

werk und dem Gewerbe zu widmen. Da die Bewohner der Innenstadt mehrere Vorteile hatten, reichten die Vorstadtbewohner bereits 1767 den ersten Antrag ein, um ihre Lage zu verbessern. Sie erzielten jedoch keinen Erfolg. Ihre nicht leichte Situation verschlechterte noch mehr die Hungersnot in den Jahren 1771–1772, da wir unter den Verstorbenen besonders Bewohner der Vorstädte und der Dörfer vorfinden.

Das Leben der Bewohner von Polička beeinträchtigte auch weitere **Reformbestrebungen von Maria Theresia**. Im Jahre 1765 kam Polička aus dem Halsgericht und zukünftig musste sich die Stadt an ihre Kreisstadt Chrudim wenden. Im Jahre 1771 wurde die erste Hausnummerierung vorgenommen. Reformen machte ferner das hiesige Schulwesen durch. Auf grundsätzliche Art und Weise wurde in der Stadt und deren Umgebung die sog. Raabisierung durchgeführt, also Reformen, welche die Untertanen und Grundstücke betrafen, womit ähnlich wie in mehreren anderen Königstädten und auf weiteren Kammerherrschaften die städtischen Meierhöfe von Polička aufgelöst wurden. Ihr Bodenbestand wurde emphyteutisch den Untertanen zugeteilt, um die Wirtschaftseffektivität zu erhöhen und den Bevölkerungsanstieg zu unterstützen. In Form der Abolition wurden diese Untertanen von der Robot befreit und als sog. Reliution wurde diese Pflicht auf regelmäßige Geldabgaben übertragen. Infolge dieser radikalen Veränderungen entstanden in der Umgebung von Polička einige Ortschaften, die die Anzahl derjenigen erweiterte, welche Wurzeln bereits im fortgeschrittenen 17. Jahrhundert hatten. Bei Borová entstanden Bukovina (Bukovina), Cerkýtlý (Cerkýtlý), Svátá Kateřina (Sankt Katharina) und Mrhov (Mrhov), bei Pustá Rybná finden wir die neuen Ortschaften Betlém, Damašek (Damaschek), Kobylí (Kobyli), Světy (Swěty) und Blatina, bei Polička Jelinek (Jelinek), bei Telci Landráty (Landrat) vor.

Der regulierte Magistrat, der die bürgerliche Selbstverwaltung ersetzte, sicherte ab 1788 die **Verwaltung der Stadt**. Die städtische Trivialschule wurde 1789 in eine vierklassige Hauptschule umfunktioniert. In den 80er Jahren des 18. Jahrhunderts setzte sich Polička als Kernpunkt eines wichtigen Flachsanbau- und Weberegebietes durch. Im Jahre 1828 waren in der Stadt 14 Leinwand- und 1 Baumwollwarenhändler, im Jahre 1835 dann 8 Leinwandware- und 7 Baumwollwarenhändler tätig. In den Jahren 1816–1837 erhielt die Stadt mit dem Bau von neuen Straßen eine bessere Verkehrsverbindung mit den Städten in der Umgebung. Die Stadt als Feudalherrschaft hatte genügend Einkünfte, der Anteil an dem Graphitabbau in der Gegend von Svojanov und die Stadtfinanzen erhielten eine wesentliche Unterstützung auch dank des Holzverkaufs aus den städtischen Wäldern nach dem Windbruch im Jahre 1834. Es verbesserte sich deshalb u. a. das Stadtmilieu (Straßen- und Gassenpflasterung, Kanalisation). Als negativ wird bei der Modernisierung der städtischen Verbindungswege die damit verbundene Liquidierung aller Stadttore betrachtet (1836–1843). Die Stadtmauer selbst entging jedoch der Demolierung. Die bedeutendste Baumaßnahme war in den Jahren 1840–1841 die Umfunktionierung der ehemaligen Kaserne zum klassizistischen Knabenschulgebäude.

