the change of political system in 1989, the decline proceeded. Between the censuses of 1988 and 2002, the number of residents in most of the districts of the 'old' Warsaw (Bielany, Mokotów, Ochota, Praga Północ, Śródmieście, Targówek, Wola and Żoliborz) decreased significantly. 5000 people less lived in Praga Północ in 2002 compared to 1988. The decrease in this period can be explained by a relatively old demographic structure of the districts of the 'older' Warsaw, lack of good quality spaces for new residential developments in these districts limited to singular buildings filling in the gaps between older constructions, and the flow of people to outer layers of the city and suburbs (Gawryszewski, 2009).

Dzielnice ¹ Quarters	Lata (dane spisów ludności) Years (Census data)					
	3 XII 1950	6 XII 1960	8 XII 1970	7 XII 1978	6 XII 1988	21 V 2002
	Ogółem / Total					
M.st. Warszawa	839 810	1 168 102	1 357 492	1 565 392	1 666 234	1 689 201
Bemowo	19 698	21 811	40 343	41 856	85 003	104 663
Białoleka	12 741	20 033	18 842	16 556	26 754	57 765
Bielany	47 377	74 019	102 074	139 621	147 901	138 356
Mokotów	84 358	161 150	204 878	269 986	256 855	235 381
Ochota	39 281	79 718	114 556	111 075	98 337	94 178
Praga Południe	84 805	117 631	152 990	158 296	185 607	189 251
Praga Północ	105 805	101 908	86 917	84 280	80 392	75 348
Rembertów	20 532	21 529	21 108	19 850	19 124	21 601
Śródmieście	148 625	202 008	203 621	184 162	158 247	138 299
Targówek	44 520	51 045	53 160	121 320	130 061	124 316
Ursus	9 898	18 707	30 398	42 031	41 526	42 547
Ursynów	17 816	14 559	11 711	26 051	101 313	134 440
Wawer	41 693	52 144	47 193	48 653	54 185	61 817
Wesoła	5 100	7 378	8 371	8 931	9 766	17 531
Wilanów	8 780	10 357	6 986	10 150	12 017	13 731
Włochy	43 051	44 701	37 368	39 216	35 535	39 176
Wola	87 308	140 682	158 491	181 658	166 069	148 869
Żoliborz	18 422	28 722	58 485	61 750	57 542	51 932
W-wa lewobrzeżna	524 614	796 434	968 911	1 107 506	1 160 345	1 141 572
W-wa prawobrzeżna	315 196	371 668	388 581	457 886	505 889	547 629

Table 2: Population dynamics in the districts of Warsaw, 1950-2002. Source: Gawryszewski, 2009.

Due to systematic nationalization under the socialist rule, most of the residential units used to belong to the city. Many of the flats were devoted to social housing. After 1989, many of those who could afford it moved to more attractive districts. In the same time,

many of the social flats reminded in hands of the district council and still carry this function. In 2008, social housing constituted 20% of the whole stock in Praga Północ (Marchlewski, 2008). Today, Praga is a young district with 50% of population below the age of 40 with women being the majority of residents (Richards et al., 2010).

3.2.6 Criminality

In 2009, portal 'Moje Miasto Warszawa' in cooperation with the municipal police created a report about the safety and criminality in particular districts of Warsaw (Luciński, 2011). In Praga Północ, the most recent interventions relate to disruption of public order, alcohol abuse and devastation of properties. Another serious problem are young residents who gather in stairwells and courtyards drinking alcohol, breaking glass, and misbehaving. Related to this are often reported broken windows, devastated lanterns, and destroyed elements of buildings infrastructure or equipment.

Street trade has got acclimatized much more on the streets of Praga Północ than in other districts of Warsaw. Although somehow historically justified in Praga, street trade without appropriate permissions remains illegal. Especially subjected to it is one of the main streets, Targowa, and the areas surrounding shopping center Warszawa Wileńska. There, numerous sellers move around with little trolleys, in which case it becomes uneasy for the police to execute law. In the end, street sellers have been tolerated. To a certain extent inscribed in the character of the area, street trade relates to solicitation and brings uneasy feelings among visitors.

Praga has had rather bad reputation concerning safety and criminality rate. The study by Jałowicki (2000) shows that the residents of Warsaw perceived Praga as the most dangerous district. The map of crime intensity prepared by the municipal police shows that the 'Triangle' Wileńska- 11 Listopada -Szwedzka, and places adjacent to Targowa street are where the police intervenes most frequently. Figures 9 and 10 show ascertained crimes per 1000 population for all the districts. Praga Północ remains in the top five with the highest indicator in 2005 and in 2010. However, it must be noted that the indicative intervals change for the 2010 data and the number of crimes is smaller in general. For Praga Północ, it was between 60 and 89,9 crimes per 1000 population in 2005, whereas between 40 and 59,9 in 2010. Also, table 3 shows how number of ascertained crimes committed in Praga Północ has been changing since 2003. Between 2003 and 2010 it was decreasing steadily. Therefore, figures advocate for a positive change.

	2003	2005	2007	2010
Total grand of which:	5498	4953	4182	2954
Criminal	5051	4142	3116	2318
Against life and health	84	110	87	63
Against property	4052	3146	2320	1746
Theft	1696	1330	950	745

Table 3: The number of ascertained crimes yearly in Praga Północ, 2003-2010. Source: Panorama Dzielnic Warszawy, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010.

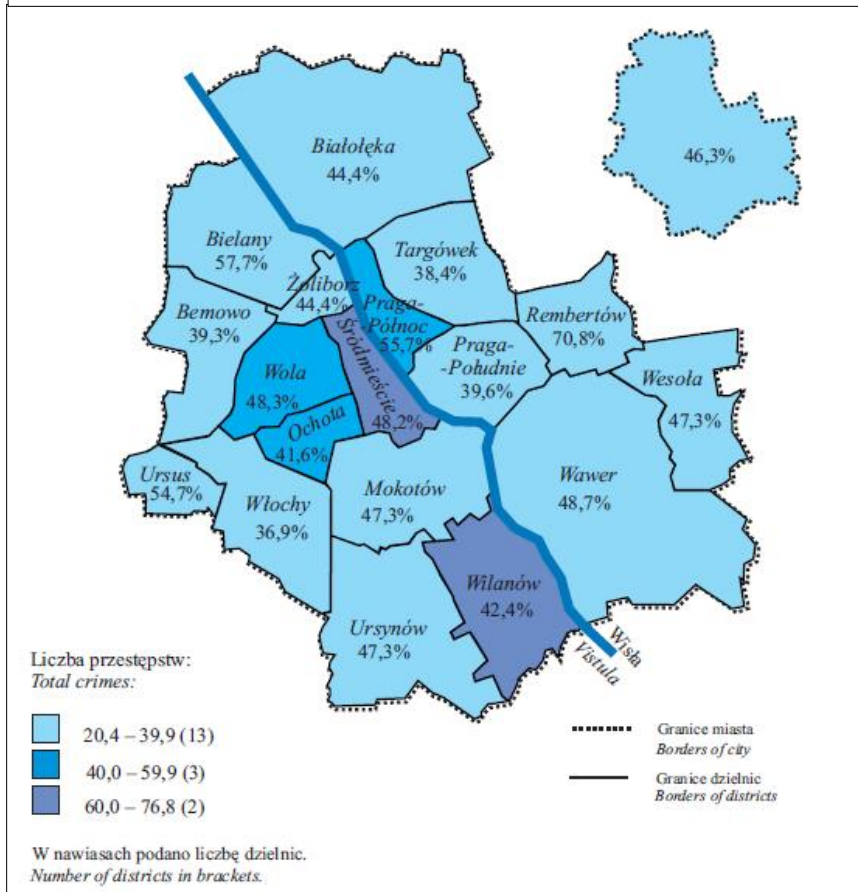
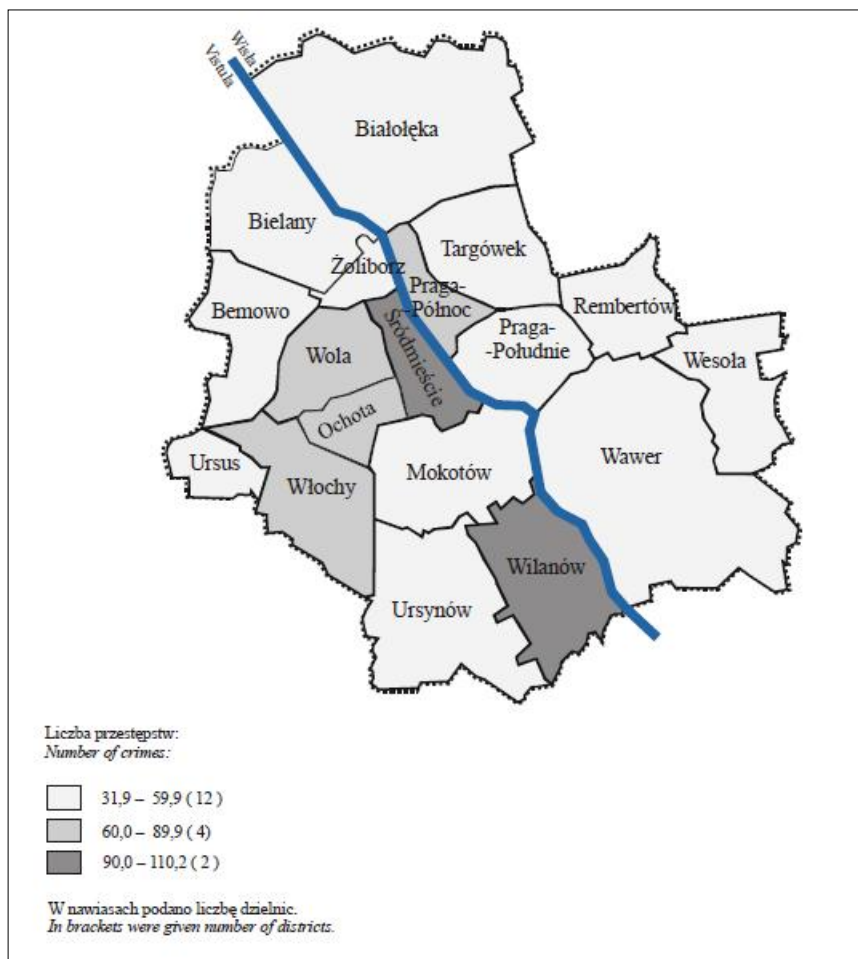


Figure 9 and 10: Ascertained crimes by police or prosecutor per 1000 population in 2005 (fig.9) and 2010 (fig.10). Source: Panorama Dzielnic Warszawy, 2005 and 2010.

Chapter 4- The History of Praga

The following chapter introduces the history of the study location. Praga Północ is perceived by the residents of the city in a peculiar way: stigmatized, unsafe and dirty on one hand, and old, historical and charming on the other. These perceptions appear in the empirical part of the research in the experiences revealed by the nightlife producers. It is important to at least shortly present their origins.

4.1 Before the 20th century

Among the residents of Warsaw, term 'Praga' is often generalized and used in reference to the whole East bank of Vistula River. Originally, it used to be the name of a small village located on the East bank the river, vis-à-vis Warsaw located only on the West side at the time. Praga received city rights from the king Władysław IV in 1648 and was incorporated to Warsaw only in 1791. Currently, 6 out of 18 Warsaw's districts are located on the East bank: Białołęka, Targówek, Praga Północ, Praga Południe, Rembertów, Wesoła, and Wawer. Praga Północ and North part of Praga Południe are the areas where the life of the East bank settlers originated and these two adhered to Warsaw earliest from all of the smaller settlements. The two contemporary Pragas, especially their parts adjacent to the river, have always seen their development delayed if compared to the left-bank center of the city. History was not easy on Praga and Vistula turned out to be a barrier stronger than one could expect.

The name of the area, Praga, comes from the verb *prażyć* (to burn out). It originated in times when the lush forests growing to the East from Warsaw needed to be burnt out (*prażone*) in order to obtain areas for agriculture and new settlements. The land was marshy and prone to inundation from the river and was not connected with a bridge to the other side for a long time. This separation caused the two riversides to develop independently. While Warsaw was developing on the West bank, Praga lived its own life and was treated as a separate settlement. In the last decades of the 16th century, Praga raised interest of Mazovian nobelty and magnateria and substantial areas of land were bought by these groups. At this point in time, Praga had been governed by the Catholic Church. From then on, two groups managed Praga: the nobility and clergy. The town was divided along this division.

Experts of Praga's history speak about three historical catastrophes which devastated Praga and hindered its prosperous development. Swedish Deluge in 1656 was the first one to cause large scale disturbance. The march of the troops through the area and epidemic consequences devastated buildings and population. The second large-scale destruction of the town took place in 1794 during the Kościuszko Uprising. After the defeat of Kościuszko, Russian army attacked Warsaw from the East and killed 20 000 civilians in Praga. This massacre paralyzed the West bank and forced the capital city to capitulate. For the third time, Praga suffered when Napoleonic troops destroyed several areas of the settlement. Manor houses, buildings, churches, and monasteries were

demolished in order to build Napoleonic fortifications between 1806 and 1807 (Wyderko, in: Kazimierski et al., 1970). After the massacre of 1794, later destruction of the remaining buildings in 1806, and finally the losses that Praga suffered during the November Uprising in 1830 and 1831, Praga struggled to regain its urban character. Wyderko (in: Kazimierski et al., 1970) implies that the events at the turn of 18th and 19th centuries caused profound destruction of the area which caused it to be left behind until the end of the 20th century. For many years of the 19th century Praga consisted mainly of unstable, wooden houses. Figure 11 is a painting presenting the panorama of Warsaw from the side of Praga in 1770. The map below shows Praga in 1972 (figure 12).



Figure 11 (above): Bernardo Bellotto, „Widok Warszawy od strony Pragi”, 1770. Source: Napiórkowska.



Figure 12 (right): The Map of Praga. 1972.

A positive twist in Praga's fate was a direct consequence of the opening of two train stations in 1860s. Right-side Warsaw was since then directly connected by rail with Russian Empire. Petersburg Station was opened in 1862 and Terespol Station was opened in 1867. Since a new railway bridge connected the two banks of the river and the West-bank had now a better communication with Praga, new possibilities opened for trade and personal connections. Good transport possibilities of raw materials and already made goods, as well as cheaper labor force in Praga, encouraged the development of industry in this area. Intense industrialization spread from Praga (today's Stara Praga in Praga Północ) to Nowa Praga, Szmulowizna and Kamionek (then smaller villages, nowadays parts of Praga Północ). The improved connectivity between the two sides of Warsaw forced the authorities to improve the governance on the East side. An iron bridge was opened in 1864 (*Most Kierbedzia*). Around this time, some major improvements were introduced: today's Radzymińska street was constructed (then Aleksander Avenue), a famous Orthodox church and Florian's Catholic church were built, and a new park was opened for the residents. In 1882 Praga's population counted around 16 000. In 1913 it was already 90 000 people. However, despite some attempts, the residential units which were inhabited mainly by proletariat had a very poor provision of sanitation facilities and not much was to be improved by the time of the outbreak of the IWW.



Figure 13 (top left): The map of Warsaw, 1820. A very small at the time Praga visible on the bottom (East). Source: Cyfrowe Archiwum Narodowe; Figure 14 (bottom left): The crossroad of Targowa and Żąbkowska streets, around 1890s, source: Kasprzycki, 1998; Figure 15 (top right): Żąbkowska street, 1918. Source: Kasprzycki, 1998; Figure 16 (right middle): former *Dworzec Petersburski*, nowadays *Warszawa Wileńska* train station, 1932. Source: Cyfrowe Archiwum Narodowe; Figure 17: The view on Targowa street, around 1900s.

4.2 The two World Wars

The damages of the I WW were removed and reconstructed when Poland regained independence in 1918 and defended Warsaw against Bolsheviks in 1920. During the interwar period, industry flourished in Praga. Much more difficult to handle occurred already mentioned poor sanitary conditions, gas and electricity, lack of infrastructure which would serve the industry and growing number of residents, and general condition of urban tissue. The outbreak of the II World War ended the happy time of restoration. 2270 buildings were destroyed fully or partially in Praga during the II WW, accounting to 26.9% of the whole built tissue (Getter, 2004). This was dramatically less than on the West bank, where 80% of the urban fabric was destroyed during the shootings and bombardment (Getter, 2004). As explained earlier, good preservation of the buildings

caused a massive inflow of people from all over the country and abroad, including urban and rural population, as well as national authorities which needed temporary headquarters. This is how this period of Praga's history is described today on the District Council's website: " Praga somehow carried a temporary function of the capital [...] The fast regeneration of life in Praga was revealed through quick opening of train stations, offices, shops, bazaars, hospitals, libraries, but also the first cinema, theater, symphonic orchestra, a radio station and newspapers (District Council of Praga Północ)".

4.3 Socialist Warsaw

Warsaw has never been an industrial city to the extent compared to some of the grand German, British, or American cities, where the studies quoted in the theory part were conducted. Warsaw is a unique case study in this respect: it traveled from hands to hands throughout centuries, developed under various oppressions, as well as suffered in numerous uprisings and both World Wars. Although Warsaw once had a strong working class and significant manufacturing production in the 19th and most of the 20th centuries, especially in Powiśle, Wola, and in both Pragas, it could rather not be called a post-industrial city if compared to big industrial powers of the West. The context which combines the post-industrial transition, the specific nature of Warsaw, its history and urban structure, and draws a starting point for the discussion about culture and entertainment in area such as Praga, is its socialist past and the legacy of central planning.

