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Summary

Libeň, originally a village, which became a town in 1898 and which was annexed to Prague in 1901 is now a part of the boroughs of Prague 8 and Prague 9. It is situated eastward and north-eastward from the meander of the River Vltava. The relief of the cadastral territory of Libeň is quite rugged; the lowlands along the Rokytka Brook and in the area of its confluence with the River Vltava change into undulating terrain where the altitude ranges between 186-293 metres above sea level. The cadastre of the municipality of Libeň is nearly continuously covered with urban development. It resulted from interconnection and urbanisation of the village of Libeň (Stará /Old/ Libeň, Alt Lieben), the Jewish neighbourhood in Libeň, the settlement of Nová (New) Libeň, the hamlet of Malé Holešovice (Holešovičky), the extinct village of Podvíni and several dozens of suburban holdings.

From the primeval times the territory of Libeň has been a part of the larger Prague area with a long settlement tradition. The development of the area of Libeň has always been influenced by its favourable location near the lower reaches of the Rokytka Brook, one of the right bank tributaries of the River Vltava. As late as the mid-19th century the bank of the Vltava in Libeň looked very different from today: two mighty islands and several small islands stood in the way of the water stream.

Not many objects from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic were found in this area, however, some of them are quite unique (e.g. a leaf-shaped tip made from a flint whose age is approx. 50 000 years). In the young Stone Age (approx. 5,500-4,000 B.C.) the territory of Libeň became more prominent. Some researches revealed settlement of cultures with linear and pricked ceramics, and in the Eneolithic (approx. 4,000-2,200 B.C.) the basin of the lower reaches of the Rokytka Brook became an integral part of the settled area of Prague. During the coming ages, in the Bronze Age (approx. 2,200-750 B.C.) and in the old Iron Age (approx. 750-450 B.C.) this feature became more and more apparent.

The first "historic" nation connected with the Czech territory were the Celts. They lived in our area in the young Iron Age, which means in the Latene period (approx. 400-0). Also the territory along the lower reaches of the Rokytka is covered with Latene bone graves. The density of settlement in the Libeň cadastre became probably thinner in the Roman period and at the beginning of migration of nations (0-500 A.D.) when groups of Germans passed through the area of Prague. After the arrival of the Slavic ethnic group the historic period began. Objects evidencing the presence of the first Slavs from about the 6th and 7th centuries have been discovered in Libeň; some small settlement-related finds date from the 9th century. At about this time Prague Castle was established and on the left bank of the Vltava and later on, on the right bank as well, a large settlement agglomeration was established. This agglomeration soon controlled, directly or indirectly, areas far behind the borders of the later Old Town, New Town and Lesser Town.

In the 14th and 19th centuries Libeň was the centre of an independent estate which was a part of the district of Kouřim for all the defined time; in 1898 it became a town and shortly afterwards, in 1901, it became a part of the capital city of Prague – Prague VIII.

The development of the medieval Libeň was influenced by its location along a significant path running from the centre of Prague Agglomeration to Prosek, to (Old) Boleslav and further on to Žitavsko. According to Kristian's legend a miracle occurred on this path - a carriage with St. Wenceslas's body was spontaneously carried over to the other bank of the flooded Rokytka Brook. The settlement was concentrated along the little river, near today's manor house, however, we know very little about its density and layout.

In spite of the relatively dense and continuous settlement from the primeval times until the peak Middle Ages, Libeň is first mentioned in written sources relatively late – only in the second half of the 14th century (the information dates from 1363), and in some works of the old literature this Libeň was interchanged with Libeň near Zbraslav located south of Prague. The area where Libeň is situated was, due to its location, destined for the role of an assembling point for armies on their way to Prague. A so called Špitálské Field was used for these purposes long before the village itself is documented in written sources (direct reports are available from the first half of the 11th century. Various armies took advantage of the strategic site near the Rokytka (between Libeň and Vysočany) many times during the whole Middle Ages and the early Modern Era; even in the 17th and 18th centuries the area around Libeň and Libeň itself was seriously plundered by armies (Libeň was desolated significantly during the Thirty Years War and during the War for the Austrian Heritage in the 1740-50s). The element which determined the

economic, communication and urban development of Libeň was the nearby River Vltava. It played an important role in operation of numerous manufactures in Libeň and it was also a rich source of fish; we can reasonably expect that Vltava had been used for transport from very early times, however, specific information relating to Libeň and its immediate vicinity dates only from the beginning of the 16th century. The periodically repeated floods on the River Vltava were a serious urban factor. While in the modern period the scope of floods is documented in detail, only scarce and brief notes inform us about the older periods (for example during a devastating flood in 1432 Libeň as well as the nearby Špitálské Field were flooded).