Im Jahre 1789 zählte Polička 439 Häuser, im Jahre 1811 bereits 560 Häuser (und 2823 Einwohner) und 1843 insgesamt 647 Häuser (und 3923 Einwohner). Wenn wir jedoch den Umfang der Bebauung auf der Karte der I. militärischen Landesaufnahme (1783) mit der Karte des Stablen Katasters (1839) vergleichen, stellen wir fest, dass er sich nicht wesentlich verändert hat. Der Unterschied beruhte besonders in der **Verdichtung beider bestehenden mit dem Stadtkern zusammenhängenden Vorstädten und weiter in der Vervollendung der Bebauung mit kleinen Häusern auf der Außenseite der Stadtmauer. Der Großbrand im Jahre 1845** vernichtete total das malerische Aussehen der Stadt. In der Innenstadt widerstanden dem Feuernur vier Häuser. Dann folgte ein nüchterner klassizistischer Umbau. Die Häuser erhielten in dieser Zeit reich geschnitzte klassizistische Haustore und Haustüren. Der Brand betraf darüber hinaus erheblich die gotische Dekankirche, deren Reste abgerissen und in den Jahren 1853–1865 durch einen neugotischen Neubau ersetzt wurden.

Im Jahre 1850 wurde Polička nicht nur zu einer Selbstverwaltungsgemeinde, sondern auch als Sitz des Gerichtsbezirkes bestimmt, seit 1855 war hier ein gemischtes Bezirksamt tätig und seit 1868 ein Bezirksverwaltungsamt. Die Stadt stagnierte, was Baumaßnahmen betrifft, in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts, denn es fehlte ihr eine Eisenbahnverbindung. Der einzige größere Industriebetrieb war die Bierbrauerei südwestlich von dem Synský-Teich. In derselben Zeit entwickelten sich in der Stadt eine kleinere evangelische und eine jüdische Gemeinde. In den Jahren 1889–1891 wurde in der Vorstadt ein Bezirkskrankenhaus erbaut. Im Jahre 1890 ist in Polička sein berühmtester Landsmann geboren – der Komponist Bohuslav Martinů († 1959).

Eine neue Stadtentfaltung brachte erst der Bau der Lokalbahn in den Jahren 1896–1897, die am nördlichen Stadtrand vorbeiführte, wo auch der Bahnhof entstand. Beim Bahnhof konzentrierten sich später neue Industriebetriebe (Weberei, Sägewerk u. a.). Die Anzahl der Häuser und Einwohner begann nach langer Zeit zu steigen. Im Jahre 1898 kam die erwartete Wasserleitung, 1910 das städtische Elektrizitätswerk und in den Jahren 1911–1916 die neue Straßen- und Gassenpflasterung dazu. Am Umbruch des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts entstand das monumentale Gebäude der Lehrerbildungsanstalt (später Gymnasium) im Neurenaissancebaustil als Anfang des neuen nach einem Konzept geplanten repräsentativen Viertels südlich vom historischen Stadtkern hinter dem Synský-Teich, das als Gegenstück des nördlichen Industrieviertels aufgefasst wird. Mit der Stadt wurde es durch einen neuen Park verbunden. Im Jahre 1913 arbeitete Vladimír Zákrevs einen städtebaulich bemerkenswerten Regulierungsplan von einem neuen Viertel aus, jedoch seine Realisierung schob der Erste Weltkrieg hinaus.

In der Zwischenkriegszeit wuchs die Stadt ziemlich gleichmäßig in ihrem ganzen Umkreis. Als bedeutendes Element in der Entwicklung

von Polička betrachtet man 1922 den Bau der Munitionsfabrik für das Militär in den Wäldern hinter der Stadt. Die Verknüpfung der dörflichen und stadtnahen Teile beider Vorstädte erreichte in dieser Zeit ihren Gipfel. Entlang der südlichen Seite des Teiches entstand die bemerkenswerte Baukomposition eines neuen Stadtviertels mit den Masaryk-Schulen (Masarykovy školy) (1925–1928), der evangelischen Kirche (1936–1937), Zinshäusern (1922–1924) und des Bezirksamtes (1929–1936). Lose damit hängt auch die bemerkenswerte Theaterdominante (Tylový dům, 1924–1929) zusammen. Die Zwischenkriegszeit betraf zum Glück nur in einem kleinen Maß das historische Aussehen der Innenstadt, wo nur einige Fassaden modernisiert wurden und einige Neubauten entstanden. Am markantesten ist das Sparkassengebäude Spořitelna osady Polický innerhalb der Stadtmauer aus den Jahren 1936–1937.