4.3.1 Characteristics of a socialist city

The following section outlines the main features of a socialist city adapted from Jałowiecki et al. (2009). After that, Praga is portrayed in light of these characteristics. The aim of presenting this information is to provide a fuller understanding of the complex conditions in Praga nowadays which have been the legacy of the described system.

Socialist city is characterized by the following features:

- Industrial work dominates the employment structure. Therefore, working class is a leading group in the system.
- The social structure is rather homogenous, with regards to class divisions and economic status. Working class is favored. Elitist lifestyles are practically non-existent.
- The lifestyle in socialist city changes as an extensive influx of rural population is highly encouraged. With rural population, the customs and social norms evolve.
- The management of urban land and spatial planning is rather extensive. Bid- rent theory does not apply to socialist city and there is no rent gap.
- There is no freedom to choose the place of settlement. Apartments, flats, or houses are given to families according to their needs, including the number of the family members. The change of the place of residence is controlled by registration control. Therefore,

inhabitants do not express their preferences regarding location or quality of housing. With this means, the state makes certain that population is very mixed. In case of housing estates attached to particular industrial units, the residents share usually a single occupation.

- Due to the fact that architecture is rather uniform, the streetscapes are quite monotonous. In this framework, for example, the high rise blocks made of prefabricated concrete elements were built on a big scale. There is no much attachment to urban aesthetics, rather functionality and uniformity is of the highest value.
- The combination of economic system with the planning of housing estates limits the number, quality, and form of available services.
- While stress is put on production, the environmental problems are rather ignored.
- Centralization is a general rule in which city authorities prioritize the interests of the state over the interests of the residents.
- Symbolism changes in urban space. A vast public space in the city center, usually nearby a monument or a construction of political importance, is crucial in order to gather people in one place and demonstrate the unity and homogeneity of the society.

The theory of building the socialist housing estates which were massively constructed in Polish cities remains outside the scope of the current research. What occurs important for the contemporary development of culture and entertainment in a post-socialist city are the socialist management of urban tissue, the nationalization of real estates and later privatization after 1989, industrial growth, and social housing and system's preference towards working class. These elements are presented in the next section.

4.3.2 Significance of socialism for Praga

Most sources on the socialist Praga Północ were published during the functioning of the system. This makes an objective discussion about the proper or improper management of the area very uneasy to be achieved. Historical publications about Praga from these times contain strong elements of propaganda, applauding the achievements of People's Republic in terms of socialist equality, new functional infrastructure, and working class housing. For certain, the provision of standardized forms of socialist housing and negligence towards the pre-war constructions summed up to a dramatic decline in Praga. Initially, working class was accommodated in the proletarian housing states where workers of the same professions would live together. This determined the working-class character of the district for the times after the system transformation. Considering the decline of the pre-war urban tissue, the present dilapidated condition of the tenements is not only the result of negligence. Often beautifully sculptured or painted tenements with annexes were perceived as the legacy of elitist architecture. The original facades were scratched out so only the smooth, pale fronts would remain.

The hindered industrial growth around 1970 and the lack of investment in the historical parts of the area contributed to a gradual deterioration of living conditions for the whole of the area. The progressing degradation touched especially the oldest parts of the district: New Praga, Old Praga, and Szmulowizna, but spread also on the new at a time proletarian housing estates. The authors of the most recent publication on Praga's history "Dzieje Pragi" (Sołtan et al., 2006), emphasize the correlation between the deterioration of the urban environment, related to a general decrease in the quality of life, with the increasing social problems. Some sources suggest that in the late socialism, Praga Północ became a place where the problematic and unwanted social "elements" would be resettled from the more representative district of the left-side Warsaw (Sołtan et al., p. 26).

Post-war Praga was dominated by industrial growth even more than before (Sołtan et al., 2006). After the war, the urban fabric was particularly dense in Nowa Praga and Stara Praga, but the surroundings had vast areas of unused land. Because of an already existing industrial association with Praga, the vast lands where new manufactories could be built, and abundant labor force accumulated on the right-bank Warsaw, Praga became a new center of production for the capital city. Thousands of created workplaces and new housing estates were the positive outcomes of it which, as already discussed, did not improve the situation of the pre-war tenements. Because of the industrial growth in the area the population was involved mainly in physical employment. Blue-collar jobs dominated the economy in general, but were particularly inscribed in local cultures in places where the manufacturing was accumulated. The industrial growth of Praga before the industrial crisis in 1970s and the continuation of the manufacturing dominance after that made it difficult for the district to regenerate after the change of the system. This concerned the lack of alternative employment opportunities and vacant post-manufacturing spaces on one hand, and a total lack of preparation of the population for new employment structures on the other. The left-side city center and more residential areas experience faster improvements. For Praga, the barrier in form of the river, the chaotic complexity of the built fabric and very unclear ownership situations hindered a fast leap forward.

In the whole country the real estate properties were nationalized. The same happened in Praga Północ. After 1989, a long period of time was needed to establish the reclaim system and divide the properties open for ownership claims and those kept by the state. A significant number of social houses in Praga definitely did not facilitate the regulation of ownership. The problem remains valid until today, with around 120 legal cases in court. It causes two main problems. Firstly, implementing revitalization plans in cases of particular historical tenements is pointless if the ownership status is unclear. The city cannot invest money from the public budget in an object which possibly will move to private hands, meaning that district authorities would carry out significant and expensive work eventually not for public interest. Secondly, other actions aiming at modernization of both, commercial premises and social housing units, are blocked for the similar reasons. Managing the modernization of a street on which private, public, and unsettled ownerships intertwine is problematic.

4.4 The district of manufacturing, craftsmen, and proletariat

Adding to what has been already established, this section explains the way in which Praga has been conditioned historically as a working class and post-manufacturing space.

Praga developed from a semi-feudal town into the one of the main industrial and proletarian districts of the capital city (Kaziemierski et al., 1970). Praga carried the character of an agricultural and petty-bourgeoisie settlement for centuries. According to Kazimierski et al. (1970), what revolutionized the village, especially through connecting the two sides of the river, was early capitalism (though hindered soon after by the partitions, occupation and Napoleonic marches). Historically, then, the population of Praga was of agricultural character and rural traditions. Even the craftsmen group took a long time to crystallize - only in the mid 19th century we could speak of a distinctive craftsmen group in the sense of "class distinction and identity" (Kazimierski et al., 1970, p.43). Between 1870 and 1880 Praga developed industrially very fast and at some point it hosted more than a half of all factories in the capital. The culture and education of the district was associated with the dominant form of labor.

During the inter-war period, the population increased from 83,3 to 246,3 thousands for the whole East bank, with the terrain of today's Praga Północ counting 124 thousands. More than a half of all employed in Praga Północ and Praga Południe was employed as physical workers. Industrial workers and petty-bourgeoisie (lower-middle class) constituted from 60 to 77% of society here, compared to 52% for the whole Warsaw. Kormanowa and Ławnik (in: Kazimierski et al., 1970) estimate that there was only a tiny percent of bourgeoisie in Praga, twice or 3 times less than in 'Warsaw'. Even in the 20th century historic literature, one can observe that the figures are being compared for Praga and Warsaw, proving again how strong the division between the two river banks remained. In 1926, 63,4% of Praga's workers were employed in metal, machine, electro technical and clothing industries. By 1928, the number increased to 68%.

The losses of industrial sector in Praga after the II WW amounted to 80%, including buildings, production and storage sites, and the manufactured goods. To give an example, the famous Wedel chocolate factory employed around 800 employees before the war. Under the occupation it was only 500, just before the liberation 100, and after the end of war only 13 (Jędruszczak, in: Kazimierski et al., 1970). In 1975, at the outset of post-Fordist transition in Western cities, Warsaw celebrated 25 years of People's Republic where industry did not lose in value. The 6 years plan was to establish the basis of socialism in the city and regenerate industry. Some of the factories were rebuilt (Wedel, Schicht, Drucianka) and some new ones were opened (Warszawska Fabryka Tworzyw Sztucznych, Warszawskie Zakłady Telewizyjne, TZF, Fabryka Samochodów Osobowych [FSO], Polskie Zakłady Optyczne, Tarchomińskie Zakłady Farmaceutyczne Polfa, Warszawskie Zakłady Przemysłu Odzieżowego "Cora", Warszawska Fabryka Pomp, Warszawska Fabryka Sprężyn Karola Wójcika, and many others). Between 1955 and 1970, Praga became the Warsaw's center of industry (Czechowski, in: Kazimierski et al., 1970). Around 50% of all production in Warsaw took place in Praga. Reflecting on the publication "Dzieje Pragi" by Kaziemierski et al. from 1970, one can draw impression that the socialistic urban planning turned Praga into a flagship project, concerning especially industrial growth and housing provision. The social realist housing estates constructed in

framework of socialist urban living, although laudable under the slogan of provision of quality housing for everyone after the turbulences of war, brings rather mixed sentiments among today's Varsovians. Jędruszczak writes that considering the employment structure, Praga Północ was a totally proletarian place. In relation to culture, however, the author comments that there was a strong petite-bourgeoisie legacy in local customs (Jędruszczak, in Kazimierczak et al., 1970).

Chapter 5 - Praga Północ Today

After years of stagnation and deterioration of Praga Północ, the district received new impulses for change in 1990s in form of dramatic political changes, free market, and "authentic municipal council (Sołtan et al. ,2006, p.26)". While the city center experienced an extremely fast re-development and massive influx of national and direct foreign investment and some of the outer districts transformed largely into residential areas (like Ursynów and Białołęka), Praga Północ did not take up an immediate alternative for the post-socialist reality. The main obstacles in redevelopment have been discussed in the previous chapter.

5.1 Socio-economic situation

In Poland, Warsaw is recognized as a successful, rich in potential city, where despite the negative birthrate the number of residents keeps increasing. On this background, Praga Północ carries the reputation of a neglected socially and economically place, where lots of potential has been wasted by lack of interest and investment, unsolved ownership rights of many buildings, and post-manufacturing legacy in education and employment structure of the population. For many years a working-class and industrial district, Praga has not seen a feasible alternative for its character and functions after the transition. A recent study of socio-spatial differentiation of the districts of Warsaw lists Praga Północ as offering bad living conditions and low socio-professional position of residents, expressed in poor education and employment predominantly not requiring qualifications (Smętkowski, 2009). The domination of lower social class culture, perceived high crime rates, street vending, and overall poor condition of Praga Północ, developed and maintained its reputation of being an unsafe and unpleasant place to live and work, or simply to visit (Jałowiecki, 2000). A wave of developments neighboring Praga after the transformations of 1989 successfully avoided any substantial investments in the area. Few first commercial developments, such as Praha cinema and the restored train station Warszawa Wileńska with the adjacent shopping center, improved the vision of the nodal point of the district, but the surroundings have not experienced significant spill-over economic effects. A side effect, however, has been the worsening of the local market for the small shops and local craftsmen who are pushed out by the big commercial center. Indeed, the majority of businesses in Praga involve repair, maintenance, trading, warehouse management and communications (Richards et al., 2010). The public sector is still the largest employer in the area (Richards et al., 2010).

Praga Północ is characterized by high rates of poverty and social exclusion (Richards et al., 2010). The biggest share of residents receives here benefits dedicated to poor families. The Diagnosis of The Social Help System (2008) sums up that "in Praga Północ, there live twice as much poor people as in Śródmieście, Targówek, or Wola (2008, p. 10)". 2010 census speaks of 2520 registered unemployed, which constitutes 4,9 % of the total district population. This percent is the highest in Warsaw. It is possible, however, that many of the unemployed do not register and the factual number is higher. 27% of all Praga's registered unemployed had been without job for more than 2 years. For 68 % of the unemployed it had been a recent situation (up until 1 year), meaning losses of jobs or

unsuccessful entrance into the labor market. The vast majority of Warsaw's residents with primary and vocational education live in Praga Północ, Wola, and Targówek. This distribution overlaps with the areas of so called 'low employment', so areas in which blue-collar jobs dominate, and with the highest rates of unemployment (report 2008). In these very same areas, with Praga Północ on the first place, most social care service interventions were noted. Although in recent decade the situation in Praga improves, the stereotypical reputation of unsafe place is still attached to it.

5.2 Modernization and ongoing initiatives

The privatization and restructuring of Praga's industrial plants, slow transformation of trade, gradual multiplication of services and office premises (such as banks, insurance companies etc), the appearance of hotels, and the functioning of first university level education units (mainly private schools) are the examples of changes in progress in Praga (Sołtan et al., 2006).

There have been a few flagship projects in Praga Północ influencing the streetscapes and demonstrating the change on a larger scale. They do contribute to the appearance and image of the area.

5.2.1 Examples of flagship projects

i. Warszawa Wileńska

Formerly called *Dworzec Petersburski*, the newly reconstructed Wileńska train station, together with a commercial center, are situated in the very heart of the district. They also happen to be located precisely in the middle of the distance between the two cultural centers of the district: Żąbkowska street (to the South) and Nowa Praga (to the North), the two areas to be investigated in the current project. Since its opening in 2002, the project has changed the public experience of the crossroad of the Solidarności Avenue and Targowa street, providing quality private-public space for the residents and attracting visitors from the other areas of the city.

ii. Nowe Kino Praha

Nowe Kino Praha was opened in 2007 in the neighborhood of Stara Praga. It replaced the old Kino Praha which used to be under the same address on Jagiellońska street. The building of the new and only in Praga Północ cinema was financed from public funds. It was planned in a manner combining the cinema with office functions and small events. This interesting building is known for the reliefs placed on its outside walls and its modern architectural style. In March 2012, the main owner of the real estate decided to close it down, which encountered a strong social opposition and the decision has been temporarily suspended.

5.3 Cultural and creative re-imaging of Praga Północ

Since 1990s, the stigmatized image of Praga Północ has been gradually improving. Initially, the change was unnoticeable - as many other transformations commencing in the city after the change of political and economic system, it required time to fully develop. A special role in the process of reimagining of Praga has been played by artists who started locating their workshops and galleries in the district by the late 1990s and early 2000s. Galleries, photographic studios, workshops, architectonic offices and advertising agencies were the main pioneers of change. At this point in time, Praga was not in condition good enough, in contrary to the city center, to become a place for commercial and corporate investments. One of the first big cultural initiatives which involved events and large scale promotion was the renovation and adaptation of an old factory into a cultural center and event location- Fabryka Trzciny. Fabryka Trzciny opened in 2003 on Otwocka street becoming the first serious evening destination in Praga Północ.

Within a few following years, Praga Północ became an emerging alternative space on cultural map of Warsaw (Gawlas, 2011). Due to the deprived character of the area and artistic trigger of the regeneration initiatives Praga was being compared to Montmartre or alternative areas of Berlin (Gawlas, 2011; Chłestowska, 2007). Praga's tourist guide and historian, Katarzyna Chudzyńska, observes that the settling of artists and culture in Praga took place in stages: by the end of 1990s the arts workshops and studios multiplied, after which first galleries were being opened in the beginning of 2000s (personal communication). After that, night clubs started opening in the area by 2005 and until today constitute the main attractants of attention for Praga's skeptics.

There is no source available yet presenting a factual elaboration of the Praga's culture district in the strict field of urban geography. However, the anthropological study of Chłestowska (2007) which draws the picture of Praga and its cultural richness in an urban-ethnographic perspective allowed for conceptualizing Praga Północ as a scholarly established arts district for the purpose of the current research. The author concludes that artists were the protagonists of Praga's cultural "colonization" and underpins the changes taking place in Praga Północ with the context of the worldwide emergence of art quarters in large cities. The research was based in the area of 'Triangle' (see chapter 7) which is also the setting for the current project. Chłestowska (2007) conducted a study of similar objectives as the one at hand but directed the focus on the artistic 'colonization' of Praga. The questions that have been asked included the narration of the relations between the artists and Praga and the 'myth' of Praga as a bohemian neighborhood. The activity of artists in a deprived setting coats the neighborhood in what the author calls 'bohemian myth' - "the answer to the question of the role and place of arts and artists in the contemporary capitalistic society (Chłestowska, 2007, p. 2)". What the artists 'do' to Praga which increases the meaning of the district, says Chłestowska, is attaching to it the label of 'authenticity'. An authentic place is not contaminated with evil ideals and false premises, it is close to the natural rhythm of life, remaining practical and therefore valuable. A part of the process of discovering a district is uncovering its history. This is also the reason why the current study assumes the importance of presenting the history of Praga to allow the readers a full comprehension of the described processes. The artists interviewed by Chłestowska compare Praga to SoHo, but only in terms of the functional

change, not the scale of the development. The tendencies are similar, but the conditions, scale, and dynamics of the phenomena are different. What counts, nonetheless, is the 'atmosphere'. The architecture, age and condition of the pre-war urban tissue make Praga unique.

The cultural infrastructure in Praga Północ, meaning the production, regulation, and consumption of arts and culture, is not clearly pronounced in the physical landscape. It proved difficult to obtain the exact number or map of locations of all kind of cultural and creative producers in Praga Północ to sketch the current intensity of cultural production. According to interviewees (see the empirical part of the research) and the consulted representatives of the district council, there is much more cultural production in the district than it is visible on the streets: workshops occupy tenements and post-manufacturing premises hidden between residential units and on different floors unapproachable from the street level. The dynamics of opening and closing galleries and workshops is also pretty fast. The 'hidden' character of the culture infrastructure has been confirmed by Chudzyńska, acquainted with many of the cultural producers in Praga and up to date with new establishments on the Praga's map. As 'alternative tour guide', as she calls herself, she organizes tours around Praga with the emphasis on less known 'cultural corners', leading her guests to artists' workshops located in their houses in the attics of the old tenements or hidden galleries and meeting places in post-industrial spaces. The relations between the artists and the residents have been shortly approached by Chłostowska (2007). The author noted divergent attitudes of artists towards the local residents, varying from the most interactive ones to the most isolationist and closed.

