

6 | DEJVICE – SHOWCASE OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC

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The first mention of Dejvice dates back to 1088, when the village was registered as the property of the Vyšehrad Chapter (Pražská šestka, 2007). Today's Dejvice is not only the heart of the Prague 6 district, but also a centre of all-Prague significance. It is the seat of a number of public institutions – including universities, ministries, embassies and the military command. The list of socio-geographical literature, which deals directly with Dejvice itself, is surprisingly not so long, despite the unquestionable historical significance and architectural and urban value of the district. Several student theses have been written about it, for example Procházková (2014) focused on the issue of further development of Vítězné square.

Dejvice, together with a number of other municipalities, became part of Greater Prague in 1922, from which we can date its golden era of development. Central Dejvice around Vítězné square grew as a compact concentric unit together with part of neighbouring Bubeneč according to the generous urban plan by Antonín Engel, when it was connected to older areas from the east (Borovička, Hrůza, 1983; Maier, Hexner, Kibic, 1998). This part is characterised by a large proportion of monumental office buildings (see Figure 6.1), once serving the needs of the young republic, and block-organised high-quality tenement houses. At the same time, the western part of Dejvice developed towards Horní Šárka, which, due to its landscape, was more suitable for individual house construction. By the end of the Second World War, most of Hanspaulka's villas and terraced houses were already standing. A very specific chapter of the interwar period for Dejvice was the experimental functionalist colony Baba, built at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s on the model of the Stuttgart Weinssehof as an example of the modernist conception of future living (Lukeš, 2013). Also notable was the so-called official's colony from the 1920s close to Vítězné square, which gave way to further construction (e. g. Hotel Diplomat). On the other hand, the rapid construction boom did not affect the surroundings of the Šárecký potok from Jenerálka to Podbaba so much, thus the original rural character of development was mostly preserved there.

The Second World War, and especially the subsequent onset of the communist regime, meant for Dejvice (as well as for other districts of the inner city) a slowdown in rapid development. The communist government first dampened investment in Prague as a whole at the expense of the expansion of heavy industry centres, and later, when the development of the capital became a priority again, focused primarily on the construction of large housing estates of the outer city (Musil, 1987; Ouředníček, Špačková, Pospíšilová, 2018). Dejvice continued to grow,

but this period did not change its face so fundamentally – rather it followed the same face of previous development. Internacionál Hotel and its surroundings from the 1950s became a symbol of Prague's not very common socialist realism. The development of Hanspaulka was gradually supplemented by smaller collective housing projects, and since the 1960s Evropská třída has also been developing, which has become more important with the growth of housing estates to the west, and the university campus. The completion of the housing estate in Baba from the 1970s became the only larger and compact residential complex from the time of socialism in Dejvice. Due to its character, the housing estate is relatively sensitive to the surroundings, and in addition to six low-rise apartment buildings, it consists mainly of terraced houses.



Figure 6.1: *Vítězné náměstí [Victory square] in 1945.*

Source: *fotohistorie.cz (2020).*



Figure 6.2: Administrative complex PPF Gate on Evropská street.

Photo: Adam Klsák (2020).

The fall of the communist regime was a stimulus for the development of Dejvice due to its return of freedoms and the re-integration of the city into global networks. The strategic location of the city axis brought further new development on Evropská street, where a larger number of administrative and commercial buildings were built (Figure 6.2). Some of the constructions had to give way to the intentions of the new investors, among them, for example, the Dejvice telephone exchange or the controversial Hotel Praha. The developers used ideal dispositions of the Šárka Valley for the construction of luxury areas of family houses and a completely new compact complex of apartment buildings was built on the site of the former malt house in Podbaba.

Development of the number of inhabitants, houses and apartments

Dejvice's most dynamic development is intrinsically linked with the period of the First Republic, as demonstrated by statistics of population and housing. As late as 1921, there were only 354 houses in Dejvice, and this number grew to more than 1,300 at the next census in 1930 (see the graph of population development in the map sheet). Likewise, there was a sudden increase in the population between those years, from 10,000 to 24,000. The significant growth of Dejvice lasted until the 1960s, when the district had historically the largest population - more than 35,000. Although new housing construction continued in the following decades (for example, the construction of the housing estate in Baba in the 1970s)

and the number of houses increased, the population has been steadily declining since the 1970s. The situation was similar in the other neighbourhoods of the inner city as there was a massive out-migration of people to the newly built large housing estates on the city's outskirts (Špačková, Pospíšilová, Ouředníček, 2016). Population decline, however, stopped after 2000 and there has even been an increase in the number of inhabitants living in Dejvice. This is connected with the new housing construction (housing complex in Podbaba and other smaller projects in Hanspaulka and Šárka valley) and also with general reurbanisation tendencies as the interest in living in the inner city is revived (Haase et al., 2017).

Development of the social environment and age structure

Since its greatest development - the 1920s - Dejvice has been a historically socially strong neighbourhood. This is illustrated by the fact that in terms of social status Dejvice in 1921 ranked among the districts with the highest proportion of white-collar apartments in the total number of rented dwellings (Špačková, Nemeškal, 2015). Compared to industrial districts, a higher proportion of the working-class population has never lived here. Moschelesová (1937) and Král (1946) equally refer to Dejvice as a socially strong district of Prague. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify distinct parts of the neighbourhood. These are especially evident when comparing the average prices of building plots in 1939, which differed greatly in different parts of the district (see the map).