As early as in the 14th century Libeň was the centre of independent real property, the existence of the stronghold of Libeň is positively documented from the 1430s. We can just assume that it was located on the site of the future castle. The castle was probably built at the time when Libeň flourished under the rule of the Bryknars in the 16th century – probably as a result of reconstruction of the gothic building. At the beginning of the 17th century, under the rule of Eliška Hofmannová of Grünbühel Libeň Castle played an important role in the history of the whole country (in 1608 a Peace Treaty between Emperor Rudolf and his brother Mathias was signed there – a so called Libeň Peace).

Up until the beginning of the 20th century Libeň was not a parish, there was not even a filial church (it was a part of Prosek Parish). Only in 1904-1905 a partly wooden church was built near the castle and it was dedicated to St. Vojtěch (designed by M. Biecha); however, as early as 1770 (which means along with the grandiose celebration of 800th anniversary of the parish in Prosek) a chapel was adjoined to Libeň Castle and from the very beginning it had a status of a public sanctuary to which services which had taken place in the church of St. Peter and Paul (in front of Poříčská Gate) were transferred.

About the mid-16th century, under the rule of the Bryknars of Brukštejn, a Jewish neighbourhood was established in Libeň (the oldest information dates from 1561); as early as at the end of the 16th century so many Jews lived there, that Libeň was called *Judendorf* (1595). The legal status of the Jews from Libeň was regulated by a privilege granted by Jan Hartwig from Nostice in 1656; nevertheless, detailed rules regarding the duties of the Jewish community and its internal administration were only established by the modern bureaucratic state after the mid-18th century. The Jewish settlement in Libeň expanded significantly in the mid-18th century when Jews who were expelled from the inner Prague on the basis of Marie Terezie's decree found refuge there. The ghetto was located south of the confluence of the Rivers Vltava and Rokytka (approximately in the area restricted by today's Vojenova, Voctářova, Zenklova and Chocholoušková Streets). Today the neighbourhood hardly exists (an old synagogue probably from the end of the 16th century was destroyed before 1900; about the mid-19th century a neo-Roman synagogue was established there and it has still existed; some relics of the ghetto survived in Koželužská Street).

The beginning of New Libeň dates probably from the 17th - 18th centuries (between the years of approx. 1780-1840); it was established on plots sold emphatically, situated in the upper (northern) part of Libeň where secluded farmhouses hidden in vineyards had existed before. It was not recorded in Shaller's Topography (1788); Sommer, in his Topography of 1844, describes New Libeň as a village fifteen minutes' walk north of Libeň, along the road to Ďáblice, with 28 houses and 245 inhabitants.

The beginnings of the Estate of Libeň could be traced at the times of the Prague patrician family of Rotlevs – we can say for sure that they owned property in Libeň in the years of 1363-1436/1437. It was probably Jan Rotlev who built a stronghold in Libeň and the first information about it dates from 1436-7. During the 1430s Libeň was purchased by New-Town baker Václav Cvoek. After Cvoek's death, his children inherited the property, however, in the second half of the 15th century there were other people who held the property title to some parts of Libeň and the situation was often rather complicated. Even though individual parts of Libeň were united by the family of Roupovský of Roupov at the end of the 15th century, owners changed very often – at the beginning of the 16th century it was owned by Sigismund Holec of Květnice (died 1520) a member of a Prague noble family which was granted a gentry status in 1483; in the years 1513-1520 Libeň was owned by Vilém of Valdštejn. Probably in 1520 Valdštejn sold Libeň to Mikuláš Bryknár of Brukštejn. The Bryknars held the estate of Libeň until the end of the 16th century – during their rule it flourished significantly, several villages were annexed to it (including a small estate and a stronghold called Podvíni, located next to Libeň), documents exist about plants right in Libeň and its immediate vicinity (for example grain mills, paper mills, tilt-hammers processing copper, powder-houses and also a brewery, stalls, gardens and other agricultural operations). From as early as the Middle Ages vineyards were established in the surroundings of Libeň and in the 16th century documents mention also hop. It was probably during the period of the Bryknars of Brukštejn when the stronghold of Libeň was turned into a small Renaissance castle.

In 1595 the Bryknars sold the estate of Libeň to Eliška Hofmannová of Grünbühel, née Purkrabice of Donin (died 1611), and after her death the property was held by the Tschirnhauses and from 1651 it was Jan Hartwig of Nostice who owned this property. He held Libeň just shortly and in 1662 he sold it to the municipality of the Old Town of Prague which had wanted to acquire the estate from the end of the Thirty Years War (the economic background is described in the purchase agreement to a great detail). The Old Town gradually annexed Libeň to its estates in Strašnice, Braník, Záluží, Olšany and Dolní Chabry; at the end of the 17th century the Old Town acquired also Prosek and it was also annexed to Libeň Estate. A commissioner and an administrator stood at the head of Libeň Estate at that time and each of them had a strictly defined scope of competences.