Discourse revolving around the changing image of Praga Północ focused mainly on the artistic and creative activities occupying old factories and tenements of the area. Loopholes in public finances and unclear ownership of numerous properties obstructed any far reaching revitalization projects. Still, currently, there are more than 100 ongoing ownership court cases (the spokesman of District Council, personal communication). However, after the Poland's accession to European Union in 2004, new financing possibilities opened up for Warsaw with available funds devoted to local development initiatives. A revitalization plan was passed for the whole city of Warsaw for years 2005-2013 with Praga being one of the main recipients. Drawing from interviews with well-established local artists on one hand and public officials on the other, Gawlas (2011) sees the process of revitalization in Praga Północ as changing from initially spontaneous and arts-led to a more orchestrated by local authorities starting with 2005. This argument combines the artistic use of previously underused spaces and simultaneous revitalization of historical buildings at the discretion of public authorities.

The publication "City of Warsaw Supporting the Creative Industries in Praga Północ" (Richards et al., 2010) documents the assessment of Praga's potential to develop into a creative district. The research conducted showed that Praga Północ appealed to the involved creative professionals and specialists as a place with the highest creative potential in Warsaw. The report establishes that Praga Północ became organically a creative location thanks to the availability of low-cost premises. It also emphasizes the role of culture and entertainment for the development of creative industries. It is stated that there is not enough cultural facilities in Praga, such as cinemas or theaters, but there are many privately run businesses such as galleries, cafes, clubs, and concert stages. The

role of creative industries and its potential for Praga has been therefore recognized, as well as the supportive function of the cultural and entertainment infrastructure. The arguments of Florida (2002) related to connection between the creative class and nightlife have not been clearly pronounced. Policy support for nightlife was not included in closing recommendations of the report.

The economic and social situation of Praga Północ has not improved solidly yet, but some preliminary, early criticisms on gentrification to-come can be already heard. The report from 2010 mentions that yuppies and young couples increasingly move to Praga lured by the "district's recent trendiness which has been on the rise for several years (Richards, 2010, p.21). Recalling studies by Hae (2011) and Zukin and Breslow (2011), the developments in Praga Północ mirror to a certain extent the middle stage of the cultural districts life cycle or nightlife-led gentrification, where the increase in property value is encouraged by the cultural 'vibe' and changing image of the area. "Praga was first discovered by artists and then by developers", writes Chudzyńska in her article published in November 2011. "The value of real estate in Praga Północ increased suddenly – on Inżynierska street prices of houses tripled during only few years (Chudzyńska, 2011). Some of the artists start leaving the area. The author of the critical article on Praga's current status of change mentions an acquainted couple of sculptors who after 15 years of living and creating in Praga are forced to move due to the rising rent. This has been the case in numerous situations. The reason for gradual increase in rent costs is explained by "improvement in reputation of the area (Chudzyńska, 2011)". In March 2012, an assembly of Praga's artists issued a request to the District Council inquiring for a group meeting to discuss the problem. Usually not so univocal artistic environment of Praga Północ unified in face of the difficult situation of the area becoming increasingly expensive to live and work in. There has been no answer to the problem at the date of the publication of the current project.

Only one research has been conducted in the subject of clubbing in Praga Północ. Sadowski (2009), an anthropological researcher, familiarized himself with one of the already non-existing clubs in the courtyard on 11 Listopada street. In his study the author refers to the provincial, local, and safe atmosphere created by the club which attracted a variety of guests and performers throughout the few years of its functioning. He juxtaposes the neighbors putting outside their stairwells some chairs and tables, sitting and commenting on everyone that passes by, with the partying guests of the nightclub just vis-à-vis. In his assessment this club constituted the center of change of the image of Praga and the focal point of contact between the two worlds – the nightlife guests and local community. The author also investigated the anthropology of organization in the club in question. His main argument is that this self-made family business created the aura of home. The owners and employees established strong relations with visiting clients and caused many people to affiliate with the reality created by this alternative venue.

Chapter 6 – Methodology and Explanation of Terms

6.1 Methodology

Following the literature review and the introduction of the history and geography of Praga Północ, this short chapter explains methods selected to conduct the research and some terms which will be used throughout the analysis in chapter 7.

The design chosen for the present research is case study. Since the objective of this research is to investigate the experiences of entrepreneurs in running alternative night clubs and club-cafes in a deprived neighborhood, the qualitative methods appear best fitted for the project (Bryman, 2008). In the situation where personal experiences towards visitors, neighbors, and other clubs are explored, group discussions would limit the freedom of expressing opinions and could prevent the interviewees from sharing their real experiences. Therefore, semi-structured, individual interviews have been chosen as the main method of the research. Individual interviews create setting for more direct contact between the researcher and interviewee and encourage open and frank discussion about related subjects. The basic structure allows for keeping the main categories of experiences during the conversation: personal background, motivation, business choice, location choice, interaction with the neighborhood, interaction with competition and related artistic environment, and co-operation with local officials. Sub-questions arise when interviews enter the areas of experience which are related to specificity of the promise in question. Interviews provide the opportunity to explore the reasons for similar or divergent experiences between the interviewees and elaboration in form of personal stories which is crucial for the research but could not be achieved through quantitative methods or strictly structured interviews.

6.1.1 Key concepts and attributes

The exact content of the semi-structured questions is attached in the appendix at the end of the study. Before proceeding to data analysis it is crucial to outline and elaborate the key concepts along which data analysis will be conducted. Table 4 lists the main subject elements (column I) which are set to:

- (a) Describe the factors which encourage the appearance and nature of the nightclubs in the area of the case study (see first part of the research question), and
- (b) To encourage the discussion on perceived interaction with and role played in the district (the second part of the research question).

Questions in the interviews were formulated according to these key concepts. To help the interviewer to categorize and segregate answers and see connections and differences between some of the respondents, various attributes were distinguished as potential components of the key elements in the column II of the table. These factors were not suggested to the interviewees as possible answers. They were merely indicative possible

scenarios listed on the basis of the literature presented in of the research for the purpose of discussion in the non structured part of the interviews and facilitation of data analysis.

In order to answer to the first part of the research question which relates to the development of the nightlife zone, the key concepts refer to entrepreneurs, their opinions and motivations. For the second part of the question which aims at elaborating the functions of the clubs in Praga, questions relate to the functioning of the premises and connections to other actors, such as participants of nightlife, artistic groups working in the territory of Praga, and neighbors.

Table 4: Possible attributes of the factors contained in the interviews.

I. Elements	II. Possible Factors
Personal background	Origin/ age/ education/ previous experience
Motivation	Financial/ personal / business plan/ opportunity/ realization of passion/ others
Business choice	Personal affiliations/ personal interest/ experience in similar business/ economic niche/ others
Location choice	Personal preferences/ attractive rents/ reputation of the district/ public policy encouragement/ availability of locale/ others
Perception of the district	Descriptive, subjective, personal impressions/ entrepreneurial impression/ Negative, positive/ others
Characteristics of the venues	Club/ club-café/ pub/ mixture; A variety of events and activities (dance, music, concerts, parties, events, others)/ Production and regulation
Guests	Target group/ description/assessment of characteristics of the guests visiting venues
Relations with other clubs and cafes	Personal/ professional links; Competition/ cooperation/ common promotion/ random common activities/ others
Relations with neighbors	Friendly/ hostile/ neutral/ supportive/ other/ Noise complaints/ community involvement/ community separation/ others
Advantages and disadvantages of the location	Geographical location/ rent prices/ infrastructure/ availability of locales for

	rent/ atmosphere/ the condition of buildings/ target groups/ presence of clients/ presence of related economic activities/ friendly/ unfriendly social environment/ others
General assessment of the impact of the venue's activity on the neighborhood	Isolation from the local context/ direct impacts/ indirect impacts/ singular activities/ the impact of the whole assembly of venues/ others

6.2 Selection of venues

The research was conducted in May and June 2012. Before this time, a total sum of 11 clubs and club-cafes were invited to participate in the project. By the beginning of May, 2 venues closed, 2 did not express the willingness to participate, and 7 leading entrepreneurs agreed to be interviewed. Although the number of the interviewees is relatively small, it represents the majority of venues in the area and a share of the most popular ones. Therefore, the interviewed group is believed to be indicative and reliable for the purpose of the study. All of the interviews were conducted in Praga. Most of them took place in the investigated clubs and cafes. Figure 18 shows the two locations where the interviewed venues can be found on the map of Praga. These two are the main areas where nightlife is particularly important: Żąbkowska street, with pubs, clubcafes, and restaurants, and so-called 'Triangle', the triangle of the streets Wileńska, Inżynierska, and 11 Listopada with a variety of nightlife venues. 2 venues out of 7 that have been researched are located on Żąbkowska, 2 on Wileńska, 1 on Inżynierska, and 2 on 11 Listopada. The number of venues per street is approximately proportionate.

6.3 Explanation of terms

Since part I of the research made evident that some terms carry different meanings dependently on the authors that use them, as well as that some concepts are created and used by the authors specifically for their studies, it is vital to precise the meaning and scope of terms which are used in the next chapter. The names to be used in the current project are explained here as derived from theories but adjusted to the peculiarities of the case study.

- The assembly of the artistic, cultural, and creative activity settled in Praga Północ will be referred to as ***cultural district***, the term proposed by Zukin and Breslow (2011). *Cultural district* in reference to Praga encompasses artists living and working in the neighborhood, cultural events which are organized by private persons or in association with the local authorities, and a variety of creative

businesses, such as architects or designers, together with professional networks and cultural infrastructure established in Praga.

- The whole of the creative companies that have so far settled in Praga do not amount to Florida's 'creative center'. There is, however, some creative industry in Praga, with architecture, planning and design, and various cultural entrepreneurs and artists. Therefore, the term *creatives* will be used for the purpose of the present study in a more narrowed-down meaning: encompassing some creative entrepreneurs such as designers, cultural activists and artist working in Praga Północ. It does not encompass high tech, innovation, or scientific creativity.
- Non-mainstream, alternative evening and night venues are put in question in the present report. In the next chapter devoted to the analysis of experiences of entrepreneurs in running their business in Praga, references will be made to their premises as to *clubs, club cafes, and pubs*, with *clubs* being non-mainstream, alternative nightclubs, *club-cafes* being cafes active culturally and hosting various events during the evenings and nights, and *pubs* of a more residual character. Pubs and club-cafes are not orientated straightforwardly at clubbing *per se*, but as established through the interviews, they organize events related to music and dance. Not all of the cafes in the area have been chosen for the study - only the ones which can be related to night time economy (open from 4pm onwards, or later, 'along with the last client') and active culturally as they get involved in concerts, exhibitions, or cultural events. Adjusting the term proposed by Campo and Ryan (2008) to the spectrum of interest of the research in Praga, the spatial assembly of the clubs and club- cafes will be called *nightlife zone*.

Chapter 7 – Entrepreneur experiences – data analysis

The following chapter is fully devoted to the presentation of data obtained during the study and its analysis. Chosen aspects discussed in the interviews are presented and compared for different venues and important common features emphasized. The following sections analyze in detail the entrepreneur experiences. Further reaching conclusions and theoretical fit of the results are presented in the closing part of the report.

7.1 Specification of the venues

The selection of the venues which participated in the project has been discussed in the previous chapter, as well as methodology and terms to be used in the following section opening the data analysis. The table below points out the basic characteristics of the places whose owners or managers have been interviewed.

Tabela 5: The overview of the selected nightlife venues.

Club/club-café	Opened	Location	Building construction and former use	Character of the place
A	2003	Ząbkowska	1863, residential tenement	Music and art pub
B	2005	Triangle	1914, small rubber manufacture	Club-café, café culture, open café
C	2006	Triangle	1914, space "roofed" between tenements	Music club, dancing club
D	2008	Triangle	around 1880, tenement	Pub, music pub
E	2009	Triangle	1883, furniture stock	Music club, dance club, and culture center
F	2011	Ząbkowska	1897, old vodka factory	Club-café, vodka bar
G	2010	Triangle	around 1880, tenement	Club-café, culture café

For the purpose of data analysis and quoting, each club is given a consecutive letter-name. The features of the venues given in the table include the character of the place, the year of opening, and the location. Since the research is strongly situated in extensively discussed historical background of the district, the dates of the construction of the buildings in which the venues are located as well as previous uses of the premises are given too. The table shows how the interviewees described their venues. The answers range from a café, through café-culture, club-café, or pub, to a club or a cultural center. Indeed, the variety of demonstrated activities is undeniable and it seems impossible to classify them all in one particular way except for 'alternative nightlife'. However, drawing from the conducted interviews and the observation of investigated premises it becomes certain that the venues in question share certain features which let them be associated one with another. In the same time, each could be approached and discussed separately

because of the differing entertainment and cultural activities. These features, which combined allow for the perceptive 'togetherness' and translate then into the creation of a nightlife zone, are:

- Location in Praga Północ,
- Small distances to other premises,
- Occupation of old buildings,
- Non-mainstream interiors (alternative/raw)
- Evening and night time orientation,
- Mixing of gastronomy, entertainment, and culture,
- Non-mainstream character of the entertainment offer,
- Presumed informal regulation.

7.2 Two studied areas

There are two location categories which correspond to two centers of cultural activity in Praga Północ: Ząbkowska street and the so-called 'Triangle'. Ząbkowska is the street on which a special focus has been put throughout past years, where some private and public building restorations took place along with a few new constructions, with simultaneous enhancement of cultural and gastronomic development. According to the local residents, the term 'Triangle' comes from the famous 'Bermuda Triangle' – a dangerous triangle of islands on North Atlantic Ocean where a number of aircrafts and sea vessels is claimed to have disappeared mysteriously. In Nowa Praga, the area designated by Inżynierska, Wileńska, and 11 Listopada streets used to be one of the least safe and pleasant places in perception of Varsovians. The clubs from this part of Praga investigated in the study are located exactly on these 3 streets – hence the name for this part of the entertainment zone.

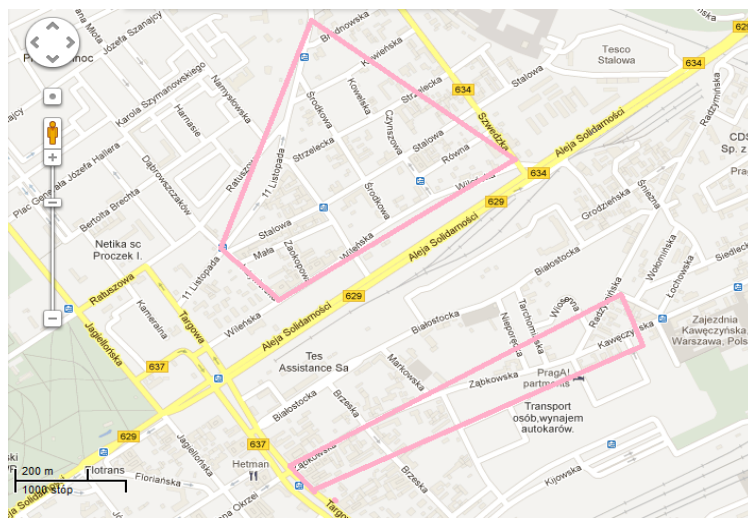


Figure 18: The map of Praga Północ with two studied locations: the 'Triangle' and Ząbkowska street. Source: google maps.

7.3 Nightlife producers

Entrepreneur experiences are the main means of interpreting and understanding the way Praga's nightlife originated, shaped, and what functions it currently performs. The experiences are conditioned directly and indirectly by personal motivations and decisions. Therefore, the analysis starts with characterizing the entrepreneurs, including their backgrounds, motivations, and perceptions of the area in which they work.

7.3.1 Entrepreneurs

Sketching personal and professional profiles of the establishers of clubs is possible by obtaining information directly from the persons in question or from their representatives—the managers. In four out of seven cases, it was possible to ask personal questions directly to the owners. In the remaining three, the information was approximate and came from the interviewed managers.

In most cases, the entrepreneurs were not acquainted before the opening of their businesses (the one exception is explained in the next section). Although the interviewees made clear that the owners of the clubs and club-cafes did not come altogether from a particular social, professional or any other type of group or environment, most of them certainly share some characteristics. Interviews revealed that it is possible to approximately characterize them according to age, education and social background. All of the entrepreneurs are of age between 35 and 45 and hold higher degrees in education. They are economists, sociologists, or people related academically to social sciences or humanities. One of the clubs occurs to be a second property of a couple of owners who few years before the opening of the club in Nowa Praga opened a place combining features of pub, café, restaurant, and club-café on Żąbkowska. These businessmen, an actress and a graphic designer, encouraged by the atmosphere of the place and spacious potential of the old buildings in the area, opened a bigger club in which various functions could be combined. Therefore, the educational description of the group consists of social and economic sciences and creative professions. Pub "A" is the only premise of which the initial establisher is not known, as the pub changed the owner since the time of its opening. Approximately 10 years ago, a foreigner interested in opening an off-pub combining gastronomy and culture was attracted by the "intimate" and "non-snobbish" atmosphere of undiscovered at the time Praga. According to the current manager of the pub, the owner discouraged by problems with administration, low revenues, and problematic neighborhood sold it around seven years ago and moved back to his country of origin. The current owner, however, shares social profile of the remaining interviewees.