In Übereinstimmung mit dem Wortlaut des Münchner Abkommens wurde die von der Nationalität her rein tschechische Stadt Polička am 10. Oktober 1938 von der deutschen Armee besetzt und ernsthaft drohte ihr der Anschluss an Nazideutschland. Die definitive Besetzungsgrenze wurde am 21. November 1938 bestimmt und brachte die Rückgabe der Stadt in die geschmalerte Tschechoslowakei, die am 15. März 1939 als Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren konstituiert wurde. Im Jahre 1940 wurde der Bezirk Polička aufgelöst (dessen Drittel im Jahre 1938 eingenommen wurde) und aufgelöst wurde ferner die städtische Selbstverwaltung. Vor Luftangriffen auf Berlin und Essen wurden nach Polička Mädchenschulen und ein Kindersammlager, das aus Berlin evakuiert wurde, verlegt. Die Juden wurden zum Holocaustopfer.

Nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges sank die Bewohnerzahl um 1300 Personen, die in den Jahren 1945–1948 die ausgesiedelten Gemeinden des Bezirkes und andere Grenzbereiche besiedelten. Nach der kommunistischen Machtübernahme 1948 wurde die Bedeutung der Munitionsfabrik erhöht und für ihre Arbeiter entstand eine städtebaulich hochwertige Kollektion von Gebäuden, angeschlossen an das Viertel aus der Zwischenkriegszeit. Seit den 60er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts wurde der weitere Ausbau besonders in Form von monotonen Plattenbausiedlungen und im kleineren Ausmaß auch mit dem Bau von Reihen-Einfamilienhäusern realisiert. Wesentlich breitete sich die Gewerbezone beim Bahnhof aus, die zusammenhängende städtische Bebauung erweiterte sich somit bedeutend. Der historische Stadtkern entging zum Glück unangemessenen Eingriffen.

Den Schutz des historischen Stadtkerns sicherte die **im Jahre 1990 ins Leben gerufene städtische Denkmalzone**. In den danach folgenden Jahren wurden sowie die wichtigsten Dominanten, als auch die übliche Bebauung gefühvoll korrigiert. Polička erweitert sich seit den 90er Jahren mit neuen Gebäuden weiter aus. Die Anzahl der Bewohner erreichte im Jahre 2001 das historische Maximum (8669). Der Bau von neuen Wohnhäusern und besonders individuelle Baumaßnahmen konzentrierten sich vor allem südöstlich von der Stadt und auf die Obere Vorstadt (Horní předměstí). So entstanden ferner neue öffentliche Dienstleistungsanlagen und die nördliche Gewerbezone wurde vergrößert.

POLÍČKA

The destiny of Polička and its region has always been influenced by **rough geographic** conditions which made it different from the old core settlement of Bohemia and Moravia. Even though in this less fertile area some ancient tools have also been found, people have long avoided the remote region of Polička. The area was covered with dense forests spreading between Bohemia and Moravia and settlers started cultivating the area from both sides only in the 12th century.

The town of Litomyšl, where Vladislav II (1140–1172) had a Premonstratensian monastery established, started developing into a natural centre of the region from the 11th century. The monastery made the whole area more attractive and **colonization activities started spreading all the way to the place where Polička was subsequently established**. Monks from Litomyšl also obtained a "district called Lubné and meadows called Na Polickah" from their founder (*„circulitum ... qui dicitur Nalubnem, cum pratis omnibus, que vocantur Napolickah“*); the village of Lubná is situated north of Polička nowadays. It is very likely that as early as at the turn of the 13th century a settlement owned by Premonstratensians from Litomyšl was situated on the site of today's Polička. There are also other indications suggesting that Polička settlement tradition reached back before 1265, since users of "villages and cultivated fields" were mentioned in a document dated 1265.

Přemysl Otakar II (1253–1278) soon focused his attention on the long-forgotten region. Přemysl started preparing the **establishment of a municipal community directly in Polička**, probably along with castle Svojanov. Entrepreneur Konrád visited the selected site. A village called Limberk (*Lewendorf*) was established shortly before 1265, i.e. before the town was founded, and Konrád became its reeve. A document issued by King Přemysl on 27th September 1265 is usually mentioned as the Polička founding deed, however, in fact the document only charged Konrád of Limberk to establish "a new town in Polička" (*"ut novellam plantacionem nostre civitatis in Policzek"*). The original deed has not survived, only its copies have; nevertheless, the document is expressive and illustrative evidence of the practice in establishing Czech and Moravian royal towns in the second half of the 13th century. We do not know much about Konrád himself. The King called him an appropriate and skilled man and it was probably the King who had sent him to the neighbouring Limberk before September 1265. Konrád might have been a burgher (we do not know from where) who became rich, he might have started his career as a founder of settlements. Such activities flourished under Otakar's rule.

