



Currently part of the Region of South Bohemia, the town of Slavonice is situated on the border of Bohemia, Moravia and Austria on the eastern edge of the Bohemian Paradise natural park, 519 meters above sea level. Slavonice is a town of culture that is renowned for its well-preserved renaissance architecture.

The history of Slavonice cannot be separated from the historical transformations of the Bohemian – Moravian – Austrian borderland. It all began with roads: a significant connection between Prague and Vienna leading across Jindřichův Hradec, and the route from Brno to České Budějovice and further to Passau. At the join of these roads, Slavonice settlement grew up in the 12th century. According to recent research it was situated at the site of the present parish church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.

Somewhere in the middle of the 13th century, the original Slavic population was expelled by German colonizers; German population then predominated in Slavonice until 1945. The first written reference to Slavonice comes from the year 1260, from a document of Vicar from Trnava, which mentions a parson Werner from Slavonice as a witness. It is not known who owned Slavonice at that time, whether



the country-lords or the Lords of Hradec. In a reference from 1298, Slavonice was already described as a market town. The chapel of Corpus Christi is mentioned in 1296 for the first time.

As a town, Slavonice are listed in extant documents from 1354 onward, when it also became the subject of dividing of property among the Lords of Hradec. During the 14th century Slavonice were becoming the most important town in the south-western Moravia, and trade and crafts, especially the drapers' guild, went through massive development.

Slavonice weren't saved from the Hussite wartime; the Chapel of Corpus Christi and a nearby village of Pfaffenschlag were burned out.

Meanwhile, however, nothing stood in the way of the development of the town, which during the 15th century gained many other township and market licenses.

The ascension of the Habsburg dynasty on the Czech throne brought another source of wealth to the town and its inhabitants.



In 1526 a post office station was established to swap horses on the postal road Prague – Vienna, which was later, in 1560, extended by a regular wagon connection. At the next splitting of possession among the Lords of Hradec, Slavonice and Telč became the property of Zacharias from Hradec, who partook significantly in the prosperity of the town. The most apparent expression of the wealth of the town and its inhabitants were the numerous building activities. Even Italian and Flemish builders, workers and artists, contributed to the renaissance reconstructions of the burghers' houses. At the same time, reformation affected the so far Catholic settlement. Lutherans began to use the re-established Church of Corpus Christi for their services; at that time it was consecrated to the Holy Spirit.

During the 30 - Years War, the town often fell victim to the passing-through of the imperial army and in 1645 even the Swedes. The end of the wars didn't bring further development and the economic stagnation continued ever after the death of Zacharias from Hradec; supported by the limitation of trade and diseases. After the Slavata dynasty, the new owners became the Liechtenstein –



Castelcorn dynasty. The gradual decline climaxed in the removal of the postal route to Znojmo and Jihlava in 1750. The community was becoming poor and Slavonice turned into a town on the fringe.

From the second half of the 19th century, Slavonice once again became a centre of the textile industry, as several branch offices of Viennese textile companies, including new weavers', dye-houses and hosieries were established there. The year 1902 brought railway to Slavonice, year later it was extended to Austria. Today there is a bike trail, called Die Thayarunde.

The reaction of a predominantly German town to the founding of Czechoslovakia in 1918 was an effort to annex to Austria; the resistance climaxed in armed conflicts which had to be suppressed by the Czechoslovakian Army. German nationalist tendencies continued throughout the 1930's. After the Munich Diktat in September 1938, the whole judicial district Slavonice was incorporated by Waidhofen in Lower-Austria. During the war the town was abandoned by numerous Czech inhabitants, and forcibly also by the Jewish people. Slavonice was liberated on May 9, 1945 by the Red Army. Within one month, the liberation was followed