Only in this very case, the place has a single owner. All of the remaining venues are owned by two or three shareholders linked by personal affiliations: colleagues, friends, spouses, or family members. Considering ownership, then, all of the studied venues appear to be small businesses run privately or in financial cooperation with acquaintances. They are family businesses (husband and wife, siblings) or friends' businesses (friends from school, a couple, acquaintances which happen to be interested in running their own business and possess money to invest in it). This observation

harmonizes with the non-mainstream profile of the studied nightlife destinations. All of the researched clubs and club-cafes reject branding, corporate structures or other typical mainstream features. They are privately owned and mostly privately managed. Partially because of the limited financial outlays, partially because of a conscious choice of the owners to keep place local and intimate:

"When we were opening "B", there was no facebook or other social networks. It was just before the bigger wave started and we in fact were placing some burning candles on the windowsills to show that were there! [Laughing] People heard on the grapevine, and that is how it spread, and to be frank, I am happy about it. Today there is twitter, facebook, blogs, and I am enchanted with the fact that it developed naturally, in 'Praga's' way, and people started coming the way moths are attracted to light..." (Interview B)

While characterizing the establishers, it is also interesting to touch upon the question of their origin. All but one of the founders grew up and studied in Warsaw; all of them have been working and living here for many years. Two scenarios emerge from their stories. Some of the founders followed professional careers in corporate structures or private companies. At some point, unsatisfied with lifestyle offered by corporate employment, they turned towards opening their own businesses in which they could combine entrepreneurship with culture, fun, and open contact with people. The second scenario which comes forward especially for two of the clubs, referred to as "E" and "F", is opening one's own business when appropriate funds have been accommodated throughout the years of professional work. Here comes the story of a successful creative professional who came to Warsaw from another Polish city in order to continue professional career but opened a club aside. "E" and "F" are characterized by being the owner's personal (or shared with a partner) investments which are eventually run by appointed managers while the professional, in both cases related to creative industries work, is continued.

Most of the founders relate somehow personally to the East riverside of the city. One of the two owners and the general founder of club "C" emphasized his Varsovian roots and strong attachment to the old part of Praga Północ. Personally, as much as a businessman, he also expressed the impression that even without knowing figures such as criminality rates or average income in the area, he notices dramatic improvements in Praga throughout past several years:

"My great grandparents, grandparents, and parents, they were all Varsovians. My mother lived two blocks from here during the war. Now I live in Bródno, but I used to go to school one kilometer from here. When we were in high school, I remember us organizing races: manage to run along Stalowa street and survive. If someone was not successful..."

- *What was so difficult about the task?*

[laughing] For example, a few hooligans would run out from a courtyard or a gate and beat you. Praga has changed so much since those times..."
(Interview C)

The two owners of the club-café "B" used to live in Praga Południe. After opening their business in Praga Północ, the two moved to Praga Północ into the 'Triangle' neighborhood:

"Changing the place was connected to the atmosphere that Praga Północ offers and to financial possibilities that opened for us the moment we opened our own business. Also, we would just leave the house then, cross the street, and we were in "B" in 2 minutes. I laugh a bit when I hear the word 'atmosphere' again, but how would you call it here otherwise?" (Interview B)

There is no cohesion among the entrepreneurs with regards to their previous experiences. The owners of the "B" did not have any previous experience in running music or gastronomy related business. There was no manager or hired representative to take care of the administrative and formal matters- all of the formalities were taken care of by the two shareholders. Interviews conducted directly with the owners of "C", a music and dance club, "D" which remains closest to pub in its character, and "G", combining features of café, club-café and café culture, showed that what connects the owners of these three venues is no previous experience in entertainment but a vague experience in management in unrelated sectors. The situation was slightly different in the vodka bar "F" and club "E", where the founders had certain experiences in running gastronomic locals and delegated adequate tasks before and after the opening to appropriate managers. In case of "E", the management group is organized and hierarchical, but composed of people without specific management education and holding strong interest in culture and entertainment. In "F", the interviewed manager, an employee with experience in relevant branch of economy, takes most of the management issues on his shoulders. His tasks involve PR and events management.

7.3.1 Motivation

Two sub-groups emerge also in the set of studied venues considering the presence or lack of intention to fill in the experience gap by hiring skilled employees. Those who decided to continue their professional careers and approached their locals as additional investment projects needed to come up with a more structured business plan and seek assistance of managers taking care of public relations and promotion. On the other side, there is a group of owners who followed a "movie scenario", as one of the interviewees described it, by resigning from employment in medium companies or corporations and opening their own places and getting strongly involved:

"I used to work in a bank. Within just a few years it turned out that I am absolutely not cut for this kind of job- I cannot work in corporation, as I

always have something different to say than my superiors. The idea of opening something like a 'different' restaurant appeared in my head. At the time, two club-cafes were functioning already in this courtyard. One of them was run by my colleague from school, in fact. From him I got to know that there is another place available under the same address [an empty local for rent in the same courtyard – authors' note]. I observed that my friend's business worked very well and I believed something in a similar style would function well for me too." (Interview C)

Overall, the interviewees shared a similar story in respect to their motivation to open specifically a club or club-café. Although the ideas were triggered by financial reasons, they have been equally the fulfillment of dreams or passionate challenges in one way or another. The founder of an evening café-culture describes it in the following way:

"For years I worked in a corporation, after which I followed a scenario almost taken from a movie. I was thinking about my own business, but I was not sure what kind of business that would be. My husband worked in domains similar to my personal interests, namely art and culture, so we agreed to revolve somehow around this. I had some passion for creative things and he had some operational knowledge, so we tried to combine it. I dreamt of a place with a vintage appearance, old-fashioned, like a strange museum, and I did not want to have a business with a third-person shareholder, so the two of us, we ended up having it all combined in form of this club-café, more a café-culture in fact." (Interview G)

The previous speaker, an economist and the owner of a music club "C", admits that his club is a combination of fun and business. He nevertheless clarifies one aspect of it:

"It is good fun combined with making money, because remember, you have to make your living somehow. However, if anyone tells you, here, in this somehow artistic Praga, because here scenarios like this are quite likely, that he or she opens a club because of a 'higher' idea, it is a lie. It is business in the first place and will always remain it." (Interview C)

The lack of experience and connected to it risk in running a club or club-café is meaningful in the context of Praga. The unofficial nightlife zone created out of the assembly of the studied venues and few more, not involved in the present study, is characterized by spontaneity, informal regulation, and personal character of the business, concerning the financial input as much as the management of businesses. These features become only more evident in the following sections which treat on location choice, the activities organized at the venues, and entrepreneurs' personal attitude towards the area in which they settled. After describing the internal functioning of the examples at hand, the interaction with all the factors related to their locations can be explored.

7.3.2 Perception of Praga Północ

History shows how the barrier in form of the river occurred to be decisive for the fates of Praga throughout centuries. Separated from Warsaw by Vistula, Praga would first constitute Warsaw's 'backyard', then upgrade its status, and eventually be negatively affected by historical events which hindered its further development. The exceptional case of the II World War after which Praga was preserved relatively well compared to the West bank did not bring a significant change in this historical vicious circle as Praga Północ eventually did deteriorate by the end of the 20th century. Without denying the recent optimistic outlooks for the district, the truth remains that after 1989 the West inner city developed incomparably faster to the East inner city of which Praga constitutes a part. The legacy of such course of events is the stereotypical juxtaposition of left-side 'Warsaw' and right-side 'Praga'. This differentiation is not absent among the interviewees. When asked about the feeling of safety, one of the interviewees commented with the words: "[...] *it is not that bad, but you know, Praga, it is not the exact same as Warsaw after all, right?*". Another interviewee explained his interest in Praga with regards to business location in the following way: "*We live on the Eastern suburb, so we would always drive through Praga on our way to Warsaw...*". These and similar expressions confirm that the geographic separation still exists in people's minds, not only for the residents of other neighborhoods, but also for the local entrepreneurs. There exists certain dichotomy in this phenomenon. On one hand, Praga stays distant and unattractive for certain groups through stereotypical judgments. On the other hand, the myth of the old, fascinating, but confusing district in combination with the emerging aura of cultural events and nightscape might turn out to be attractive for the group to which the cultural economy of the area is addressed. This issue comes back in discussion about the disadvantages of the location in section 7.2.2.

A clearly visible trend among all of the entrepreneurs is related to its omnipresent dichotomy in many physical and social aspects of Praga. The landscape of a "*beautiful labyrinth of old tenements, roofs covered with numerous chimneys, red bricks, sculptured balconies and flowerpots (Interview G)*" is appreciated by both, local entrepreneurs and residents, to the same extent as the negligence and lack of intervention in the condition of the very same buildings is being criticized. Another dissonance commonly recognized by the interviewees is the contrast between the local disadvantaged, sometimes pathological social environment, and the representatives of local culture economy and the more well-off participants of culture and nightlife. The entrepreneurs also recognize the difficulty which stems from these discrepancies: how to preserve the old beauty of Praga Północ but do not lose its authentic character and threaten residents and local small businesses? The manager of "A" speaks openly about the "typical *Prażans*" and the "new *Prażans*" ('Prażan' is a resident of Praga). It is understandable from the speech of the manager that typical residents of Praga are represented by lower and lower middle classes, involved in blue-collar jobs or low-paid services, affected by pathological problems and lack perspectives. The "new" groups are those who choose Praga consciously as Praga becomes a fashionable place to live in and to work in for certain professional circles, such as artists or yuppies.

All interviewees experience the “fashion” for Praga: among their customers, friends, tourists, or media. They cherish the positive atmosphere surrounding the nightlife zone because it contributes to the popularization of the formerly stigmatized area and encourages clients, but are not particularly positive about it. The owner of “C” speaks with irritated voice about the new “trend”. Happy about the popularity of the alternative clubs in the neighborhood, he is worried that the mainstream and commerce will flood the place soon. The owner of “B” worries about the loss of authenticity of the place and recalls a story when she first experienced it:

"We opened such a little place... First people would come to visit only us. We were first here, in this area. It was nice, I liked this atmosphere. Then few articles were published somewhere in press and the wave of actors and celebrities started. Once we hosted a team from TV, they asked as many questions about our events and the work we did for the local community. I was more than happy to tell them lots of stories. In the end, they just wanted to have me saying that the famous actor about which the ongoing episode of their program was about sometimes comes to visit us. I was so angry." (Interview B)

Interestingly, the subject of safety is not touched upon much during the interviews. Only one of the owners mentions that some of his clients find the streets of the ‘Triangle’ still slightly suspicious in terms of safety, but he has not heard of any troublesome incidents. As already quoted, the years of experience of the owner of “C” prove that Praga is increasingly safe and visitors from outside tend to act increasingly more confident. Figures presented in section 3.2.6 confirm this observation. In their study on nightlife regulation, Chatterton and Hollands (2002) emphasize that alternative nightlife brings suspicions and attracts the attention of the police due to its non-mainstream character as much as the marginal location. This has not been a problem for the club owners in Praga. Only few encounters with the police were noted throughout years and with no major consequences. Here, the threat to safety is put on the side of the nightlife producers and consumers and not caused by them. The weight of offensive behaviors is put on the side of the entourage.

7. 4 Praga Północ as a nightlife zone

The interviewees have been asked about the reasons for locating their businesses in Praga Północ. Location factors are important especially for the policy makers in the situation where nightlife would be encouraged and favorable conditions for its development desired. The current section presents the opinions of the interviewees on the environment in which they run their premises, including the features of Praga which attracted them, as well as advantages and drawbacks experienced later on in running the business.

7.4. 1 Location choice

Factors decisive in locating clubs and club-cafes in Praga Północ provided by the interviewees overlap to a large extent with factors exposed in the established studies on similar developments. The location decision seems to be determined by the combination of the chosen style of the premise and circumstances favorable for this style. Praga Północ, as a non-commercialized neighborhood, has become an interesting location for businesses which do not require specific economic entourage such as the one offered by commercialized city center, but do need spacious premises and rather low rents. Non-mainstream night events tend to adhere to marginal or less popular city areas because there these criteria are met. Therefore, relatively low costs of occupying post-industrial or run-down buildings together with availability of space are connected to the alternative style of the premise.

In case of Praga, the appearance and atmosphere of the "old Warsaw" is discussed by the interviewees as one of the key factors. The owner of the club "C" explains that the interesting setting created by the old urban tissue compensates for a rather unattractive location in terms of a relative absence the other kinds of entertainment, inconvenient travel location, or the unfavorable reputation of the area:

"In my opinion, this is how it works: you open a club either because of the location or because of the atmosphere that surrounds the place. In this respect, this part of Praga, this part of the right-side Warsaw, is the only place where the pre-war tenements have been saved. These buildings come from the twenties of the past century, some date even earlier!" (Interview C)

Another owner, orientated more towards gastronomy and culture than clubbing scene, aimed at finding a nice, calm, and charming neighborhood on the side of the river where her family life is based. She admits she was discouraged by the commercial changes in Warsaw's city center and attracted to Praga by its history, age of the built tissue, and the atmosphere. Mentioning that glass and aluminum dominate the landscape of new constructions in the city center, she expressed appreciation of the "spirit" of Praga:

"Most of all, we did not want to be in the city center. We bought a house nearby and we wanted to move around this side of the river. I also used to work here in a company. I never commuted to center. I am discouraged and tired of commerce, snobbism, prices, people, and the speed of life... [...] Here, just take a look around: Wileńska street with a beautiful view, you see the old orthodox church, the history of Praga... This place just has a soul. " (Interview G)

The same entrepreneur took into consideration future developments planned for the area. The proximity of the second metro line, currently in construction, was an asset. A place closer to the proper metro station was initially preferred, but no locals for rent were available at the time closer to the planned metro stop. Nevertheless, the relative proximity of Wileńska train station with the shopping center and the presence of famous 'off' clubs around the corner, in the estimation of the owner, compensate for the disadvantage of a

slightly "hidden" location (the 'Triangle', the area of Nowa Praga). Although scarce if compared to the nearby city center, the presence of few other services related to entertainment and leisure, such as big commercial center of other clubs, has acted as a pull factor.

Presence of artists and cultural events in Praga Północ has been mentioned by only one interviewee and in a quite vague way:

"We were attracted by the 'Sąsiedzi dla sąsiadów' festival ['Neighbors for Neighbors', independent cultural festival of artists with events located in various places in the district- author's note], so I really believe that these cultural events attracting people here are not a myth, because this is how we got here. We went to the festival, we also used to go quite often to a restaurant on Inżynierska street, now closed since few years, [...] and in Praga Południe, we felt, there was no such potential of development, and here- the architecture, atmosphere, the feel of a smaller town.." (Interview B)

Previous studies showed that nightlife can function as a separate, independent economy (Hae, 2011; Chatterton 2002) or develop in combination with culture (Breslow and Zukin, 2011), dependently of its kind. Montgomery (2003) described how nightlife venues, not necessarily clubbing scene but also simple meeting places or music venues, are part of the cultural 'entity' and the cultural infrastructure in cultural quarters. From the same sources, it is possible to conclude that alternative kind of evening and night venues is very likely to function in association with certain non-mainstream cultures. The production and consumption of such alternative sub-cultures, especially in form of artistic activities, are likely to concentrate in urban environments which for them appear attractive, but are discouraging for more well-off social groups, usually in older, run-down marginal parts of inner cities (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003). This dependency is clearly related to the situation in Praga. The knowledge that the presence of arts and cultural events in a deprived area can interact with nightlife, invites to analytical reading in between the lines when interviewees explain their location choice without referring to this relation directly. Although the remaining owners did not literally list the arts or culture in the area as a push factor for locating there, they do list the improved 'atmosphere' in the neighborhood and a kind of 'fashion' for Praga. As it will be later revealed, the sum of voices of the entrepreneurs and local officials indicates that the 'invasion' of artists and creatives in Praga has already changed the atmosphere of the place and had further reaching consequences. Therefore, it can be implied from the arguments relating to 'improved atmosphere' or 'trend for Praga' that the cultural life of Praga was an indirect location factor for these entrepreneurs.

One of the owners admits that when asked, he usually gives 'better sounding' reasons for choosing the business and the location. In fact, while looking for solutions, he imitated the already existing, similar venues in the area. The idea that came first was to open a non-formal place, one of a "more relaxed atmosphere", something between café, pub, and club-café. After that followed the realization that only few premises of that kind were open in Praga at the time and all were very popular. The two future shareholders recognized the niche for evening destinations with diversified cultural

atmosphere and quite loose regulation in the particular area of Nowa Praga. Meanwhile, the owner of the "B" is quite straight forward: "charm and prices". The atmosphere surrounding Praga was the main attractant, she says, but without the incomparably low rents their place would "not happen".



Figure 19 (left): A club-café which closed down during the research. The dynamics of change among Praga's nightlife venues are fast; Figure 20 (top right): "G" represents a culture-café style. The owner visited Berlin to draw inspiration from corresponding in style venues; Figure 21: The courtyard on 11 Listopada street. Currently, there are a hostel, a café, 2 night clubs, an 'open club', and a theater there. Photos: the author.

"F" is the only premise from the interviewed set which occupies a privately owned space, which makes it a distinctive and interesting case. The manager of "F" cannot quote the owners literally, but he is convinced that their decision relied on the specific building and its character. "F" is currently located in one of the several late 19th century post-industrial buildings which together used to function as a factory of vodka. In 2007 the factory was purchased by a private developer from the hands of the national company. Vast unused spaces have been taken over by artists and culture animators already few years ago. "Koneser" belongs to a private investor who just recently released the final master plan for the area which should be finalized in the beginning of 2014. The plan assumes construction of lofts and soft-lofts, offices, and dedication of 3 units for cultural purposes. Similar scenario for post-industrial objects has been established before in the literature (Zukin, 1982). The execution of the master plan threatens the presence or current businesses which located there, including a theater, an art gallery, a café-bar, an 'etno' shop, and the club-café "F". However, the entrepreneurs were aware of the situation while deciding on location. The "hipster" aura of Praga was admittedly supportive, but the

area of the former vodka factory appeared perfect for opening a club-café which was to take the form of a 'vodka bar'. Therefore, the location decision was determined by the conditions created by "Koneser": post-industrial setting and "local drinking traditions" which correspond with the idea of the club. This correspondence, however, is indirect. The sophisticated culture of alcohol drinking represented by the vodka bar, explains the manager, is connected to a totally different level of cultural awareness than the one represented by the stereotypical local community. Members of the target group, in reverse, possess this awareness, and this trend wants to be represented in "Koneser".