As a locator, Konrád was to become the town mayor and the King also promised he would get the reeve's office with the judicial authority over the surrounding villages and a revenue of one third of court fees. The whole colonization project covered 800 fields of which 50 belonged directly to the town. Polička reeve had two free fields plus every tenth field out of the aforementioned 50, two meat and two bread shops, a free pub in Limberk and four mills in the surroundings. No pubs could be established within one mile from the town. New town citizens were to enjoy exemption from taxes and tolls, and a land path towards Brno was to run through Polička. Rural background was built along with the town. The arrangement of plots in the town as well as in the surrounding villages proves that the establishment of Polička was regulated, not spontaneous. The town itself was not large it only covered 12 hectares. The town was dominated by a large oval-shaped square and a well-arranged street network. The first fortification system comprised a stake rampart and a shallow moat.

Polička ranked among medium sized royal towns from its beginning, and represented an important support base of the central administration in Bohemian east. In 1285 Wenceslas II (1283–1305) gave his step-father Závist of Falkenstein († 1290) a wonderful present – he hereditarily assigned to him and his son Jan the town of Polička, Castle Lanšperk and the town of Lanškroun with all outbuildings, villages and privileges. When Závist was captured and imprisoned, Polička was subject to a territorial swap that was to be executed by Wenceslas II and Frederick I, Margrave of Meissen from the Wettin family. The planned swap did not take place eventually and Polička flourished for the rest of Wenceslas' II rule. However, at the same time the town started being considered as **one of the east-Bohemian dowry towns**.

At the restless time after the Přemyslid dynasty died out and after King Rudolph of Habsburg died in 1307, a network of royal dowry towns situated in East Bohemia started to be formed in order to sustain Elizabeth Richeza of Poland, the widow after Wenceslas II and Rudolph of Habsburg. Such an institute was first legally enshrined in a deed written by the Roman King Albert I of Germany and his son Frederick in a military camp near Opatovice monastery in October 1307; Frederick strove to win the Bohemian kingdom after the death of his brother Rudolph. The document officially provided a Queen-widow with five dowry towns whose list expressly included the town of Polička for the first time, and at the same time the document significantly extended the towns' privileges in return for their accepting German mercenaries during winter 1307/1308 who enforced the right of the Habsburg family to the Bohemian throne. The document was paradoxically issued by the Habsburg family who in fact had no right to intervene in internal matters of the Bohemian land. The deed was probably based on a presumption that Frederick would become the Bohemian King.

The aforementioned privilege for Queen-widows was reconfirmed (even though no specific towns were listed) in an agreement concluded in August 1308 between Frederick of Habsburg and Henry of Carinthia by means of which Frederick waived his right to the Bohemian throne in favour of Henry.

Polička was involved in political-military events also in 1315 when disputes between King John of Bohemia and Czech noblemen culminated, Silesian army troops of Bolko II, the Duke of Jawor, settled down in Polička and in some other dowry towns as per order of Elizabeth Richeza; Bolko II was to marry Agnes, a daughter of Elizabeth Richeza, even though King John and his wife Elizabeth of Bohemia disagreed with that. Polička burghers drove the soldiers out of the town.

The local political and economic life of the town was primarily regulated by the privilege from 1307 which provided dowry towns, as we had mentioned, with a number of economic privileges. From the legal point of view the privilege of King John dated 1337 prevalingly controlled local life of the town; the privilege significantly extended competences of the municipal council in relation to royal officers and the town mayor. This privilege was not specific to Polička, it was granted to all royal towns. The increased significance of the municipal council in Polička was demonstrated by the construction of a Gothic Town-Hall in the middle of the square about the mid-14th century. Only a tower has survived from the original building and nowadays it is surrounded with subsequently added sections of the Town-Hall. A stay of King John in Polička in April 1336 is a local legend which is not based on historic facts.

In addition to municipal administration, church authorities also resided in Polička. Beside a parish, Polička hosted the lowest unit of the period church administration – the deanery which controlled 25 parishes with several filial churches on the Czech-Moravian border in the surroundings of Litomyšl and Polička. After Litomyšl diocese was established, Polička became a part of this diocese.

There is no doubt that the **large-scale development which followed the original division of the area into plots** and which substituted original temporary mostly wooden structures was a significant element of the town life. The construction of approximately 1200 m of bricked fortification walls surrounding the oval-shaped town was remarkable; most of the fortification system has survived till now. The fortification system was reinforced with 19 inwardly open bastions; the town could be entered through three gates and one pedestrian gate. However, no one has proven that a castle was established in the town. Unclear information about a castle in some sources was probably related to a significant fortification feature in Starohradská gate (somewhere at the end of today's Šaffkova Street). Another significant Polička structure was a three-aisle Gothic Church of St. Jacob that probably replaced an older temporary wooden structure. Worth mentioning is the fact that today's church has nothing in common with this original Gothic structure beside a part of the presbytery. In 1845 the church burned down and was replaced with today's pseudo-Gothic structure.