The change of the owner of Libeň in 1662 was soon reflected in the purpose of use of Libeň Castle – it became a summer residence of Prague burgomasters. In the 1740s and then again in 1757 Libeň Castle was damaged by attacks of enemy armies – the necessary repairs subsequently resulted in large scale reconstruction of Libeň Castle (1769-1770) during which the castle was enlarged; a castle chapel and a representative wing with a balcony, clock and a spire were added. The costly renovation which cost 40 000 gold coins was initiated by Václav Fridrich of Friedenberg, who was the Old-Town burgomaster at that time and he even won support from Maria Theresia for this reconstruction. Libeň castle located in a suburb of Prague became a site for occasional stays of rulers – it was not only Maria Theresia who came there at the beginning of the 1770s, but also Joseph II in

1786, or his successor Leopold II who stayed in the castle before his coronation and he set out for his coronation journey to Prague from Libeň; in 1803 Emperor František I stayed there with all his court for six weeks. The castle remained a representative place even in future. After the end of the patrimonial administration (1848) the castle, beside being a mayor's residence, was used for representative purposes by the municipality of Libeň. It means that to a certain extent it substituted the Town Hall even though the municipal authority had its official seat there for a short time only. During certain periods it was used as a hospital and during the great flood in 1845 it provided a shelter for many families from Libeň. In 1880 Prague Mayors stopped using it as a summer residence and after Libeň was annexed to Prague in September 1901 it became a seat of the magistrate office; in 1949 it became a seat of the District National Committee for Prague 8 and in 1990 a seat of the Borough Authority for Prague 8.

Farming houses next to vineyards and fields were an integral part of the picture of Libeň in the 17th - 19th centuries and they often were very remarkable from the architectural point of view. Situated in the local countryside they were frequently named after the nearby vineyards, which had existed in the surroundings of Libeň and Podvíni from the Middle Ages). The holdings on the slopes around Libeň had their own colourful destinies which formed the history of Libeň, but often even exceeded it. Many of them became a part of the Czech cultural history thanks to their visitors or owners.

The 19th century and especially its second half represents the busiest period in the history of Libeň. At that time this mostly rural locality gradually became an important industrial suburb of Prague. The beginning of the local industrialisation reaches as far as the first half of the 19th century: In the year 1832 a large engineering factory of the company of Ruston & Coll. was built on a large plot between Palmovka and Invalidovna in Karlin which used to be a vineyard called Svábka before. Further industrial development of the municipality was supported by the railway from Prague to Vienna which ran through most southern part of its cadastre in the years 1844-1845.

The largest industrial company in Libeň became the First Czech-Moravian factory for production of machines established in 1870 in the south-east edge of Libeň in the vicinity of the northern railway, and like the "Ruston's" it produced steam engines, boilers, iron bridges and equipment for sugar refineries, mines, ironworks and water management companies. In the 1890s other engineering plants were built and at the same time the textile industry as well as leather-, wood- and food-processing industries arrived. In 1882 gasworks of a Belgian joint stock company started their operation in Libeň.

The development of industry was conditioned by construction of sufficient traffic connections, especially of the railway. From the mid-1840s a state northern railway ran through Libeň and from the beginning of the 1870s there was also the north-western railway which ran from Těšnov through the centre of Libeň to Vysočany and further on to Všetaty or to Lysá nad Labem. There were factory rails branching out from both the railways to the surrounding factories; in 1877 a railway station called Libeň-downhill was established on the north-western railway and in 1879 the station of Libeň – uphill was established on the northern railway. The River Vltava flowing in a large bend along Karlin and Libeň was also utilised for freight transport. In the 1890s a port with a transhipment centre was built in Libeň.

Along with the growth of industry more and more new production facilities, apartment houses for workers (mostly houses with courtyard galleries) and also public buildings such as schools, were built in Libeň. New streets were established even though they got their final names only in the mid 1890s. The industrialisation tied Libeň more firmly to Prague. In 1874 public petroleum lighting was installed there and in 1884 it was replaced with gas lighting. In 1884-1885 a public water distribution line was constructed.

In 1869 Libeň had 5,845 inhabitants, in 1882 there were 10,446 inhabitants and in 1895 the number of inhabitants increased to 17,740. During the census in 1890 most of the 12,536 inhabitants claimed to be of the Czech nationality and only 159 of the German nationality. As far as the social structure of Libeň inhabitants is concerned, workers dominated at the end of the 19th century, there was a numerous group of craftsmen and merchants and there remained a certain percentage of farmers and their supporting staff. Professionals formed a small group only.