7.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages of the location

After elaborating on the motives for choosing Praga as their business location, the interviewees have been asked about the factually experienced benefits and inconveniences of the location. It occurs that the push factors have not been misleading and to a large extent overlap with the answers to this question. This overlapping indicates that the assumed perspectives and hopes of the entrepreneurs relating to the atmosphere and authenticity of the place, the demand for new establishments within the already filling in alternative niche, and affordable rents, have not been disappointed. A very few new added values are revealed while discussing the problematic issues encountered in Praga Północ and some of them appear also double-sided.

One of the main problems in managing a nightclub or club-café in Praga Północ is the fact that Praga is predominantly a residential quarter. Whether in a tenement or a former manufacturing premise, the direct surrounding are the residents of tenements or blocks of flats. The night silence time starts, according to the city's law, at 10pm. After that, anyone can complain to the local police about nuisance or disturbance.

"We are not a residential building, but there are people living just next to us. We want to do some things for them too, but they are not glad about it. I understand that it can be a problem for them: you sleep, and then some people go outside just in front of your house, they stand outside and smoke, come in and out, or laugh." (Interview B)

The owner of "B" explains that her 'open club' respects the neighbors and has no intentions to cause troubles. It is inevitable, though, that the courtyard where more similar clubs are open (at the moment 4 + 1 theater) gets full of people from different venues that mix and go outside for a chat, especially in hot summer nights. As the courtyard is surrounded by high walls of tenements, the sound spreads easily. There have been initiatives of common outdoor events, such as garden parties or concerts, but the nuisance has repetitively been the issue. Similarly, the pavements aligned along the courtyard and edges of the park located vis-à-vis the patio on 11 Listopada were some time ago considered in terms of arranging tables, chairs, and lying chairs for visitors to have the possibility to spend time actively outside. This encountered the opposition of the residents who did not want additional nuisance and desired to keep the pavements for walking and car parking. Therefore, discourse on space becomes an issue. The details of the discourse can be found in section 7.4.1 of the report.

Meanwhile, another problematic issue is revealed by the persons who struggled or keep struggling, in this case, with the age or condition of the managed space. With no exception, all of the premises occupy very old buildings. Pubs and club-cafes, as "A", "D", or "G", are located on the ground floors of tenements. The youngest of them dates from around 1880. These clubs and a vodka bar, occupy one a warehouse, another one a manufacture hall, and the last one an old factory. None of the buildings have been revitalized and the vast majority of locals (5 out of 7) have been self-overhauled and had the interiors designed by the owners themselves. Therefore, some installations or amenities solutions have been provisional. The owner of the open club "B", which in fact has been undergoing renovation during the author's last visit, comments:

"For me, another big problem is the condition of the building. We fear that we will be flooded after just a slightly bigger rain, or maybe one of the pipes will break again. Oh, and we do not have any heating!" (Interview B)

The owner of "C", and the direct neighbor of "B", adds:

"You see these two walls that designate our club? These are the external walls of the two tenements in between which we are squeezed. And this is just a roof put above the space.

- *Amazing!*

We had such holes in the roof in the beginning...

- *It does not leak now anymore?*

Of course it does... Look at the pipes. These are the external pipes of the tenements. They occasionally clog and explode here onto the dance floor.

- *Fun?*

Fun. But look at how many wires with current we have around here. Once, I hardly saved my own neck, I remember."

Since the tenements are venerable, so are most of their facilities. The provision of obligatory ventilation in "D" was obstructed by unanticipated lack of chimney vent. It was a standard of the tenement construction back in times that locals on the ground floor should have their chimneys separate from other apartments situated on the upper floors. In this case, one of the inhabitants of the tenement desired to have his own chimney and closed off the connection of the one which should have been ventilating the premise occupied by "D". This unusual obstruction could be overcome through dialogue and cooperation between the owner and the residents – the chimney was restored to "D". This dialogue, in the end, helped as well to establish friendly relations between the owners of "D" and the residents of the tenement.

Although chosen by the entrepreneurs themselves, the geographic location of their clubs is perceived by some as problematic. The problem relates to the West-East divide,

the 'uncrossable' river, and insufficient public infrastructure connecting some parts of Praga to the other parts of the city.

" - So what is the disadvantageous part of running a club here?

I believe it is still the location.

- *Though you chose the place yourself?*

Yes. When we talk about clubbing, the flow of people is important. It's about the frequency. I get the impression that people who live on the 'left' side of Warsaw still prefer to go clubbing there. Though I know that somehow many of our clients do not come from Praga... But the river, in Warsaw, is after all a huge barrier. So it's a localization-logistic problem." (Interview C)

For "F", the location problem appears two-fold. First of all, "F" is not well connected to the other parts of the city, nor by private, neither by public transport. The very few buses which run along Ząbkowska street are not the most convenient lines and, most importantly, they do not run at night when the club is open. In such situation, metro available to nightlife participants until 3am on Friday and Saturday nights, according to the current schedule of the first line, could be crucial. The perspective of the second line opening within two years brings some optimism. The second difficulty relates to the fact that the whole factory where "F" is located is privately owned and under reconstruction. There are two entrance gates to the area of the factory and the choice of the one that stays open changes occasionally and depends on private security company. The workers of "F" worry that guests are not always aware of that and do not verify whether the second gate is open in case when the first one is closed. This regulation, which the managers of "F" unfortunately cannot influence, discourages the visitors. Locating in a privately owned property stretching on such a big area and with numerous buildings, explains the manager of "F", has two sides. On one hand, the regulation of entering and exiting does not always depend on the club. Also, the future of the bar is uncertain – the place of the bar in the master plan has not been clearly anticipated. On the other hand, however, there is certain feeling of safety connected to it- the whole area is surrounded by factory's walls and guarded. The question of safety left in hands of the property owner does not leave any worries about unanticipated incidents or unwelcomed guests to the managers.

Last but not least, the economic situation of Praga Północ is listed as a disadvantage. The owner of the culture-café "G", which opened two years ago, juxtaposes the city center and her neighborhood: there, people work and rush, they come and go, there is a constant flow. Here, there is not much commotion in the area and guests, if come, come purposely to visit a particular place. The blockade of traffic caused by the construction of metro temporarily worsens the situation. Asked why despite these unfavorable conditions she decided to stay here, she explains with enthusiasm:

"Economically, I believe, it is hard to make big money here. Myself, I wanted to stop for a moment, to slow down; otherwise I would have opened a place

in the city center. Here, it works different than there: you approach your client, you talk, someone keeps an eye on the bar for you, strolls around, and some people pitch in if you don't have money for something. Here, the relations between the consumers and you are just better. You know the people that come; you are by names with them." (Interview G)

The very same entrepreneur uncovers another dichotomy of the conditions in Praga and related dynamics. In one of the previous sections, the proprietor of "G" listed the perspective of a new metro line as a factor which acted positively in choosing the 'Triangle' location for her club-café. As mentioned before, the opening of the new metro line is expected to improve the connectivity of the place but currently the 'Triange' has been cut off from main transport arteries and experiences significant fall in revenues. In the future, when metro opens, she expects not only the intensified flow of people, but also increase in rents:

"Some already close. The rotation here, among the club-cafes and galleries, is quite fast. Two places closed down just this year. It's not fun, rather sad. The municipality says that they will increase the rents when metro opens. I do not intend to be 'adding' to my own business. If I need to close, I will." (Interview G)

The metro line occurs to be as much an improvement as a problematic issue. Choosing Praga for the metro line destination was a strategic step of the city to integrate two watersides of the city socially and economically. Besides the general improvement of the status of Praga Północ on the real estate map of Warsaw, local small businesses, crafts, and establishments of the kind investigated in the project are likely to suffer due to commercialization and rise of property values.

7.3 Regulation

Almost all of the night time establishments which can be found in Praga Północ today can be classified to a non-mainstream category. All of the studied venues are alternative with respect to the features distinguished by Chatterton and Holands (2002). These aspects of production, regulation, and consumption will be discussed in the current section. To recall, the production of alternative kind of nightlife is individual, entrepreneurial, and local; regulation cautious and informal; and the consumption of such nightlife rather creative-oriented, interactive, with more open consumer-producer relations.

7.3.1 Production

The analysis of the methods undertaken during the preparation for the opening of each venue and the current ways of production revealed both common and distinctive approaches among the studied establishments. Production in all of them has been personal, entrepreneurial, and is definitely inscribed in locality. 'Locality' does not mean

here that the activity is addressed to local residents. In reverse, production rarely involves the community. It refers rather to a direct connection between the envisaged character of these venues (their offer, atmosphere, specific use of space, and rather informal regulation which will be discussed in the next section) and the unique in Warsaw conditions existing in Praga Północ which allow for inscribing this character in the complex urban context. In club "B" it is explained with the example of use of space:

"We saw the space first and we already imagined everything: in the basement – the concerts and here, to the left, the bar and café place. "B" is divided into smaller rooms, so there is a dance and events basement room, there is an entresol and half-floor with a smaller, charming corner, and you can hide there more intimately. This space is really divided architectonically in a very interesting and untypical way." (Interview B)

Locals in similar shapes and in rather poor conditions require not only imagination for creative indoor arrangement, but also financial inputs in renovations. The owners of the venues tell the stories of hard individual work in bringing their spaces from the initial, quite deteriorate state, to the present condition. No far general renovations were encouraged as in 6 out of 7 cases the rent contracts with the city were quite short (renewable every 3 years). Many major ones, however, such as introducing ventilation (already mentioned chimneys), new water pipes, electricity, and taking care of the safety requirements were absolutely necessary. Self organized preparation with the help of acquainted workers or friends and personal performance of all the technical and logistic activities was common for the majority of the clubs and club-cafes. The owner of "B" clarifies, though, that the conditions and atmosphere of the rented premise required major renovations, but in the same time encouraged rather raw, 'dirty', somehow 'scratched' and minimalistic décor. The overall work amount was vast, but the satisfaction great and the financial input, if compared to the mainstream clubs which occupy basements in city centers or prestigious spaces in new office buildings – incomparably lower:

"It was not that much money mainly because we did everything on our own. We traveled around the country through small villages bringing old, cheap furniture. We installed electricity, we put the wooden floors, we made bathrooms, we painted walls, and we cleaned old door and window frames. Crazy, but it's ours." (Interview B)

The entrepreneurial aspect becomes evident when the interviewees talk about their logistic and administrative struggles. In case of clubs "E" and "F", the interviewees were the managers and were able to talk only vaguely about the beginnings of the establishments they represented. The interviewed owners of "B", "C", "D", and "G", however, openly report that they initially possessed little financial bases and little knowledge in running one's own business. All of them eventually cooperated financially with agreed partners (as discussed before, personally acquainted persons) and sought

additional help in adequate support offices in the district council. District's administration advised on various legal logistic and technical issues.

This is how the initial preparation was carried out. Considering nightlife production, as Chatterton and Hollands (2002) say, alternative night time premises are small, differentiated, independently run, and cater for more specific cultures and tastes. This is indeed the case with all of the investigated units. The venues in Praga Północ are truly differentiated. "A" is mainly a pub, but often organizes arts exhibitions of acquainted artists, small concerts, or presentations. For example, a traveler's presentation of materials gathered during his journey: pictures, movies and stories. "B" is a total mixture of various activities: there are dance and concert rooms in the basement, a bar on the ground floor with two smaller rooms and an entresol in semi-shadow and candles, but also a room on a first floor which serves various purposes depending on the event. There are louder or more 'delicate' concerts, some musicians come in the evenings with their equipment and simply organize jam sessions, but these are not popular kinds of music – rather world, ethnic, Jewish, somehow oriental tunes. Dance parties for guests aged 50 and 60 have been organized occasionally, when local groups performed old local songs. The owners participate in the life of local community, helping charity organizations and occasionally organizing events for children. The main page of the place's website says: "B" is located in one of the courtyards of the old Praga. It is not a club. It is not a pub. It is not a gallery. It is a place of encounters – musical, multimedia, and human ones". The closest to "A" in character, although of a more transparent, light space and orientate more to evening than night time activity, is "G". "G" is a café where "everything happens". There are cakes, salads, and beverages; board games and books; arts exhibitions and dance parties. The owner admits openly that "G" is "a space crated for her ideas and wonders to be fulfilled". "C" is orientated at two main activities: clubbing and concerts. "E", the largest from all, is a music club, concert spot, and cultural center hosting a range of events. "D" is dominantly a pub. Interestingly, the owner admits that the cultural activities in this place result more from the demand and atmosphere of the nightlife zone than his personal interest or needs – different than "A", also a pub, which as mentioned above, engages in cultural life of the neighborhood actively. "F" is a slightly different case in terms of the setting, due to its location on a private property ground and slightly different conditions for management as discussed in the section 7.2.2. However, the place mixes various functions: with regards to gastronomy, it is a high-standard vodka bar. The good quality of the offered alcohol is not aimed at limiting the audience to well-off groups. In reverse, the manager explains that the target group of "F" is 'really fine', people aged 20 -40, hipsters, young professionals, tourists, but also random groups of people who choose to try a slightly different kind of entertainment. The large open space with sand imitating beach during the summer, wide-open door, a quite austere interior stylized according to social realist taste, encourage different groups of people. The premise is quite large but also simple: one, large, spacious room with a bar, high chairs and tables, where space for dancing or events can be easily organized by moving them aside. "F" organizes multiple events which vary from dance parties with music from the 70s, 80s, and 90s, or Polish disco parties, to sophisticated concerts. The cross-section of the activities performed by the studied venues shows how diversified they are in their offer and how independently they are managed according to preferences of their owners.

The following quote, which shows that diversified perception of the character of a venue can develop even within a single management team, closes the section:

"We promote the culture of drinking; we do not promote a style of being. It is the difference between the 'consumption' and the 'culture of drinking' that we promote. [...] There are three shareholders. One of them calls the place a 'vodka bar' – looking at our offer the reason is obvious. However, the second one calls it a music club, and the third one – a club-café." (Interview F)

7.3.2 Regulation

This section, devoted to nightlife regulation, elaborates on how nightlife producers regulate their contacts with consumers. This aspect involves two main questions: the entrance selection and the extent and form of contacts between the nightlife producers and their clients.

In case of clubs with popular dance scenes, such as "C" or "E", some form of entrance regulation appears necessary. These clubs explain that selection does not aim at invitation of certain envisaged lifestyles or formation of a dress code. Rather, it does not ignore the reputation of the neighborhood in which the venues are located. The reputation of Praga Północ as unsafe is one aspect of it. The second one, in both cases, is the gained experience which says that one out of few visits of the 'local fellows', or 'local youngsters', ends up with a fight or, at least, with a "very uncomfortable situation". These 'local fellows' are being recognized mainly by their appearance: the outfit and language they speak. The establisher of "C" explains in the following way:

"[...] The only selection we have aims at eliminating Praga's hooligans. I guess in 90% of cases they can be cool buddies, but with their looks, language and our knowledge of what their fellows have been up to before, we are suggested that these can be potential hooligans. In reality, many of them might be nice people.

- *So this group of Prażans who match the dangerous stereotype you do not allow inside?*

The 'scallies' ('dresiarze'), at least this is how we call them here, they even respect this place. To the extent that we know each other and they know they should not be coming here. First of all, they are not really interested by this form of culture. Second of all, there is no sense in messing around on your own territory, right? And lastly, we know them, we know their faces, they are recognizable here... [...] It is evidently one thing, because even me, I walk around in the kind of clothes that they wear (laughing) – it is that one out of ten causes troubles." (Interview C).

The situation is different when pubs or club-cafes are considered. Here, there are no guards employed full-time. The persons involved in running the venues, the owners, managers, and other employees, try to manage the safety themselves. They explain that they cannot say 'no' to someone who peacefully enters the premise, orders a drink and

sits down. In case of troubles, the troublemakers are gone before the called security company reacts. Therefore, the method of dialogue is preferred. The openness of these venues towards "any kind of people" is therefore true in practice, but constantly re-negotiated and does not always feel comfortable:

"I don't feel good in a stiff, impersonal entourage, hence the 'chill' atmosphere in here. Our guests are normal, ordinary people. Those Prazans that come are the ones that feel the vibe, but some 'scallies' happen too..."