An important moment in the town development was the substitution of original, mostly wooden houses, with impressive stone structures.

This process took place already in the first half of the 14th century. As a result of this process King Charles IV and his suite found lodging in the town and stayed there for three days in 1346. Deep cellars under some houses, especially the ones surrounding the square, have remained from the oldest residential houses. House no. 59 in Palackého Square is considered the best retained house with a Gothic core. The general appearance of the town was probably also influenced by a privilege granted by Charles IV in 1360 by means of which he permitted paving of the town and resulting levying of fees from carriages that were passing through the town.

At the end of the 14th century Polička was an impressive and fully organized dowry town of Bohemian Queens. Between 1378–1393 dowry towns were controlled by Elizabeth of Pomerania, Queen-widow after Charles IV. She indebted dowry towns, however, we do not know how much Polička was affected. Elizabeth's step-son Wenceslas IV restricted Queens' competences towards dowry towns and confirmed all privileges of burghers in such towns; he probably did so in response to complaints of dowry towns regarding their indebtedness. The last Queen to control Polička before the beginning of the Hussite revolution was Sophia of Bavaria, the wife of Wenceslas IV.

We do not know what the attitude of Polička burghers towards the long-lasting political crisis in the early 15th century was. Since Polička supported the Hussites during the Hussite revolution most of the time, we can assume that Hus' reform theory found its supporters.

During Hussite wars, which speeded up the process of Czechization of the town, Polička became a member of the Prague Hussite Town Association and remained there up until the first half of the 1430s; in 1434 Polička turned away from Táborites and Orphans and in the battle of Lipany the town fought on the side of the Utraquist-Catholic formation that won the battle, which eventually brought about the end of Hussite wars. The oldest known Polička municipal register has survived from this time; records in the register originate from 1432–1525 and document the work of municipal administration and the legal order in the town. Rare reports from period chronicles also bring information about events during this restless time. Worth mentioning is the information from Vavřinec of Březová from 1421 about conquest of Polička by Tatars who allegedly killed about 1301 people. Even though the number is probably exaggerated with regards to Polička population at that time, it does document the most tragic event in Polička history.

After Sigismund of Luxembourg took over the throne, Polička was included in the list of dowry property by means of a deed dated probably 11th February 1437; this time it was the dowry of Queen Barbara of Celje. Previous Queen Sophia of Bavaria weakened her relationship to her dowry property by her departure for Pressburg at the end of 1419 and subsequent handover of the property to Sigismund at Brno council. Due to the complicated situation after the death of Sigismund of Luxembourg († 1437) and Albert II of Habsburg († 1439) the Queen was only able to return in 1441. During the following ten years, until the Queen's death in 1451, Polička was controlled by Queen's vice-chamberlain. At this restless time, when political ambitions of representatives of royal towns played an important role, landfrieds (regional defensive confederacies to enforce a legal order), organized on the regional level in Bohemia, worked fairly well in administration of the Bohemian Kingdom. Polička was a part of the east-Bohemian landfried which, along with other Utraquist landfrieds, helped George of Poděbrady to conquer Prague in 1448.

As regards incomplete reports on the development of Polička during the rule of Ladislaus the Posthumous we shall mention his decision from 1456 by means of which he pledged Polička to the owner of Svojanov Castle Ješek Svojanovský of Boskovice who had granted him a loan of 400 threescores of groschen. It was only George of Poděbrady who managed to buy the town back; under George's rule Polička burghers also succeeded in buying out the reeve's office. **Significant privileges** granted in the 15th century included the privilege of annual market (granted in 1454) which started on St. Simon's and Juda's day (28th October), and the privilege of another market which could be held on St. John the Baptist's day (24th June). The privilege granted by Vladislaus II Jagiello by means of which he entitled the town to organize another market, is the oldest survived deed in Polička municipal archives. Documents related to dowry towns issued during the rule of George of Poděbrady and the Jagiellon family show a very specific situation when some documents were co-issued by the King himself, some were issued directly by him and the King even interfered in yields forwarded to the Queen's treasury. This is also documented by the text of Vladislaus' II deed from 1474 which we know from a certified copy as of 1508. The document is valuable also because it comprises a list of villages in the town surroundings that paid taxes to the town. Polička managed to have them re-classified to serf villages only when they were recorded in the land register in 1545 and completed thus its municipal estate.