During the second half of the 19th century about fifty various associations launched their activities in Libeň, in 1879 an organisation of the Social-Democratic Party was established in Libeň and in 1885 a Civil Club supporting the programme of the political party known as "Mladočeši" was established. In the 1860s ensembles of theatre amateurs – named Osvěta and Ochotnická Beseda – were established. A singing choir called Věnceslav, which was very famous at that time, dates from the same period. The owner of the local "U Deutschů" Pilsner pub and a bandmaster, František Deutsch, organised concerts, various academies and amateur theatre performances in his pub from the 1860s. A theatre hall was built in the pub garden at the beginning of the 1890s and the first professional ensemble in the history of Libeň started performing there in 1893. Libeň played its role in the literary history as well; it is for example connected with the name of the decadent poet and artist Karel Hlaváček (1874-1898) or with the Czech-Jewish writer Vojtěch Rakous (Adalbert Östreicher, 1862-1935).

Very dramatic were the moments which the local inhabitants experienced during the Prussian-Austrian war at the beginning of July 1866. On 8 July 1866 Libeň was occupied by the Prussian army and a cholera epidemic started on 24 July and it lasted until mid-October. Cholera struck again in the spring of 1873 along with smallpox; in June 1877 and in the summer of 1833 it was smallpox again which troubled Libeň. Other disasters included fires which affected especially the local industrial companies; on the other hand the central part of Libeň near the River Vltava and the part near the Rokytka stream were often flooded. Floods often came during spring when snow melted down; however, the most destructive flood came at the beginning of September 1890. It flooded most of the town and houses located in lower areas were flooded up to the first floor, or the lower ones up to their roof. The most damaged part was the Jewish neighbourhood where some of the houses had to be pulled down after the flood.

In 1872 the first great strike in the Czech-Moravian Engineering Company took place; at the same time workers constructing the railway from Prague to Neratovice were on strike too. In August 1886 there was a large-scale strike of Libeň tawers and in 1896 there was a strike in Perutz's weaving mill. Libeň workers actively participated in the

movement which organised gatherings on sites important in the Czech history at the end of the 1860s; in 1893 and in 1905 they participated in the fight for the general franchise. They could not miss the May Day celebrations in 1890.

By the end of the 19th century Libeň had the status of a suburban community, on 29 October 1898 it was promoted to a town and received its own coat of arms. However, shortly afterwards negotiations regarding connection of Libeň to Prague between the Town Halls of Libeň and Prague started and they were ended successfully at the very beginning of the 20th century: according to the Land Act of 16 April 1901 Libeň, as the second Prague suburb (after Holešovice – Bubny annexed in 1884) became a part of the royal capital city of Prague – it became Prague VIII.

During the next period Libeň underwent a phase of vigorous construction development. Blocks of two- or three-storeyed houses gradually filled up the remaining empty areas or the plots after destroyed old houses, workshops, storehouses or agricultural buildings. In 1909 the Municipal Council of Prague decided that a large hospital will be built on the slopes between the holdings of Rokoska and Bulovka. A secluded pavilion for patients with contagious illnesses with 24 beds had stood on this site; this pavilion was established as early as 1896 by the then independent Libeň municipality.

After the beginning of the First World War Libeň became a passing station for army transports. The local engineering factories started producing for the war. The men of Libeň were enlisted in the Austro-Hungarian army and many of them never returned home again. Even the students of Libeň Grammar School had to join the army and before doing so they had to take early graduation exams.

In the 1920s Libeň became an integral part of the developing city organism of Prague. The construction activity interrupted by the First World War started again. All over Libeň, most of all along the Rokytka Brook near the brewery, but also in many places of Horní Libeň blocks of modern houses were built; on the slopes near the northern and western edge of the neighbourhood new one-family or apartment houses started to appear and subsequently whole villa neighbourhoods were erected. Opposite the southern wing of Libeň castle, on the site of an old farm of the Svět family a new constructivist palace called "Svět" was erected in the mid-1930s. It included luxurious flats, a restaurant, café and a cinema; next to the Gymnasium of the Sokol Association a department store called Te-Ta was built in 1932; the hill above Palmovka got its distinctive feature – a ball-shaped gas container. An old wooden bridge connecting Libeň with Holešovice gave way to a new, concrete Libeň bridge which was built in the years 1924–28.