- *Do you welcome them?*
Yes, until the moment when they start to brawl.
- *And it does happen?*
This is the kind of guests we would prefer not to have. But when they enter, look around, and say: "hey, what a cool place!" and they sit down and call their people to come along, what can we do? If they just sit and do not make troubles, we won't ask them out. But we do feel uneasy.
- *But is this the question of security, or do they not match the convention?*
I am not sure. Maybe it's my fears? But I wonder how other guests feel about it. You wouldn't think twice before entering if you saw a group of 'scallies' hanging around? I did see this behavior few times already: there was a group sitting inside, and other clients opened the door, had a look inside, saw them, and left. It's no use." (Interview D)

The owner of "G" had troubles mainly with youngsters. She recalls several times when young kids from the neighborhood would run inside, grab random objects or foods, and run away. She never called the police. Instead, she decided to organize a series of savoir-vivre lessons for children and adolescents. Similarly, on occasion of Christmas, pub "A" invited a group of local children and toughed them how to behave in such a place, allowed them to walk behind the bar and prepare their own, non-alcoholic drinks. The owners also know that by this kind of community involvement they make themselves liked in the neighborhood. Two ladies who run "B" express their personal affection towards their neighbors and laugh more than worry about the safety issues:

"There are some residents from Stalowa street or Inzynierska street who do come, but there are also those who would never visit. There are also some who, if they know that we have a dancing in Praga's old style, come, and even bring their alcohol in breast pockets. But we are happy that they are here. These are the people who go to prison for winters and for the summer they are back. They appreciate us, they know they can be here. If someone drunk too much, one of our guys would come and say: "hey, 'Siwy', you exaggerate a bit now...", and 'Siwy' would reply: "oh, sorry girls, sorry!" and leave... And then, he would come afterwards and add: "hey, girls, your car... is safe!" (laughing)". (Interview B)

The overview of the selection policies of the seven venues and the explicit answers of the interviewees considering the desired target groups show that the atmosphere which they

created, possible through rather informal regulation, aims at making guests feel comfortable and at ease. Loosen social customs do not mean here misbehavior or violence, but no strains attached with regards to dress code, orders, and prohibitions. The fact that clubs welcome representatives of differentiated social groups and lifestyles is also characteristic. The limited section at the entrance in case of clubs is officially justified by safety issues. Uneasy impressions about local hooligan-looking like groups come in between the lines.

Only one of the interviewees speaks of the relations he builds with his employees: cleaners, waiters and waitresses, djs, etc. His attitude shows also the tendency untypical for the hierarchical structure of employment in corporate establishments:

"Looking at how the relations between the employer and workers in this business function, I chose a model which suits me best - a friendly one. I don't want to be a boss who stands next to a person and looks from behind the shoulder controlling and punishing, 'because some dust still hasn't been cleaned from the shelves'. I get nervous only when serious mistakes happen. The atmosphere here is easy, we drink together, we go out together after work, though most of them are fifteen and more years younger than me. If they need anything, like space for private parties or making movies (some of them do movie studies), they just come."

This choice was motivated by personal preferences. In private business, when the owner serves also as a manager (though some of the employees carry out distinctive managerial functions here as well), the man chooses to stay in friendly touch with his co-workers to create a friendly atmosphere. This way he also minimizes the risk of theft or other possible uneasy situations:

"This allows also for identification with the place. They also live with this, they belong here, and for me, by the way, it is also safe, because this way I know them better and have bigger trust in my employees." (Interview C)

Finally, the managers who are most active in running the business know many of the clients. Three groups emerge out of the words of the interviewees with regards to their familiarity with guests. The first group are customers which come regularly and particularly to specific locations. These people visit because of the atmosphere suitable for them, the presence of other acquainted groups, and seek the entertainment they know and like. The second group are the Praga's creatives. Artists, activists, writers, and people of professions which involve exhibiting, organizing group meetings or events, are often customers of the seven studied venues. Personal and professional encounters mix here for them. Local painters or photographers negotiate on personal level the possibilities of organizing their professional events in "A", "E", "F" or "G". The last group are the residents of the tenements in which, or next to which, the venues are located. The owner of "D" knows most of the people who live in the tenement of which the ground floor he occupies. During the interview, around 6 pm during the week, a young man enters the pub and sits by the bar. The interviewee comments: "This guy, there, he lives upstairs.

Poor guy, he has two full-time jobs so he worked whole night in the hospital and from the early morning he had another shift. I know this because he usually comes here to rest after having two shifts one after another (Interview D)". The lady running the café-culture "G" and a close neighbor of "D" also occupying a ground floor of a tenement speaks with pride about her contacts with neighbors. Some ladies from upstairs leave their bags with groceries behind the bar when they leave to finish their errands. They come back to pick the bags up, have a small talk with the owner, and go back home. The owner does not mind people coming, asking for favors, and not spending money – if they have no money to spend, she still prefers knowing people from the neighborhood than not knowing them at all.

7.3.3. Consumption

Nightlife consumption cannot be discussed thoroughly in the current project due to the chosen perspective and research methods. The nightlife zone in Praga is explored here through the experiences of the entrepreneurs who produce and regulate nightlife. The method chosen for the study – the interviews with the owners of the clubs - cannot reveal the full picture of the consumerist side. A detailed survey among the visitors, their motives, participation, and impressions would need to be investigated.

However, a few conclusions can be drawn from the experiences shared by the owners and managers. Chatterton and Hollands (2003) speak about the creative – oriented and interactive mode of nightlife consumption and the blur between the consumer and producer in alternative style of venues. This pattern is encountered in the seven investigated premises. The previous section, in which the three groups of guests have been distinguished, shows the shortened distance between the producers and consumers. Moreover, some of the guests discussed are not even consumers per se – they are participants of the local life. This interaction, however, is not universal for the units of the nightlife zone in Praga Północ. As discussed earlier, those of the premises which organize dance or music events introduce selection. This divide does not necessarily need to be the result of the owners' lack of open or friendly intentions, but can be a mere logistic step required in organizing the events with a larger number of guests. The creative and interactive dialogue –the outcome of the blur between the producer and consumer – comes through when workers know their clients by names, know personal details from their lives, or engage with local artists' community. These interactions will be further elaborated in the next section.

7.4 Interactions

The last section of the chapter corresponds with the second part of the main research question. An attempt is made to establish and discuss the lines along which the nightlife venues interact with the urban setting in which they function. The history and social-economic situation of Praga Północ was discussed in detail in chapters 3 and 4. Current chapter analyzed so far the conditions which encouraged the development of the nightlife zone in Praga and characterized the venues which create it. The following sections

elaborate on the ways in which studied clubs, club-cafes, and pubs negotiate the use of space, interact with the local community, compete among themselves, and establish links with the cultural district.

7.4.1 Discourse on space

The discourse on space is raised in the interviews by those of the entrepreneurs who interact with space larger than their indoor premise: courtyards, patios, pavements, or the inside of post-industrial complexes as in the case of "F". This spatial discourse revolves around the contact of two totally divergent social groups which represent different needs and perceptions of space. Nightlife producers and users see the 'labyrinth' of tenements as a playground for relaxed and non-customary entertainment and social interaction. The austere conditions of the buildings and post-manufacturing character of some of them appear to the entrepreneurs as 'charming' and 'challenging', as there are few limits or rules which need to be obeyed in arranging the interiors or exteriors. The example of adapting the interior in a bit unusual way is the management of already mentioned former industrial space, which in fact is not a building in itself, but a construction covered by a roof in between the tenement. Here, where "C" is located, the external pipes of the buildings in between which the club is squeezed are inside the club itself. In case when a pipe breaks due to a strong precipitation, the interior of the club can be flooded. The owner of "C" does not see it as a major problem. He says "*it is fun, after all*". The examples of the assimilation of the exterior space are knolls of sand on the concrete pavement in the courtyard on 11 Listopada street or paintings on the walls of the buildings in the same place (see figures 22 and 23).

On the other side, there is a strong sense of local community detectable in Praga Północ. The young evening visitors of different backgrounds strolling around the neighborhood are not an unusual view anymore in case of Żąbkowska street, where the presence of a more frequented road and basic services such as small clothing shops, groceries, or cafés, especially since the revitalization and construction of new housing units, already made it a lively place. In the 'Triangle' neighborhood, the contrast between residents and nightlife participants, with the emphasis that the two groups overlap extremely rare, has been accustomed already, but did not disappear. The manager of "A" compares the extent to which the residents of Żąbkowska and the adjacent streets are accustomed with groups of differently looking visitors and tourists nowadays to the same aspect from 6 years before. He emphasizes that the divide has blurred already some time ago, but he does not negate that the divide between the 'locals' and 'incomers' was apparent some years ago. The owner of "C" from the 'Triangle' speaks about a similar change. He knows the area well as he grew up here and was one of the first nightlife entrepreneurs to settle in Praga Północ. Six years ago, he recalls, *this* space was not the space of the nightlife participants. '*This space*', meaning the 'Triangle', the old part of Nowa Praga, was a purely residential neighborhood, with intimate courtyards, stairwells, and social flats, where people know each other and would meet in their gardens to smoke or drink together. Few local, small grocery shops were no destination for people from outside the neighborhood and were the only services in the area. The owners from the courtyard on 11 Listopada street, "B" and "C", remember that their guests felt in the

beginning watched and unwelcomed. The groups of strolling youngsters, visibly not from the neighborhood, were not a typical view. The owner of "G" reflects that this conflict about space works in both ways: the residents watch the visitors, the visitors watch the local residents, and both sides make uncomfortable one another. This spatial discourse, however, changes:

"More people started coming to Praga and, with years, more different people started moving in. The autochthones see that beside their ways there are also other ways: they observe girls with weir tattoos, loose flowery trousers and trillions of tattoos. These two sides are two separate worlds, but somehow around here they assimilate" (Interview C)



Figures 22 and 23: The street art on the walls of the courtyard on 11 Listopada street. Photos: the author.

7.4.2 Interaction with the community

Some attributes of the interaction between the nightlife and residents of Praga have become apparent in the previous sections. The analysis devoted to the question of regulation showed that tensions between the venues and their neighbors happen sporadically. The conflicts concern the inappropriate behaviors of local bands of youngsters and the nuisance which disturbs the residents of adjacent tenements. The owner of "B" sees a natural human element in these interactions:

"[...] there are neighbors who disliked us from the very beginning and even before we opened there were already complaints. We have this one man who fights with us until today. But most of them are friendly and non-conflicting." (Interview B)

In the beginning, the situation was troublesome for "E" which was the first club to open on a solely residential street. The former warehouse hidden behind the residential tenements was empty for many years. Quiet artists who first occupied the space did not attract significant attention. A club, however, caused some controversies among the local population. The manager of "E" reflects on the process of assimilation:

"In the beginning we had some unpleasant situations and I guess it took some time for the situation to stabilize.

- *What kind of problems were these?*

-

The demonstrations of dominance by the local community who wanted to show that in fact they are the ones who rule here. They would try to force entering to the club, some hooligan groups would come too. There were several acts of devastation, but it stopped at some point.

- *What were the measures undertaken to tackle the problem?*

Security and dialogue." (Interview E)

Dialogue has been an often tool in assimilating in the neighborhood. The method of dialogue has been used as well in "A", "B", "C", "D", and "G". This method can also be attributed to the specific kind of nightlife represented by the venues. Open and personally regulated contacts between the nightlife producers and their clients are indicative for the encounters with the non-consumer actors– the residents. Meetings for groups of adolescents with culture learning activities organized by "G" are of course a different kind of dialogue than the one developed in "D", where neighbors integrate by coming to have a drink after work. Both can be equally influential.

Community and charity work are also present in some venues. The dominant form of community help, however, is addressed to younger groups. Very few actions tackle problems of the adult groups, such as unemployment, addictions, or pathology. Those of the venues which decide to open their doors for the community-help programs work with children. "B" is famous in Praga for "doing great job (Interview C)" through organizing cultural events which involve no entrance selection and offering help to non-profit organizations which coordinate cultural activities addressed to children. The owner of "B" believes that children spending days and nights on the streets, aggressive and uncontrolled, not surrounded by quality parental protection, are the biggest visible problem of the neighborhood. "A", "B", "E" and "G" are the premises organizing poetry reading meetings for the youngest, savoir-vivre classes, or Christmas events. The remaining entrepreneurs either do not express the feeling of being in the position to intervene, or they are unable to provide help because of the profile of the venues, as in the example of the vodka bar and club-café "F". The representatives of "D", "F", and "C" admit that they do find need for the adequate steps to be taken in order to improve the social and educational situation of the families which live around them, but believe that it is not their role to do undertake any. "A", "B", "E" and "G" include in their activities community-orientated actions.

7.4.3 Interaction among nightlife venues

There is a general agreement among the entrepreneurs from different establishments with regards to their attitudes towards each other. On personal terms, some befriend and some others avoid one another. Professionally, though, all of the interviewees acknowledge and appreciate the presence of the other venues. They do not see each other as competition. First of all, their offers vary. Pub does not compete for clients with café-culture or a club. More than this, the owners of the clubs do not feel that they compete, because each one of them produces a different ambience. The culture manager of "E" captures the essence: "diversity in similarity helps", and elaborates on the subject in the following way:

"[...] there is no place identical to ours in the neighborhood, in fact. There are galleries, cafes, dance and music clubs... In fact, the courtyard on 11 Listopada street is somehow related, but still, "C" organizes good concerts and dance parties, but totally different than ours, "B" is pretty amazing but again, it is a totally different activity." (Interview E)

Second of all, and most importantly, "one place promotes the other (Interview C)". Particularly the owners of the earliest premises share the impression that in times when only one or two clubs were opened in Praga, the frequency was a serious problem. Praga was not associated with nightlife at all in the beginning of 2000s. Rather, it suffered from the reputation of unpleasant and unsafe from the earlier times. The manager of "A" knows that some people come purposely to Praga to visit his pub. However, such clients are not numerous. The multiplication of the premises of a similar character, with the offer directed at approximately common target groups, works for the benefit of all. Similarly, the already mentioned "diversity in similarity" helps, because it enriches the offer. The common observation of the interviewees is that clients stroll from one place to another. In case there is no space available in one pub, they move to another one. Similarly in relation to the clubbing scene – there is always an available alternative nearby in case when a party does not meet the expectations. The question which remains is: are the venues separate entities of a similar character, or can we talk about a nightlife zone? The interviewees definitely see the assemblage of their businesses as a nightlife zone. There are few arguments they use. The main reason is the changed image of the area which, in the experiences of the entrepreneurs, has been shaped by the 'togetherness' of cultural and nightlife activities, not by a single venue. Another argument is that the target groups of individual clubs overlap and are often re-negotiated and interchanged. Finally, as a consequence of this interchange, the whole of the district of Praga Północ becomes the destination more often than one, particular venue.

Asked about common projects or undertakings, the interviewees agree once more: there is no much initiative in this field, except for one event: the 'Night of Praga' (*Noc Pragi*). The "Night of Praga", organized yearly, is the biggest common cultural event. The event resembles common in many European cities so-called 'museum nights'. Here, the galleries, workshops, cultural centers and venues such as the ones involved in the research, organize evening and night events which are available for visitors for free. The

whole-night event offers concerts, performances, dances, parties, poetry readings, or exhibitions of the 'alternative' vibe, involving several locations around Praga. In this way, the visitors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the district by night by walking around the neighborhood from one point to another. Both sides, the entrepreneurs and the city council which has been the initiator of the event and the sponsor of the event's promotion, admit that the city does not execute any explicitly preferential policy towards nightlife producers in Praga. However, the fact that this huge night event, famous on the scale of the whole city, was initiated and supported financially (promotion) by the local officials, gives few indications. First of all, there is a detectable potential in the togetherness of the nightlife and culture economies in Praga Północ. Second of all, this potential has been recognized by both the entrepreneurs and the officials. Third of all, the "Night of Praga" is a strategy to push the re-imagining of the area further and strengthen the feeling of cultural and nightlife infrastructure among the producers and consumers.

Besides *Noc Pragi*, the owners of the nightlife venues rarely work together. The courtyard on 11 Listopada street tried to organize an event unifying all of the venues located there, but the outcomes were not satisfying. When different people come together, with each one of them being very individualistic and running the business in his or her own proper way, it is very difficult to come to an agreement. "We don't even manage to promote our courtyard, so I wouldn't even mention the promotion of the whole district!" says the owner of "C" when asked about possible intentions or attempts to promote Praga Północ as a nightlife zone in Warsaw. The owner of "G" comments on the situation as on a lost potential. In this case, the entrepreneur comes up with ideas to optimize the possible benefits of the common location, but there is no reaction from the others. In "G", the two shareholders do not hide their disappointment: they hoped to become a part of a larger whole and for more cooperation.

Finally, some of the interviewees split the area of Praga Północ into two separate nightlife zones, exactly according to the geographical concentrations distinguished for the purpose of the research at hand. According to the opinion of the entrepreneurs from Żąbkowska street, their location is an 'introductory destination', meaning that nightlife participants enjoy drinks and 'warm up' parties here and leave for clubbing to other places in town. Often, these 'other places' are clubs on the other side of Radzymińska street – in the 'Triangle'. The 'Triangle' is more of a clubbing destination. This reputation appears interesting, because only two out of five studied premises in Nowa Praga are strictly dance clubs. This division can be associated with the presence of day-time economy on Żąbkowska, where visitors have more reasons to be around before dusk, and a relatively poor in daily activity 'Triangle' neighborhood which comes alive at night. This is not to say that the streets Inżynierska, 11 listopada and Wieńska are totally empty and quiet during the day - local life is loud thanks to neighbors chatting in the gates of houses and children playing on the streets and courtyards. The 'liveliness' considered here is the flow of people who come to the area for purposes different than residential. In this respect, Żąbkowska and Triangle differ slightly. Despite this division, the owners of the premises know each other and some befriend. In their opinions, though, it is strong enough to discourage any regular cooperation. Nevertheless, the reason of distance or separation by a transport artery loses credibility if we consider the former opinions of the total lack of dialogue among the very closely located venues.