Polička, whose economic development was influenced by fairly unfavourable natural conditions, encountered problems in the late 15th century. A breaking point not only in the history of Polička was the conclusion of the Saint-Wenceslaus contract (1517) between noblemen and royal towns; the contract admitted that burghers had some political rights in matters which affected them and allowed them to purchase property registered in the land register; as regards the economic level – active noblemen had long been interested in the possibility of earning money by running business on their own – since the discussion on restricting the expansion of beer production outside royal towns was postponed, the "mile privilege" (that protected business in towns) was practically cancelled. Polička citizens were soon very upset when the owner of Svojanov Castle forbade his serfs to buy Polička beer and to visit municipal markets. Subsequently other noblemen made similar decisions.

Sanctions imposed on the town by Ferdinand I in 1547 as a punishment for the town's participation in the anti-Habsburg re-

sistance movement adversely influenced the town development. Royal towns were again considered royal property and were only allowed to participate in the diet if the ruler allowed them (i.e. this applied to envoys from Polička as well); the town had to submit all its army and privileges (which were subsequently returned), to pay a fine of 1000 threescores of Meissen groschen, and as newly established, burghers had to also pay a so called "hereditary keg fee" (a tax on produced beer), plus the municipality had to hand in all its land property, i.e. the villages of Sádek, Kamenec, Oldřiš, Borová, Telcí, Modřec, Nedvězí, Trhonice, Sedlště and Makov, and individual homesteads in Korouhev, Rybná, Široký Důl, Radiměř and Újezdec. The town was allowed to buy the property back only in 1558. The establishment of the office of a royal reeve was a significant change in the system of municipal administration of punished towns. Such an officer was expressly documented in Polička only in 1552, however, we can assume that the senior councillor Pavel Vachač, who disappeared from Polička town council after the instruction for royal reeves was issued in 1548, had held the office before 1552. The royal reeve checked the town council and he also supervised the confiscated land property and escheat from which the yields were to be transferred to the royal treasury. Worth mentioning is the obligation imposed at the end of January 1548 to address appeals from the municipal court to the appellate court, a royal institution residing in the Prague Castle. This measure restricted the autonomy of municipal administration since higher court institutions were eliminated from the decision making process.

The time of the "long" 16th century brought about several destructive fires – especially the ones in 1523 and 1613 very adversely influenced further development of the town which was, in addition to that, burdened by more and more tax obligations from the second half of the century. Therefore, in the early 17th century Polička was a small royal town with a low cultural and economic potential; we assume that most citizens were non-Catholics, mostly Lutherans. In the second half of the 16th century drapery temporarily flourished in the town; produced goods were sold even in faraway places. During this prosperous time the cemetery Church of St. Michael Archangel in the Lower Suburb was built in 1572–1576; the building had Gothic features on the outside and Renaissance features inside; a Renaissance belfry was built nearby in the early 17th century. From activities of the musical brotherhood, whose members sang in Czech during divine services from 1525, only an illuminated Polička hymn book from 1545–1546 has survived. Polička School was of low quality as documented by period reports.

At the beginning of the **Thirty Years' War (1618–1648)** Polička – damaged by a fire – encountered a number of problems. These deteriorated even further during the Habsburg uprising (1618–1620) when Polička provided estates army troops with finance, food and military forces. Soon afterwards Polička was punished for that by confiscation of its land property which was only returned to the town in 1628 when violent re-Catholicization of local citizens was completed. As documented by further development, the non-Catholic belief survived in the Polička region to a certain degree in spite of duress. Polička had practically zero political influence among other municipalities.

Polička continuously suffered from financial and in-kind levies and other obligations which were imposed on the town not only by the emperor but also enemy armies which passed through the town during wars. According to testimony of a municipal scribe the town hid in the ground various significant municipal documents at several places in the surroundings in the course of time since citizens were afraid of Swedes and their possible extortion; unfortunately the documents were seriously damaged due to unfavourable conditions (mostly humidity). Period reports from war years talk about a damaged poor town with low population. Polička serfs were also affected by this difficult situation; the town, as their master, even released them from the obligation to pay interest after 1641.