At this time the social structure of inhabitants in Libeň changed; its number increased from 27 192 in 1911 to 45 471 in 1937. Many civil servants, teachers, state employees and their families moved to the newly built apartment buildings or cooperative houses; the villas in the area of Holešovičky and Na Stráži were mostly inhabited by members of higher society – businessmen, industrial managers, merchants, lawyers, senior officials, university professors and artists. As far as the political orientation is concerned, Libeň was a left-wing neighbourhood. Social-Democrats, National Socialists and Communists had a strong position there; Communists opened the negotiations of the fifth congress of their party in the Čechie Hall in Libeň in February 1929. Beside the traditional Sokol Association, there were also working-class sporting associations and some cultural and educational organisations.

During the years of the Second World War Libeň was connected with some important names and events of the Nazi resistance movement. The life of three famous resistance movement activists – dr. Václav Holý (1900–1941), František Andráš (1897–1941) and Karel Elsnic (1905–1941) – was connected with Libeň. Libeň is also closely connected with the history of the attempt on Reinhard Heydrich's life and his killing which was carried out on 27 May 1942 at crossroads under a site called Vychovatelna. Various groups of Nazi resistance movement were very active in Libeň. During the air raid conducted by the American Air Force above Vysočany on 25 March 1945 the south-eastern, industrially important section of Libeň was badly damaged. Libeň also experienced very dramatic moments during the Prague Uprising in May 1945.

During the first post-war months industrial plants were gradually renovated and so were the residential houses destroyed or badly damaged during the air raid or during the uprising. In the years 1945–1949 Libeň, which was a part of the borough of Prague VIII, at that time called the "district", was administered by the District Council and also by the Prague Magistrate. In the new self-governing body all four Czech political parties of the National Front were represented; Communists had the most sovereign position of all the parties. During the elections in May 1946 they obtained as many as 45% of all votes in this traditionally left-wing district, even though the National Socialists had a strong position in this area until February 1948 as well. The District Council and the public in general had to deal with the same political disputes and fights which were so typical of the public life of the whole Czechoslovak society at that time.

After the coup in February 1948 significant changes in the political, economic and administrative structure as well as in the everyday life of the neighbourhood occurred. Another phase of nationalization took place at this time and resulted in establishment of state administration in 75 of the local plants; in 1950 liquidation of private shops and craft workshops started. In connection with the new administrative division of the Capital City of Prague the border of the Borough of Prague 8 changed in 1949 – the most industrial section of Libeň between Balabenka and Vysočany was annexed to Prague 9, a larger section of the neighbourhood with its historic core remained in Prague 8 and continued to be its centre. Other territorial reorganisation followed in 1960 when Karlín was incorporated in Prague 8 and in 1968 and 1974; the last two changes did not apply to the cadastre of Libeň.

The urban picture of Libeň has not changed much during the 1950s. Some old production facilities, fences, emergency structures and houses, especially in the Jewish neighbourhood, disappeared gradually, and blocks of new residential houses were built. At the beginning of the 1960s the River Vltava was cultivated around Czech Docks; new discharge lamps were installed in streets. In 1965 the remaining part of the old Jewish cemetery in Vojenova Street was destroyed and covered with soil, and thus Prague lost a precious historic sight. In the 1970s and especially in the 1980s significant changes in the general picture of Libeň occurred; lots of old buildings were pulled down in order to create space for construction of new prefabricated houses, for construction of so called Holešovice railway relocation, for reconstruction of the intersection under Vychovatelna, for construction

of an underground station and of the adjacent bus terminal called "Na Palmovce".

When the coup came in November 1989, Libeň was just in the middle of vigorous constructional changes. The return to the market economy became apparent in the life of the neighbourhood nearly instantly. Industrial plants were privatised, small plants, houses and plots were returned to their original owners or their descendants. Thanks to these restitutions many houses which were supposed to be demolished were fortunately saved. During the 1990s many Libeň houses were repaired and often reconstructed, new residential houses and office buildings grew in gaps and in empty areas.

Culture has not been neglected in this neighbourhood either. Libeň Theatre was renamed "Divadlo pod Palmovkou" and it started presenting new dramatic and directorial projects. Another permanent ensemble started to perform in Libeň, in the building of the Cultural House of Gong in Sokolovská Street. The local castle became a cultural centre as well, series of concerts are regularly held there in spring and autumn, there are also exhibitions, and from 1995 a music festival Libeň Spring for Young Artists is held there. At the end of June 1993 the rococo castle chapel of Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, which had been used as a storing place for many decades, was re-consecrated and opened to the public. In spring 2000 an original monument to Bohumil Hrabal was unveiled – a large fresco by the academic painter Tatiána Svatošová. The monument is called "In Honour of Bohumil Hrabal" and it is located on a wall in the Palmovka underground station in Na Hrázi Street.