7.4.4 Links with culture and arts environment

Asked how many of the artists and creatives visit their premises, the entrepreneurs have problems with giving the answer because, as they say, they are acquainted with only some of the clients. It appears that the clue to a discussion on the interplay between the entertainment and culture environments in Praga does not lie in numbers, though. Rather, the interviews showed that the entrepreneurs, often even unconsciously, include themselves in the group of producers of cultural district or, other way around, include the cultural producers as integral partners in their own branch. Some of the stories recalled by the interviewees advocate for the conclusion that nightlife and culture economy in Praga Północ coexist closely and in a complex way. The event of *Noc Pragi*, although happening yearly, shows that nightlife, workshops, galleries, cafes, theaters, and design shops interrelate and appeal to the same consumers. Also, the interviewees do not speak about regular cooperation with each other, but the cooperation with the acquainted cultural producers (photographers, writers, painters, sculptors, designers, actors, directors have been listed) appears as quite regular. Culture manager of "E" takes care of the management of cultural events in the club:

"Taking the example of Noc Pragi: the district council does not have enough funds to finance the event except for promoting it. The whole of the event, then, is organized and paid for by us, by the cafes, galleries, and clubs, so without these people who make culture here, these events would not exist here." (Interview E)

With these words the manager shows how in the understanding of the nightlife entrepreneurs their establishments represent part of the culture economy. 5 out of 7 interviewees did not differentiate conceptually between their nightlife premises and arts district. Due to a similar character of the two branches of economy in Praga, entertainment and culture, the two appear to melt into one. Neither do the clubs and club-cafes stay separate from culture and art events, nor do the artists stay away from the clubs and club-cafes, professionally and personally. The manager of "A" explains it in the following way:

"These two 'mesh-up', yes, I think it mixes up, and it happens naturally. They [the artists] come to visit us here, in "A". We know each other and various, quite nice things, come out of such evening encounters. Just recently, for example, an acquainted sculptor working on Praga approached us with a proposition. He made a sculpture of an angel, quite big one. There are already few angles of his in public places in Praga. He has a spare one and he asked if maybe we would want to have one standing in front of "A". We thought: would be nice to have two, so maybe we could get this as a gift and then buy another one... (laughing)."

The same manager explains also that the mixing of arts and creative environments with nightlife in Praga is not only the question of an interaction between the producers (nightlife on one hand, and the creatives on the other) who share similar interests and find a common language. This symbiosis is also beneficial economically:

"We do have common goals. I have an event in my pub- for example, today, an open meeting with a painter and the author of a book. I have the opening of his exhibition so something is happening here, and it is really good for me – people come not only to sit and drink, they seek more than this, they come and ask me: What do you perform tonight? Is there a concert or other kind of event? On the other hand, the artist has a place to put his art in front of the public. Basically, anything which is 'different' is great, and places such as ours organize it because they are interested in it, but also because it attracts guests" (Interview A)

On a different note, Chłestowska (2009) argues that the titular artists ascribe to Praga a number of positive values, including authenticity and a "conducive ambience". These values have been also recognized by the interviewed nightlife producers and are therefore a common set of attractants for mutually supportive development of nightlife and culture. The manager of "E" puts forward an argument that without the existence of the whole artistic and creative ambience in the district, clubs such as "E" would not have chances to develop in a place like Praga. This shows how strongly the two are connected. Although the artists have been the protagonists of the re-imagining of Praga and their activity attracted the attention of nightlife producers, it is difficult to assess whether the two branches of economy could work independently, without being dependent one on another, or is the functioning of the nightlife venues really pre-determined by the presence of cultural facilities.

7.5 Perceived impact on the neighborhood

The chapter devoted to the analysis of obtained information concludes with a section devoted to the impact that nightlife zone exerts on the neighborhood in which is it located. The assessment of such influence presented here is not full and complex. It is a subjective elaboration corresponding with the perspective chosen for the current project which bases on the experiences of entrepreneurs. The interviewees establish that their contribution to the economic situation of the area is not significant. Neither do they have high revenues, nor are the rents paid to the city particularly high. However, the interviews revealed that there is a strong indirect influence of studied night time venues on Praga Północ. This impact has a binary character and takes the form of two processes.

The first process is the re-imagining of Praga. Chłestowska (2009) established a framework in which she explained that artists re-imagine Praga by attaching to it the values of 'atmosphere' and 'authenticity'. Gawlas (2011) concluded that the regeneration of Praga Północ was initiated by the artistic invasion and contributed to the orchestrated follow-up of the process. The interviews with nightlife producers showed that Praga's



Figure 24 (left): There is a second courtyard behind this one. The big black gate opens a post-manufacturing courtyard filled with old chairs from theaters, random vintage tables, fairy lights, and a random old car. The club consists of two floors and a patio; Figure 25 (top right): Wileńska street with its old run-down tenements and typical peaceful atmosphere; Figure 26 (bottom right): A vodka-bar occupies a post-manufacturing, red-brick building from 1990s. Photos: the author.

nightlife confirms and strengthens these 'atmosphere' and 'authenticity' by recognizing them and re-producing. For many decades, Praga was perceived as the most dangerous and neglected quarter of Warsaw. The overall socio-economic condition as well as the mosaic and run-down character of the urban tissue persisting after the change of political system in 1989 only confirmed this reputation. Today, Praga Północ is associated increasingly with cultural economy and nightlife. In the perception of interviewed nightlife producers, their businesses partake actively in this change. The main means of their influence is expanding the liveliness of the area into the night and attracting various groups of visitors whose experiences of night in Praga diverge from the stereotypical threats of the location. The nightlife zone is popular among the residents of Warsaw and tourists. Their premises are visited by truly various guests who tend to come back and explore other, similar venues. Therefore, the functioning of nightlife venues improves the reputation of Praga Północ.

Commotion is often created by the groups of clients on their way between one venue and another. Although initially 'strangers' were not much welcomed by the residents, they have become an integral part of local dynamics by now. The earlier quoted comment of the owner of "C" about the unprecedented presence of groups of youngsters with colored hair, extravagant clothes, and "trillions of tattoos" (Interview C) in Praga and the way the local community got accustomed with such view is an example of the second

process. This second way of influencing Praga is exactly the process of familiarizing and accustoming Prazans with cultures different from local and, by doing so, indirectly adjusting and improving social norms in the area:

"Looking at 6-7 years as I am here, I believe we have our share in the regeneration of Praga. This is also how we try to speak about it to our neighbors. They say that before, they did not have problems with nuisance, but I say then that they had other problems with different kinds of suspicious situations. Today there so much less of it, you walk along the street here and you rarely see tipsy youngsters standing in the gates and spiting" (Interview A)

The direct impact on the local social condition can be spoken about in case of those of the venues which actively engage in community work. The same manager who speaks about the indirect contribution to the regeneration, asked about the direct contact with pathological families from neighboring tenements, recalls particular examples (see also section 7.3.2):

"Recently it somehow fades away, I am not sure why, maybe the need is not so manifest... But, anyways, we used to organize Christmas parties for the kids from local day rooms. We would buy local grocery shops out from sweets (laughing), sweet beverages, and invite them over. I permitted them to come here behind the bar and play around, and then we would organize an exhibition of their drawings. There is this nice organization for kids in Praga, many of places like ours help them around here" (Interview A)

As mentioned in the section devoted to the interaction between the nightlife producers and social environment of Praga, the interviewees rarely come up with aid initiatives themselves. Rather, they welcome inquires of assistance from non-profit organizations, mostly relating to the assistance and education of local children. The owners of "B" and "G" to confirm this:

"Thursday mornings we organized fairy-tales reading for children during the summer. First, only few kids came, then several, and eventually we had whole groups coming, also from some of the day rooms for children in Praga. It was so nice... But now we don't do it anymore. We invited the group which did the reading, but they're not active anymore, and none of us has time to do it... It's a pity, though, because it was lovely." (Interview B)

"We are aware of the fact that this is Praga. The past of Praga stretches its tentacles to presence – there are still many concentrations of pathology. But I am very open, so I am helping to organize therapeutic groups for them and educational activities for kids. For example, we organized classes about how to behave in a café (laughing). Fruitful, in fact! Kids come, watch movies and talk about them, make jewelry – they even make some for me! (laughing) We

play cards with them and read books. There are two groups: kids and adolescents, and some of these adolescents leave our classes with such a change that they teach the younger groups afterwards! I see sense in it, I believe you can make a change.” (Interview G)

What needs to be underlined is that this involvement is not common in all of the venues. In fact, it is not observable in “C” which is purely a club and event scene. Also, the manager of “F” sees a contradiction between involvement in community aid, especially for children, and the profile of “E” which bases on alcohol consumption. It is, however, a part of experience for the owners of “A”, “B”, “E” and “G”. To conclude, community help is an integral part of the experience for some of the entrepreneurs, but not all of them. Those of them who are active in this respect believe in factual outcomes of their initiatives. All of them, however, believe in at least indirect effect of their activities. *“I think it is all going in a good direction, this district is changing thanks to the places like ours”,* concludes the owner of “D”.

Chapter 8 - Conclusions and discussion

The closing chapter states the conclusions derived from data analysis and reviews them from the critical perspective of the theoretical concepts introduced in the theory part. The most important implications are presented straight away. They are elaborated in more detail in the sub-sections of the chapter corresponding to the consecutive research questions. Also, the question of future of the nightlife zone is shortly raised, since the first symptoms of gentrification to come have been identified by the interviewees. The chapter reviews also the strong points and drawbacks of the present study and suggests further scientific and policy recommendations.

8.1 Leading conclusions

The interviews revealed a variety of experiences of the nightlife producers from which some appear common for all of the venues and some differ substantially. A concise picture of the attributes of the nightlife zone emerges out of the elaboration of these experiences, including the functioning of the venues and their interaction with the district, in reply to the main research question:

- *What is the nature of the non-mainstream nightlife venues in Praga Północ and in what ways, drawing from the experiences of their owners and managers, do they interact with the neighborhood?*

- First of all, in terms of characterizing the venues in Praga Północ, it is confirmed that the existing nightlife zone is strongly alternative in nature. This has been confirmed through the analysis of the modes of production and regulation of nightlife in Praga.
- Second of all, the case study of Praga's nightlife zone confirms the framework of the bottom up entertainment zones proposed by Campo and Ryan (2008). As the authors framed it: "occupying older vernacular buildings in the marginal areas of downtown, the bars, cafes, restaurants, nightclubs and performance places and entertainment zones have developed largely without the large-scale design, planning, government action or subsidy common in formal urban entertainment districts (p.291)". The stories of the interviewees confirmed that the process of the attraction and multiplication of nightlife venues in Praga throughout the years have been natural and not orchestrated and corresponds with the post-manufacturing and historical appearance of the district.
- In relation to it, the study showed how strong is the link between the nightlife zone and the neighborhood of Praga Północ, with regards to discussed push factors and the added value of locating here establishment of a non-mainstream character. Thus, with regards to the chosen theoretical frameworks, the outcomes of the interviews proved that the choice of the study by these two authors, as well

as the characterization of alternative nightlife by Chatterton and Hollands (2002), has been rightly made for the purposes of the current project.

- Moreover, data analysis revealed the abundance of perceptive and factual interactions with the place-specific features and actors of the urban setting. These interactions, elaborated upon in this chapter, include:
 - (a) the adaptation and use of the old premises,
 - (b) discourse on space with local community,
 - (c) exclusionary and non-exclusionary practices of the nightlife producers with regards to local community,
 - (d) implications on the re-imagining of Praga Północ by the nightlife producers, and
 - (e) the infrastructural and social role of Praga's nightlife for the cultural district.
- The interviewees expressed a univocal believe that despite problems with nuisance they occasionally cause to their neighbors, their activity directly and indirectly influences positively the social aspect of the neighborhood and contributes to the re-imagining of Praga.
- Dichotomy can be found in many processes included in the case study. The entrepreneurs appreciate Praga for its authenticity, but find it 'forgotten' and 'neglected'. They advocate for regeneration of the district, but do not like the idea of destroying its authenticity. The nightlife pioneers in Praga obviously need to attract the clients, but on the other side complain about popularization of Praga which changed the previously more intimate feel of the district.
- Finally, some of the entrepreneurs appear to see the first symptoms of a large-scale change in Praga and reflect on the future of their role in a revitalized Praga.

8.2 The venues and the nightlife zone

Q1: Who are the nightlife producers?

The owners of the alternative venues in Praga Północ are people aged 35-45 with higher education in social or economic sciences or of creative professions. The managers are young people interested in culture and events (as in case of "E" and "F") or related personally to Praga ("A"). The interviewees and employees of the clubs encountered during the interviews showed open and amiable attitudes towards the interviewer and guests who were visiting the venues at that moment. One of the interviewees came along for the interview with her two months old son. Another one offered a ping-pong game as the club is in possession of a table and equipment. Yet another manager offered a beer and invited the interviewer for an event which was about to take place in the evening on that day. These situations and the personal stories surrounding the opening of particular venues establish the image of openness, friendliness, and informality. Using the vocabulary proposed by Chelstowska (2007), the interviewees have presented truly authentic personalities of which aura mirrors the characters of the venues.

Two groups of nightlife producers emerge from the data. The first one consists of those who located their premises in Praga because they desired a peaceful and 'cozy' environment. According to these entrepreneurs such setting is supportive for human interaction, for a closer and direct contact between them and visitors or neighbors. The entrepreneurs attracted by the atmosphere had taken into consideration that their consumers would be the people representing certain tastes, as one of them puts it – "aware and knowledgeable" enough to choose Praga. The second group of producers recognized an economic niche in the peculiar kind of nightlife specifically in Praga and took up the challenge of fitting in it their business plans. For the first group, Praga is a non-commercial refuge. It is an authentic place where they can realize their ideas in a non-formal setting. For the second group, Praga is an economically interesting place at the moment as it is undergoing a transformation in which actors such as creatives, artists or entertainment producers can play a role. They assume that Praga is going to eventually gentrify and they try to make use out of the current situation, and, possibly adapt to changing circumstances. All of them, however, without exception, see their premises as short-term undertakings as they are aware of the dynamics in the area and temporality of the current 'ambience'. The univocally see Praga as a district beautiful and neglected at once.

Q2: What is the character of the studied venues and how are they regulated?

The interviews show that the investigated clubs, club cafes and pubs are not connected directly on the level of nightlife production or regulation. Their owners are acquainted, but rarely befriend. There is no common infrastructure established between the venues. Initiatives of common events or promotion have not been fruitful. It is evident that the venues function as separate establishments and are not linked internally or orchestrated in any way. It would be hard, therefore, to talk about clustering or networking in case of nightlife establishments in Praga Północ. The main combining force develops on the side of nightlife consumption. What should be included here is the consumption per se, meaning the clients' participation in the activities taking place in particular premises, but also the attraction to Praga evoked among the visitors by the spatial assembly of the venues.

It remains most adequate, indeed, to speak about a nightlife zone. All of the studied venues can be described as alternative. Chatterton and Hollands (2002), to recall, define them as individual, entrepreneurial, and local-based. The studied venues have been established by individual groups of shareholders as family or friends' businesses. Most of the interviewees did not have the experience or education in the domain of entertainment management and needed to improve their entrepreneurial skills in order to manage their clubs. All of the premises are settled within the local entourage and correspond directly with the cultural and bohemian 'myth' of Praga established by Chłestowska (2007). The 'wild and excluded' image of Praga was exactly what Chłestowska believes to have encouraged the artistic colonization and development of culture. The same dependency proves true for the investigated nightlife venues – their alternative character corresponds directly with this image. The regulation and management of nightlife in the venues is informal, open for dialogue and negotiable.

Clubs and club-cafes employ at least one manager, while the studied pubs and cafes are run by the owners. This is probably due to a bigger number of events organized in the clubs and club-cafes than in the more peaceful premises. Independently of the structure of employment in the venues, the relations among the employees are dominantly friendly and informal. The same happens between the nightlife producers and consumers. As predicted by Chatterton and Hollands (2002), there is a blur in consumer-producer relations. In other words, nightlife producers are present at their sites, participate in nightlife consumption and interact directly with the guests. They also establish connections which then result in organization of events with acquainted guests or cooperation with local artists. In this way consumers take upon the role of producers in return. What was not confirmed in relation to the framework proposed by the authors is the organization of nightlife around specific identities such as sexuality, ethnicity or specific music or dress styles. All of the interviewees assure that they want to cater for all tastes and make people feel welcome and free to detach from daily routines and forms. There is a clear connection between the owners of the venues, their personal stories and motivations, and this less formal way of producing nightlife space. Those who escaped corporate employment enjoy the sociability of their venues and relate personally to guests and events at their places. Those of the owners for whom the establishments have been the fulfillment of dreams in a way, though in form of side investments, have slightly less personal contact with nightlife consumers.

Although the studied venues appeal to overlapping groups of clients and together create the appeal of an attractive nightlife destination, there are some differences between them. One of the identified divides lies between the venues which are privately initiated, financed, and run, and those which are also individual but have been initiated in form of structured business plans and are run mostly in hands of managers. The latter, "E" and "F", although still within the definition of alternative, reveal some features which could be helpful in future if the evolutionary model presented by Zukin and Breslow (2011) and Hae (2011) turns out the scenario for Praga. "E" and "F" appeal to large audiences, as the manager of "E" framed it: "just anyone, normal people", but send also positive vibrations towards 'yuppies' culture and media. They create certain kinds of brands with the image they produce. If it comes to a situation where mainstream nightlife will be more demanded when Praga is further regenerated, these two will have the biggest chances to stay.