Worth mentioning is the great tenacity of Polička burghers who renewed their rights in town's villages and fully utilized the potential of their subjects during post-war years. Like noblemen, Polička burghers burdened their serfs with numerous obligations, especially with statute labour. That was the reason why Polička's municipal economy was fully interconnected with the economy of municipal estate. Therefore, Polička's serfs ranked among those who strove for the improvement of their situation in 1680. However, the town itself was experiencing an unseen boom which is usually described as the "golden age" of the town. The town became very rich and settled its debts which burdened a number of other royal towns. In spite of that Polička was listed among 19 unprivileged royal towns in the early 18th century in which a decision was made to separate the management of municipal economy from the local administration. These changes also included the establishment of a municipal brewery whose income was to settle tax obligations of 113 burghers who had the right to brew beer. It was them who experienced the "golden age" since numerous town citizens, most of whom were of Czech nationality, were poor. Beside the brewery, the town also ran farms and forests. An economic instruction from 1719 documenting their operation has survived; serfs' order which preceded the aforementioned instruction has been in existence as well.

Prosperity and wealth of the town, or specifically of its top representatives, was reflected in the **impressive look of the town which gradually gained Baroque features**. Worth mentioning was the construction of the new dean's residence (1713), a large plague column (1727), two renovated fountains and a spectacular two-storey Polička Town-Hall (1733–1743), the cost of which equaled the financial means incurred in the splendid statue dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Between 1770–1774 an ossuary was built in a cemetery in the suburb. In such an inspiring cultural environment local artists had a chance to present their talents; worth mentioning is Polička native Dominik Aulíček (1734–1803) who started his career in Pacák's workshop in Litomyšl and subsequently worked in a number of places all over Europe. Pacák's work-

shop created most Baroque decorations in the town. A negative feature that accompanied the wellbeing of Polička burghers was the apparent deterioration of manners not only in children but also in adults many of whom were addicted to alcohol. This is documented by various private records and chronicles of which we shall mention at least the chronicle of tailor Tomáš Šýkora.

Guilds remained a support system for Polička crafts and trade even in the 18th century. Butchers had a leading position. Weavers and spinners formed a numerous group, especially in suburbs where they ranked among the poorest citizens of the town. Their yarn and canvases were purchased by resellers and merchants from Moravia, especially by Jews. The weavers' guild resented these practices. While in the early 18th century guilds were supported by state authorities, this policy changed in the course of time. In consequence of the loss of Silesian canvas production and due to ongoing wars, production had to grow. An order from 1762 granted people from Polička suburbs rights of burghers which allowed them freely perform their business or crafts. Since citizens of the inner town enjoyed a number of significant advantages, suburb citizens filed their first application for an improvement of their status in 1767. However, they failed to succeed. Their difficult situation was even deteriorated by famine in 1771–1772; most of the victims came from Polička suburbs and villages.

The life of Polička citizens was also influenced by **Maria Theresia's reformatory effort**. In 1765 Polička lost the high justice and had to address their matters in the regional capital of Chrudim. In 1771 houses were first assigned numbers. Polička school system was reformed. The so called 'Raabization' – a reform by means of which seignorial estates were distributed among farmers – significantly influenced the town and its surroundings. Like in other royal towns and estates, the land formerly owned by municipal farms was allocated to serfs in the form of emphyteusis in order to increase farming efficiency and to support the population growth. Statute labour was cancelled for those who were allocated land and in exchange for that they were obliged to submit regular fees. In consequence of these significant changes several settlements were established near Polička; these settlements increased the number of villages whose history reached back to the late 17th century. Near Borová the settlements of Bukovina, Cerkýdý, Svatá Kateřina and Mrhov were established, near Pustá Rybná the hamlets of Betlém, Damašek, Kobylí, Světy and Blatina were founded and near Polička it was Jelinek, and near the village of Telcí the hamlet of Landráty was established.

Town administration was performed by regulated town council from 1788 that substituted burghers' self-government. The municipal trivial school changed into a four-grade main school in 1789. In the 1780s Polička became the centre of a significant area where flax was grown and weaving trade flourished. 14 canvas traders and 1 cotton goods trader resided in the town in 1828; in 1835 there were 8 linen goods traders and 7 cotton ware traders. Due to road construction between 1816–1837 Polička was better connected with surrounding towns. Polička, as a feudal lord, enjoyed a sufficient income and it also had a share in graphite mining in the Svojanov region. In addition to that the town earned a significant amount of money by selling wood from municipal forests after a gale in 1834. As a result of that the look of the town (paving, sewage system) improved. The adverse aspect of the upgrade of town streets was the liquidation of all town gates (1836–1843). Fortunately the fortification walls were not pulled down. The redevelopment of former army barracks into a classicist building of boys' school in 1840–1841 was the most significant building project.