On 13 August 2002 Libeň was – like the neighbouring Karlín and the opposite Holešovice and other parts of Prague – affected by destructive floods, which came after a hundred and twelve years. In lower parts of the neighbourhood water reached as high as the first floor which means that all ground-floor flats and shops were destroyed. Liquidation and removal of the damage took several months and in some places even several years.

Libeň entered the 21st century as a neighbourhood undergoing significant changes in its exterior as well as its life, however, in spite of that, it has still preserved its unique atmosphere.

Resúme

Libeň, ursprünglich ein Dorf, das im Jahre 1898 zur Stadt befördert und im Jahre 1901 an Prag angeschlossen wurde, ist jetzt ein Bestandteil der Stadtteile Prag 8 und Prag 9. Es erstreckt sich östlich und nordöstlich vom Moldauer Mäander. Das Relief vom Liebner Katastergelände ist ziemlich gegliedert, die Tieflandslagen längs des Baches Rokytka und an dessen Mündung in die Moldau wechseln zu einem gewellten Gelände über und die Seehöhe schwankt ca. zwischen 186–293 m ü. M. Das Kataster der Gemeinde Libeň bedeckt fast zusammenhängend die Bebauung des städtischen Typs. Sie entstand durch Verbindung und Urbanisierung des Dorfes Libeň (Altes Libeň), der Liebner Judenstadt, der Ortschaft Nová Libeň (Neues Libeň), des Dörfchens Malé Holešovice (Holešovičky), des eingegangenen Dorfes Podvíni und mehrerer Zehner von stadtnahen Bauerngütern.

Auf der Landkarte der Prager Funde aus Paläolithikum und Mesolithikum zeigt sich Libeň nicht markant, einige Funde sind aber einzigartig (die blattförmige aus Feuerstein hergestellte Spitze, Alter etwa 50 000 Jahre). Erst seit der jüngeren Steinzeit (ca. 5500–4 000 v. u. Z.) fängt das Liebner Gebiet an in den Vordergrund zu treten. Schon die älteren Forschungen erweisen Ansiedlung der Kulturen mit der linearen und ausgestochenen Keramik und im Äneolithikum (ca. 4 000–2200 v. u. Z.) wird das Flussgebiet des Unterlaufes vom Fluss Rokytka zum ständigen Teil der Siedelökumene. In den folgenden Epochen, in der Bronzezeit (ca. 2200–750 v. u. Z.) und in dem älteren Zeitabschnitt der Eisenzeit (ca. 750 – 450 v. u. Z.), vertieft sich dieser Zug weiterhin.

Das erste "historische" mit dem böhmischen Gebiet verbundene Volk sind die Kelten. In unseren Bedingungen überlappen sie mit der jüngeren Eisenzeit also mit der La – Tène – Zeit (ca. 400 – 0). Auch das Gebiet auf dem Unterlauf des Flusses Rokytka ist mit den La – Tène Skelettgräbern bedeckt. Die Siedelintensität in dem Liebner Kataster wird schwächer wahrscheinlich in der römischen Zeit und am Anfang der Völkerwanderungszeit (0–500 u. Z.), wann die Gruppen von Germanen auch über das Prager Gebiet durchgingen. Mit Ankunft der slawischen Ethnie beginnt der historische Zeitabschnitt. Die Urkunden über die ältesten Slawen, etwa aus dem 6. und 7. Jahrhundert, findet auch Libeň auf, aus dem 9. Jahrhundert stammen aus Libeň einige winzigere Siedelfunde. Das nähert sich schon die Zeit, in der die Prager Burg gegründet wird und in der sich auf dem linksseitigen, danach auch auf dem rechtsseitigen, Moldauer Ufer eine ausgedehnte Siedelagglomeration formt, unter deren direktem und indirektem Einfluss auch die Orte stehen, die weit von der Grenze der späteren Alten Stadt, der Neuen Stadt und der Kleinseite liegen.

Die Entwicklung des mittelalterlichen Liebens beeinflusste die Lage am bedeutenden Wege, der aus Zentrum der Prager Agglomeration nach Prosek, in das Alte Bolešlav und weiter in die Region von Zittau führte. Auf diesem Wege sollte es nach Kristýáns Legende zum Wunder kommen, als das Fuhrwerk mit dem Leib vom heiligen Wenzel eigenmächtig auf das andere Ufer des übergeströmten Flusses Rokytka hinübergetragen werden sollte. Die Ansiedlung konzentrierte sich am Bach entlang in der Nähe des heutigen Schlosses, es fehlt aber an näheren Indizien über ihre Dichte und Struktur.