Meanwhile, the aspect of sociality of the alternative venues recognized by Chatterton and Hollands (2002) and Crewe and Beaverstock (1998) can be identified in the studied nightlife zone. First of all, the owners identify with their venues. As in the study by Sadowski (2009), nightlife producers make homes out of their work places in a peculiar way. This is achieved through strong interpersonal relations with the employees and affiliations of the managers and workers with the venues. Also, personal involvement in all of the aspects of running the club in a non-formal and non-hierarchical way regarding the co-workers is a decision that entrepreneurs make which allows them for the blur between home and work. Second of all, a similar conclusion can be made with respect to managers. They also affiliate strongly in a personal with the establishments they manage. One of them recalled how he visited once as a loyal client, befriended with the owner and stayed for good. Another interviewed, young manager confessed that he

had suffered in his life from serious addictions and personal problems but has regained now a more stable and supportive ground in the establishment which he represents and with the people he works with. A key-concept in respect of the third aspect of sociality confirmed to be 'transgression' proposed by Lovatt and O'Connor (1995). Taken that authenticity is what fuels Praga in its re-imagination, transgression is the way in which clubs make this authenticity empirical.

Q3: How can Praga Północ be described in terms of conditions for alternative nightlife?

Praga Północ offered several push factors to interested nightlife entrepreneurs. For those who already made decision and aimed at opening a club or club-café, Praga offered much lower rents compared to other areas of Warsaw. The only obstacle which could possibly overrule the low prices was stereotypical perception of Praga and connected to it lack of interest of potential consumers. In this respect, venues "A" and "B" have been the true pioneers in 2003 and 2005 – their owners took the risk and chose for authenticity hoping that adequate people will find them, which happened. The entrepreneurs, who joined later, after 2005, were also attracted by the prices but two additional factors played a role: the presence of similar venues and its increasing popularity. One of the built up advantages of the location, therefore, is the concentration of other alternative venues. The interviewees univocally agreed that they constitute more support for each other than competition. Guests not satisfied with one place go to another, while some coming from the latter one prefer the first location. This way the information spreads, the reputation is built up, and the assembly of the venues merges into a nightlife zone. The other push factor has been the visible prosperity of the already existing venues. 3 out of 7 interviewees admitted that they located their businesses in Praga because they either participated in Praga's nightlife already and recognized a niche, or were personally acquainted with the owners of existing venues and encouraged by their success.

The availability of the premises to rent and the appearance of the built tissue have influenced positively the location choices. Premises in austere conditions have been listed as positive and negative elements. On one hand, the austerity of the tenements and post-manufacturing buildings encourage creativity and unusual design, on the other, however, causes problems with sanitation and amenities.

The presence of the creative workers and local artistic environment has worked in the location choice in an indirect way. None of the interviewees openly admits that the presence of artists is the reason they have settled here, but what they do agree on is the fact that before the artistic colonization of Praga the neighborhood was more run-down and neglected than felt vibrant and authentic. Therefore, the presence of cultural district and creative businesses contributed to the creation of favorable for nightlife condition in Praga.

The 'authenticity' is a prevailing element which appears in all of the interviews taking different forms. For some, the history of Praga makes working here a pleasant experience. What is the experience of the 'history' of Praga, though? Those who emphasize the historical element refer in fact to the historically preserved urban environment, the streets, old trees, churches, tenements and factories. The urban

landscape of Praga is a part of the authenticity. The second component is of course its closed, local, interactive social life.

From the current disadvantages the construction of the metro line is the most frequently cited. The owners note smaller revenues and lower frequency of clients. However, some of the entrepreneurs are aware of the East –West divide in Warsaw and hope for a positive change when the new metro line will be opened. Some of them took the new metro line into consideration while opening business here. Only one of the interviewees expressed conviction that the East-West divide in the minds of residents of Warsaw might occur stronger than the attempts to combine the two riversides with metro. The argument here was, basically, that “Praga is Praga, after all”. It proves that the conceptual separation of Warsaw and Praga persists also among the entrepreneurs.

Safety issues have been raised but not listed as a significant problem. Only one of the venues experienced the act of violence from the side of the residents but the manager emphasizes that the incident happened once and in the very beginning of the functioning of the club and did never repeat again due to the dialogue with local community and occasional employment of security company. The interviewees emphasized that all of them experienced in the beginning some incidents, listing stolen drills during the renovation of the premises or groups of youngsters running inside and grabbing random objects or foods. They all agree that the situation improved dramatically by now and, most importantly, that they have not experienced any violence or criminal problems among their guests. They do admit, though, that they participated in meetings with local officials and police few years ago when the question of safety was raised by the district council and they appreciate the interest.

8.3 Interactions

Q4: In what ways does the nightlife production interacts with physical space?

Praga’s nightlife activity interacts with the physical dimension of the district in two dominant ways: through the adaptation and use of the old premises and through discourse on space with local community. Both ways contribute to organically progressing regeneration of the area. First of all, nightlife venues adapt unused spaces and give them new functions. By doing this, they also invest in renovation and re-imagining of space. Especially the ones that occupy post-manufacturing premises protect also the historical buildings from dilapidation or initiatives of deconstruction. Another dichotomy can be identified here – although they contribute to the re-imagining of the area and might possibly trigger gentrification, in the same time they prevent the deterioration of the local urban heritage. The second means of interaction is the discourse on space. The outcome of it is the assimilation of two divergent social environments- residents and nightlife producers and consumers- within one territorial unit which historically has been relatively closed and provincial in its social structure and lifestyle. More physically, the entrepreneurs arrange and manage the courtyards and streets which they occupy in a way which corresponds with the surrounding.

Q5: What are the experiences of the nightlife producers in terms of the relations with local community?

Nightlife producers differ in terms of their engagement with local community and the kind of this engagement. Some undertake steps aiming at social regeneration and community work, some isolate from it fully. However, even those who do not initiate or participate actively in community aid actions, do welcome inquires of external social help organizations or do interact with the community through different means. "F" is an example of total isolation from the surrounding residential area. This venue represents in some aspects the "exclusionary and mono-cultural" activity discussed by Thomas and Bromley (2000). "B" and "G" represent a high level of community involvement and non-exclusionary attitude. The engagement of the venue in cultural or social life of the neighborhood depends largely on the person who owns it. It becomes evident if the two pubs, "A" and "D" are compared, two premises of the same nature can demonstrate open or close attitudes towards the interaction with the residents or cultural producers. The decisive factors are not only the character of the place (whether it is a club club-café, pub, or a café) but also the intentions and willingness of the people in charge. Only one of the entrepreneurs expressed a strong disbelief in any 'idea- driven' initiatives. In his belief, higher ideas slogans are underpinned with trends and image building, rather than factual reasons for people's actions. He admits, though, that some of the neighbor-venues "do great job and he cannot say a bad word about them", but most of the others organize integration events for their neighbors but would not allow the very same people to join a party on the next day. There is a close link between the means of regulation of a venue and its interaction with social environment: the more loose and informal the regulation is, the more inclusionary becomes the nightlife practice. The experiences with local residents are truly various. Some neighbors befriend with the entrepreneurs or are often visitors. Few of the interviewees, however, noted how problematic is the social environment surrounding them. In the part of study devoted to the interaction between the artists and autochthones of Praga, Chłestowska (2007) quotes an artist who was attacked on the street nearby her home by some local hooligans. The woman did not report to the police the attempt of stealing her purse. She approached the 'boss of the courtyard', as she called him, with a quite resentful attitude, inquired why she was attacked and expressed her discontentment arguing that after all she was 'from here'. Apparently the 'boss' openly replied: "You understand, we need to do our living somehow. They attacked you but did not harm you and did not steal anything in the end, right? They must have recognized you (Chłestowska, 2007, p. 8)". The situation of self-solving the tensions between people is common in Praga and also happened to the interviewees. One of the owners organized in her café classes for the kinds who earlier had stolen some things from her bar. One of the managers spoke also about an incident in which some sound equipment in the pub was destroyed by a group of young men who, in fact, were well quite familiar to the owner of the place and in the end the situation was solved without the intervention of authorities. Such interactions, although problematic, blur the sharp divides between the 'old' and 'new' Prazans, as the same manager has put it.

Q6: What is the relation between the nightlife zone and the artistic and cultural environment in Praga Północ?

Artists, creatives, and nightlife entrepreneurs have a similar function in Praga Północ nowadays. The artists who have been settling in Praga for more than a decade now have been the precursors of the re-imagining and regeneration of the district. Today, Praga's nightlife zone is not only an attractive nightlife destination discovered by the Varsovians from the other side of the river, but also carries an important social and infrastructural function for the local artistic and creative environment. First of all, social contacts take place in the venues among the artists, creatives, and entrepreneurs. Second of all, nightlife venues offer their premises for cultural events. It can be concluded, then, that entertainment and cultural production mix in different premises and travel among the workshops, galleries and nightlife venues. In this way, also the consumption of culture and entertainment is likely to melt and the two economies work together.

8.4 Impact assessment

The interviewees believe that some of the above mentioned aspects have direct or indirect contribution in the positive development of the neighborhood. New functions given to previously empty locals bring Praga Północ back on the map of Warsaw – metaphorically and practically. The spokesman of the district council presented the author with a folder of touristic maps of cultural Warsaw where only the city center used to be shown. Now, Praga and its club-cafes are included on the map. Their presence revives the area for customers as much as attracts attention of new businesses. The opening of the first mainstream club in the 'Triangle' is one of the examples. The interviewees believe that without them having set the ground, a mainstream establishment could not function in such a difficult and isolated neighborhood.

Discourse on space between nightlife producers, consumers, and local residents, is sometimes troublesome for all parties. However, the premises of everyday urbanism support the organic process of development of the nightlife zone together with the discourse – city creating is after all “a human and social discourse (Crawford, 1999, p. 9)”. Very few conflicts and willingness of dialogue of the parties only confirm the strength of the authentic values advocated by Chłostowska (2007) and Sadowski (2009) which attracted the artists to Praga. The authenticity of Praga, in the experiences of the interviewees, thrives on lack of commercialization, rush, noise, mainstream 'trash' culture or snobbism. This discourse is also a major factor in re-imagining of Praga because it proves, along with the famous idea phrased by Jacobs (1961) that new ideas can accommodate and flourish in these old tenements. Indeed, the presence of nightlife on Żąbkowska street and in Nowa Praga has not been without influence in the positive change in the reputation of the district. Not only do people come more often to visit it, but also the lack of issues connected to violence and crime experienced by them and pronounced in public discourse surrounding the nightlife zone attacks the stereotypical image of Praga. This re-imagining has two ends: on one hand Praga's neighborhoods

open for and accept a change, on the other hand, the eyes of the outside turned towards Praga see and appreciate this change.

The regulatory practices performed by the nightlife producers are characterized by informality, openness, and re-negotiation. Some venues, after experiencing uncomfortable incidents with local hooligans at the outset of their functioning, introduced a form of selection. It is difficult to objectively assess to what extent are these measures selective and discriminatory towards unprivileged social groups and to what extent they aim at safety. By all means, however, the selection introduced by these venues is incomparably less exclusionary than in the case of mainstream nightlife. Probably the social distance between the nightlife consumers and local residents is also smaller thanks to it, because the disparity between the clients and neighbors of the clubs is not as big as it could be if the nightlife zone was intended for more well-off guests and encouraged high class dress codes.

Finally, nightlife in Praga appears to have a crucial role in social assimilation which has not been directly addressed by the interviews. In the opinion of the author of the current study, Praga's nightlife might occur important if the regeneration proceeds and gentrification will take place in the neighborhood. Zukin and Breslow (2011) help in conceptualization of the problem. Tensions among the assumed 'beneficiaries' of possible policies in the process of regeneration result from the clash of aspirational and industrial strategies towards culture. 'Aspirational' cultural strategy aims at bringing the city back to the people and at diminishing inequalities. 'Industrial' cultural strategy which looks at the policy outcomes through financial lenses ends up with favoring more privileged groups, such as more affluent creative class or gentrifiers. In the case at hand, the studied venues constitute, together with some of the residual, not included in the project venues, the only encounter space for the two groups of beneficiaries. Looking at today's situation, although there is no direct contact and dialogue between the visitors of the venues and local often disadvantaged community, there is a group of nightlife producers who negotiate with both sides continuously. Nightlife producers, then, create the skills of negotiation and compromise and can use them in mediating between the two groups.

8. 5 Future perspectives and recommendations

A decade ago, the increased interest of artists in settling and working in Praga was surprising for the public audience as confirms the press study included in the study by Chłestowska (2007). The astonishment resulted most probably from the highly deprived condition and relatively high criminality rates in Praga at the time. Since then, however, the criminality has been steadily decreasing, new functions developed in Praga in relation to artistic and creative industries, and some major physical improvements changed the image of the area (the revitalization of Żąbkowska street and the renovation of Warszawa Wileńska train station together with construction of the commercial center in the very heart of the district should be counted here). Considering the scenarios put forward by Zukin and Bresow (2011) and Hae (2011) who describe the role of culture and nightlife in transforming deprived neighborhoods, the described 'life cycle of cultural district' becomes a plausible scenario. Praga has gained already a different reputation and attracted a vast

number of businesses in culture and entertainment. The opening of the metro line, newly renovated train stations (Warszawa Wschodnia currently undergoes a partial renovation), the first in Praga Północ commercial center, and the newly renovated tram lines in the same location are the first signs of the money being brought to the area. The master plan for Koneser factory is the first major reconstruction of the post-manufacturing object and it assumes the creation of lofts, soft-lofts, and office spaces. Looking at the stages of the life-cycle of cultural districts, the entrepreneurs might experience in a short period of time even higher increase in rents and a dramatic shift in socio-economic structure of the neighborhood. The interviewees indeed expressed their concerns in this subject. The first of the raised issues is the change in rents. The second concern relates to the change in so important in Praga authenticity and 'vibe' of the place which will make the means of regulation as it has been by now quite difficult. One of the interviewees and the first one to open the venue in the 'Triangle' commented that this change is needed if Praga is to finally integrate with the rest of the city, but when it takes place the whole essence of her venue and the sense of being here will be lost.

It is important to keep the studied venues in Praga not only because of the personal involvement of the nightlife producers or their acknowledgeable contribution in the process of re-imagining and regenerating Praga. Also, if Praga is to transform into a gentrified neighborhood with residing young professionals and families and the creative sector taking the lead in local economy, these very establishments will be, first of all, the scene for mediation between the incomers and the autochthones; Second of all, they will be the keepers of the authentic legacy of local social customs and of the post-manufacturing, historical, austere physical images; Finally, they will contribute to the cultural and social vibrancy of Praga and might keep attracting various groups from outside. Using the terminology of Campo and Ryan (2008), "the self-organizing ecology" in Praga involved "many individual actors who transform small pieces of the urban landscape without drastic physical interventions or a unifying plan (p.293)". Therefore, a nightlife policy from the hands of the district council would be highly encouraged, as without interventions the alternative nightlife might be pushed out from the area and replaced by popular mainstream establishments.

8.6 Research evaluation

The research has been conducted in a very appropriate time considering the stage of the development of the nightlife zone. The nightlife zone has already shaped and created its specific "ecology", but the situation changes dynamically with new clubs opening and some closing down. The discourse on regeneration and gentrification of Praga started and the situation of nightlife is increasingly often discussed among the entrepreneurs. This point in time, then, has been a relevant choice for providing the study on the meaning and functions of alternative nightlife in Praga. The entrepreneurs expressed their contentment with the fact that a study which presents their experiences and points of view has been conducted.

Some preparatory work turned out to be more important for the author's understanding of the relevant urban processes and much less adequate for the

presentation and analysis of the data. The socialist legacy of Praga, for example, remains very important in explaining the present situation but no direct relations have been established by the interviewees with the current situation. The author decided to include the parts of the study which have not been reviewed in the data analysis and conclusions according to the personal conviction about their relevance in the complexity of the described dependencies.

The number of the interviewees was smaller than it was initially desired. This was caused by the surprising dynamics of change in the neighborhood. Few venues were closed just recently or changed location and a few did not express the willingness to participate. It would be very interesting to explore what stands behind these dynamics – unfortunately contact with the owners of the closed venues occurred to be very hard. Also, an interesting insight to the study would be including the residual premises in Praga and investigating their functions in relations to those established for the alternative nightlife. To draw more detailed and precise conclusions about the connection between the nightlife and the creative class of Praga it would be helpful to involve the artists, culture animators and creative workers in the debate and analyze the other side of the story. There has been an attempt made to include the public sector and regulatory practices in the study. However, during the research it occurred that there is no policy addressing nightlife in Praga and the contacts between the district council and nightlife producers are limited to the organization and promotion of *Noc Pragi* and sporadic feedback meetings relating to safety issues. The lack of specific policy has been confirmed at the personal meeting of the author with the representatives of the council. At the same meeting, the vice-head of the Culture Department showed a great interest in the local nightlife and the research project and explained that the measures addressing the development of creative industries in Praga are hoped to somehow interrelate with nightlife. Taken the perspective of likely gentrification of Praga in the nearest future, the study of the later stage of the process would be mostly encouraged including the review of possible policies.

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Appendix – The itinerary of the interviews

Itinerary

1. Name, surname, contact info, age, gender, education, city of origin (to personal knowledge)
2. Where did the idea to open the venue first come from? What were the circumstances?
3. Did you receive any assistance in establishing your business?
4. What were the main factors that determined your location choice?
5. How would you name the nature of your venue? What determined the character of the club?
6. What is the history of the premise which you occupy?
7. How would you describe Praga Północ? What kind of a place is this?
8. How would you describe the conditions of running a nightlife business in Praga?
9. What have been the main problems of running the club/café/ pub?
10. What are the main positives of running your venue in this particular location?
11. Do the clubs in Praga Północ have anything in common? Do they interconnect in any way? How would you describe your attitude towards the venues similar to yours?
12. Does your venue attract the neighbors? Do local residents participate in nightlife?
13. How would you describe the people who are your clients?
14. How would you assess the role of your establishment in the local life? Do you believe it has any kind of impact on the surroundings?
15. How would you describe the future of your club/club-cafe in a few years?