In 1789 there were 439 houses in Polička, in 1811 the number of houses was 560 (and 2823 citizens) and in 1843 there were 647 houses (and 3923 citizens). However, if we compare the size of the developed territory in the 1st military mapping (1783) and in the map of stable cadastre (1839), we can find out that it has not changed much. The difference resulted from **densification of the existing suburbs and from completion of a ring of small structures outside the fortification walls**. The charming picture of the town was completely destroyed by a **great fire in 1845**. Only four houses survived in the town centre. A moderate classicist renovation followed the fire. Houses were equipped with richly carved classicist house gates and doors. The fire significantly damaged the Gothic dean church whose remains were pulled down and replaced with a neo-Gothic structure between 1853–1865.

In 1850 Polička became not only a self-administered municipality, but also the seat of a district court; from 1855 a combined district authority operated in the town and in 1868 a district administrative office was established in Polička. In the late 19th century there was no building development in the town since the town had no railway. The only large industrial factory was a brewery situated south-west of Synský pond. At the same time a small Evangelical and Jewish community developed in the town. A district hospital was built in a suburb between 1889–1891. In 1890 musical composer Bohuslav Martinů († 1959), the town's most famous native, was born in Polička.

Further development of the town was only stimulated by the construction of a local railway in 1896–1897 which ran along the northern edge of the town where a train station was also built; various industrial plants (a weaving mill, a sawmill etc.) were later on concentrated around the train station. The number of houses and citizens started growing again after a long time. In 1898 a water distribution system was built in the town, in 1910 a municipal power plant was established, and between 1911–1916 streets were newly paved. At the turn of the 20th century a monumental neo-Renaissance building of teachers' college (later on grammar school) was built; the school was one of the first buildings in a new, conceptually designed representative neighbourhood south of the historic centre behind Synský pond which was to counterbalance the northern industrial neighbourhood. The park was established between the neighbourhood and the town.

In 1913 Vladimír Zákrejs created a remarkable development plan for a new neighbourhood, however, its implementation was delayed due to the 1st World War.

The town grew fairly evenly on all sides during the inter-war period. The construction of a military ammunition factory in forests behind the town in 1922 was a significant project in the context of the town development. The connection of rural and suburban parts of both suburbs was completed. A remarkable new set of buildings comprising Masaryk's schools (1925–1928), an evangelical church (1936–1937), apartment houses owned by the town (1922–1924) and the district authority building (1929–1936) grew along the southern side of the pond. Nearby there is another significant impressive building – the theatre (Tyl's House, 1924–1929). The interwar period fortunately hardly influenced the historic look of the inner town where some facades were renewed and several new buildings were constructed. The most significant of them was the Polička Savings Bank inside the fortification walls built in 1936–1937.

In harmony with the text of the Munich Treaty the purely Czech town of Polička was occupied by the German army on 10th October 1938 and was seriously endangered by annexation by Nazi Germany. The final border of occupied territory was determined on 21st November 1938 and Polička returned to resized Czechoslovakia, which became the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia on 15th March 1939. In 1940 the Polička district was cancelled (one third of it had been occupied in 1938) and the municipal administration was dissolved as well. Girls' schools from Berlin and Essen and a detention camp for children evacuated from Berlin were relocated to Polička, to protect children from air-raids, Jews fell victims to the Holocaust.

After the 2nd World War the number of citizens decreased by 1300 since some people moved away from the town to emptied German villages in the district and in other border regions. After Communists took over control of the state in 1948 the importance of the ammunition factory increased and a new well-designed housing estate was built for its employees; the housing adjoined the inter-war neighbourhood. In the 1960s and later on monotonous prefabricated housing estates and rarely also terraced houses were built in the town. The industrial zone by the train station was growing. The built-up area of the town expanded significantly. The historic centre was fortunately not subject to inappropriate interventions.

In 1990 the town was listed as a municipal heritage zone which provided protection of the historic centre of the town. Dominant buildings in the town as well as town houses have been carefully repaired during recent decades. Polička has been growing since the 1990s. The number of citizens reached the historic maximum in 2001 (8669 citizens). New apartment buildings and especially new detached houses grew especially on the south-eastern edge of the town and in the Horní Suburb. In addition to that various new public facilities were built and the northern industrial zone has been extended.