Im 14.–19. Jahrhundert war Libeň Zentrum eines selbständigen Wirtschaftshofes, der die ganze Zeit zum Bezirk der Region Kouřim gehörte; im Jahre 1898 wurde es zu einer Stadt befördert und kurz danach wurde es im Jahre 1901 zum Teil der königlichen Hauptstadt Prag – zu Prag VIII.

Trotz der relativ dichten und kontinuierlichen Ansiedlung von der Urzeit bis zum Höchstmittelalter wird Libeň in den schriftlichen Urkunden erst relativ spät erwähnt – seit der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts (die älteste Erwähnung 1363) und ein Teil der älteren Literatur verwechselte es mit Libeň bei Zbraslav – südlich von Prag. Das Gebiet des späteren Liebens wurde dank seiner Lage zum militärischen Versammlungsplatz am Wege nach Prag (das sog. Spitaler Feld) lange vor dem vorausbestimmt, als das eigentliche Dorf mit schriftlichen Urkunden nachgewiesen wurde (direkte Berichte stehen seit der ersten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts zur Verfügung). Die strategische Lage auf dem Sammelgebiet des Flusses Rokytka (also zwischen Libeň und Vysočany) nutzten dann die Heere viel-

mals aus – das ganze Mittelalter und auch die Frühneuzeit hindurch und noch im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert wurde die Gegend um Libeň herum und auch Libeň selbst mit Militärverzügen und Plünderung sehr stark angegriffen (beträchtliche Verwüstung von Libeň selbst und auch vom Liebner Grundbesitz verursachten der Dreißigjährige Krieg und die österreichischen Erbfolgekriege in den 40er–50er Jahren des 18. Jahrhunderts). Das markant bestimmende, wirtschaftliche Kommunikations- und Urbanisationselement war der nicht weit entfernte Fluss – die Moldau. Von Bedeutung war sie für Fungieren einer Menge der Liebner Wirtschaftsbetriebe und auch vom Gesichtspunkt des Fischfangs gesehen; Verkehr auf der Moldau ist schon seit jeher vorauszusetzen, aber erst seit dem Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts gibt es davon konkrete Belege im Bezug auf Libeň und auf dessen nächste Umgebung. Zum wichtigen urbanistischen Umstand wurden die sich periodisch wiederholenden Überschwemmungen an der Moldau. Während der Hochwasserumfang in der neuen Zeit detailliert dokumentiert wird, sind wir gezwungen, uns nur mit knappen Erwähnungen über den älteren Zeitabschnitt zufriedener zu geben (z. B. während des zerstörenden Hochwassers im Jahre 1432 wurde Libeň auch zusammen mit dem nicht weit liegenden Spitaler Feld überflutet).

Zum Zentrum der Einzelware wurde Libeň schon im 14. Jahrhundert, Bestehen der Liebner Festung ist in den 30er Jahren des 15. Jahrhunderts positiv nachgewiesen. Es ist nur hypothetisch vorauszusetzen, dass sie am Ort des späteren Schlosses stand. Dasjenige entsteht allem Anschein nach in der Liebner Aufschwungszeit unter der Regierung des Bryknár – Geschlechts im 16. Jahrhundert – wahrscheinlich gerade dank dem Umbau des gotischen Sitzes. Unter Eliška Hofmann von Grünbühl ließ sich das Liebner Schloss am Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts in die Ganzlandesgeschichte einschreiben (im Jahre 1608 wurde hier der Friedensvertrag zwischen dem Kaiser Rudolf und dessen Bruder Mathias unterzeichnet – der sog. Liebner Frieden).

Bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts war Libeň keine Pfarrgemeinde und es stand hier sogar keine Filialkirche (Libeň gehörte zur Pfarrgemeinde Prosek). Erst in den Jahren 1904–1905 wurde nicht weit vom Schloss die hölzerne St. Vojtěch – Kirche erbaut (Architekt M. Blecha), aber schon im Jahre 1770 (also gleichzeitig mit den prächtigen Festen aus Anlass des 800. Jahrestages der Pfarrgemeinde Prosek) wurde an das Liebner Schloss eine Kapelle hinzugebaut, die gleich vom Anfang an Status eines öffentlichen Tempels besaß und in die die in der St. Peter und Paul – Kirche zu Festen erledigten Gottesdienste übertragen wurden (vor dem Poříčská – Tor).

In der Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts entsteht in Libeň unter dem Bryknár – Geschlecht von Brukštejn ein Judenviertel (die älteste Urkunde stammt aus dem Jahre 1561) und schon am Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts lebten hier so viele Juden, dass Libeň Judendorf genannt wurde (1595). Rechtliche Situation der Liebner Juden richtete mit dem Privileg aus dem Jahre 1656 Jan Hartwig von Nostice ein, eine Detailregelung von Pflichten der Judengemeinde und von deren Innenverwaltung brachte übrigens erst der moderne bürokratische Staat seit der Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts mit; die jüdische Ansiedlung in Libeň wurde dann in der Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts um ein Bedeutendes breiter, weil hier einen Zufluchtsort die Juden fanden, die auf Grund eines Reskripts von Maria Theresia aus dem Jahre 1744 aus dem inneren Prag verbannt wurden. Das Ghetto breitete sich südlich vom Zusammenfluss der Moldau und des Flusses Rokytka aus (ungefähr auf die Raumfläche, die mit heutigen Straßen Vojenova, Vocháňova, Zenklova und Chocholoušova ulice abgegrenzt ist), heute ist das Ghetto zum großen Teil untergegangen (die alte Synagoge vielleicht vom Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts wurde vor dem Jahr 1900 niedergerissen (in der Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts entstand hier die bis heute bestehende neuromanische Synagoge); ein Überrest des Liebner Ghettos wurde in der Koželužská – Straße überliefert).

In das 17.–18. Jahrhundert (ca. in die Jahre 1780–1840) fallen die Anfänge des Neuen Liebens, das auf den laut Emphyteuse verkauften Liegenschaften im oberen (nördlichen) Teil von Libeň entstand, wo es schon vorher unter Weingütern solitäre Wirtschaftshöfe gab. In der Topografie von Schaller (1788) wird das Neue Libeň noch nicht registriert, Sommer erwähnt es in seiner Topografie (1844) schon als ein Dorf, das eine Viertelstunde nördlich von Libeň liegt, am Wege nach Ďáblice, mit 28 Häusern und 245 Einwohnern.

Die Uranfänge des Liebner Hofes werden schon in den Zeiten der Prager Patrizierfamilie Rotlev sichtbar – Libeň ist in den Jahren 1363–1436/1437 als ihr Besitz positiv zu bezeichnen. Wahrscheinlich Jan Rotlev erbaute in Libeň eine Festung, die zum ersten Mal in den Jahren 1436–1437 erwähnt wurde. Im Laufe der 30er Jahre des 15. Jahrhunderts erkaufte Libeň von Familie Rotlev neustädtischer Brotbäcker Václav Cvoek. Nach Cvoeks Tode vererbten die Liebner Ware seine Kinder, über Vermögensrechte auf Stadtteile Liebens verfügten aber in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts auch andere Personen und die Situation ist hier manchmal unklar. Auch als dann am Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts die Teile von Libeň in Händen der Familie Roupovský von Roupov verbunden wurden, wechselten die Besitzer schnell ab, am Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts war es Zikmund Holec von Květnice (†1520), der Angehörige einer Prager Wappenfamilie, die im Jahre 1483 in den Wladyka – Stuhl erhoben wurde, in den Jahren 1513–1520 wird als Besitzer von Libeň Vilém von Valdštejn beurkundet. Wahrscheinlich im Jahre 1520 verkaufte Valdštejn Libeň an Mikuláš Bryknár von Brukštejn. Das Bryknár – Adelsgeschlecht unterhielt den Liebner Wirtschaftshof bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts – unter seiner Herrschaft erlebte es eine Aufschwungszeit, an den Liebner Wirtschaftshof wurden einige Dörfer angeschlossen (des kleineren Wirtschaftshofs und der Festung Podvíni, die dicht bei Libeň liegen, inbegriffen), beurkundet sind Wirtschaftsbetriebe in Libeň selbst und in seiner nächsten Umgebung (z. B. Mühlenwerke, Papierwerke, Hämmer zur Kupferverarbeitung, Pulverwerke, aber auch Brauerei, Ställe, Gärten und andere Betriebe des Wirtschaftswesens). Schon seit dem Mittelalter wurden in der Umgebung von Libeň Weinhöfe gegründet und im 16. Jahrhundert ist hier auch Hopfenbau beurkundet. In die Zeit des Bryknár – Geschlechts von Brukštejn fällt vermutlich auch Umbau der Liebner Festung zu einem kleinen Renaissanceschloss.

Im Jahre 1595 verkaufte das Bryknár – Geschlecht den Liebner Wirtschaftshof an Eliška Hofmann von Grünbühl, geb. Burggräfin von Donin (†1611), nach der die Ware das Tschirnhaus – Geschlecht unterhielt und seit dem Jahr 1651 dann Jan Hartwig von Nostice. Er besaß Libeň nur eine kurze Zeit und im Jahre 1662 verkaufte er es an die Gemeinde der Prager Altstadt, die den Liebner Wirtschaftshof schon seit