The residential buildings from the 1920s and 1930s in the vicinity of today's Vítězné square belonged to the socially strong localities. They were built largely for civil servants and officials who worked in the newly constructed buildings of public institutions. In addition to the still-standing buildings, there was also an already-demolished so-called official's colony from the early 1920s (near today's Evropská street). This consisted of standardised small-apartment houses, which represented relatively above-standard housing at that time in contrast to the slum colonies in other parts of Prague (Praha neznámá, 2020). Also, prices of building plots were by far the largest in these localities and belonged among the most expensive in Prague. This was the case, for example, of district Dejvická (3 790 CZK/m²) or district U úřednické kolonie (3 093 CZK/m²).

During this period, villa quarters arose on relatively cheaper land on the slope at Hanspaulka (the price of building land in Hanspaulka was 570 CZK/m²) and the Baba settlement was built in the 1930s (the price in district Baba was 392 CZK/m²). The Baba settlement was built mostly by representatives of the (upper) middle class as evidenced by the list of professions of the builders - doctors, employees and directors of public institutions, artists, scientists, entrepreneurs, and others (Templ, 2000). It is interesting that the villa quarters faced at the time of construction similar problems as today's suburbs, for example, the lack of civic amenities and infrastructure or inadequate transport links (Houšková, 2006).

Both types of localities retained their character even during the socialist period, as can be seen from the statistics of the educational and social structure of the population in 1970 (see map for 1970). In addition, new localities of higher social status were built during the socialist period - apartment houses in the style of socialist realism near the Internacionál Hotel, as well as in selected places on Hanspaulka, and the panel housing estate in Baba (see Figure 6.3). The share of the population with secondary and tertiary education in these localities reached one of the highest values in Prague: districts Baba (54 percent), Hanspaulka (47 percent) and U Internacionálu (46 percent).

On the other hand, there were also localities of lower socio-economic status in the Dejvice neighbourhood. These were (i) places that continued to maintain their rural character in the Šárka valley, in Jenerálka and in Hanspaulka before the construction of villas and (ii) a part of the district in Podbaba where the malt house was operated until the early 1990s. Building plots in all these localities were significantly cheaper in the 1930s (the price in district Jenerálka was 85 CZK/m², in Dolní and Horní Šárka 120 CZK/m² and in Šárecké údolí 130 CZK/m²; see map 1930). Also, a higher proportion of workers among employees and a low share of secondary and university educated (only 12 percent in district Jenerálka or 18 percent in Dolní and Horní Šárka) were recorded in census 1970. However, it should be noted that only 5 percent of the population of Dejvice lived in areas with low socio-economic status as early as 1970.

In the post-socialist period, there were changes that meant further strengthening of the social status of the Dejvice neighbourhood. Some localities acquired an exclusive character (residential areas in Hanspaulka and Baba), which was reflected in the very high prices of newly built and existing properties (including apartments in prefabricated panel houses in Baba). Localities with lower socio-economic status have been disappearing as a consequence of development in the Šárka Valley – the existing houses were reconstructed, and new housing construction took place on vacant land. To this day, however, these places retain a certain rural and quieter character, different from the urban residential areas "on the hill." In Podbaba, a complex of new apartment buildings was built on the site of the former malt house, to which mostly socially strong residents moved. The emergence of gated communities, i.e. upper-class localities separated physically and socially from the neighbouring areas, is a new phenomenon. Brabec identified three gated communities in Dejvice (Dubový Mlýn, Heřmanův dvůr and Šárka Valley, Brabec, 2009).

All these processes are reflected in the changing population structure. Dejvice belongs to the districts with an excellent educational structure in the long-term. In 1980, local population demonstrated the best educational structure among all cadastres in Prague as measured by the average number of years of schooling (Špačková, Nemeškal, 2015). Although the spatial pattern in Dejvice neighbourhood is relatively stable, it seems that the differences in educational attainment between localities have been reducing (see map of education for

2011). We can compare, for example, the share of the population with secondary and tertiary education in 2011 in urban districts, which showed the highest and lowest values in 1970: in districts Baba (79 %) or Hanspaulka (74 percent) on the one hand, and Jenerálka (42 percent) and Dolní and Horní Šárka (62 percent) on the other hand.

Přidalová and Ouředníček (2017) consider Dejvice to be a "good address" and they point out the growth in the number of foreigners associated with this status. Dejvice is a traditional location of embassies of foreign states and there are also several international schools here or in the wider area. A total of 3,500 thousand foreigners lived here in 2018. Two thirds of them lived in tenement houses around Vítězné square, Jugoslávských partyzánů street and in Podbaba (especially districts Dejvická, Vozovna Podbaba or U Internacionálu). The foreign population in these areas mainly included Russians, Ukrainians and Slovaks. However, the composition of foreigners living in villa quarters (especially Hanspaulka) was different: mainly nationals of the European Union, such as Bulgarians, Germans, Italians, and Slovaks, lived there.



Figure 6.3: Socialist panel housing estate and terraced houses "Na Babě".
Photo: Adam Klsák (2020).

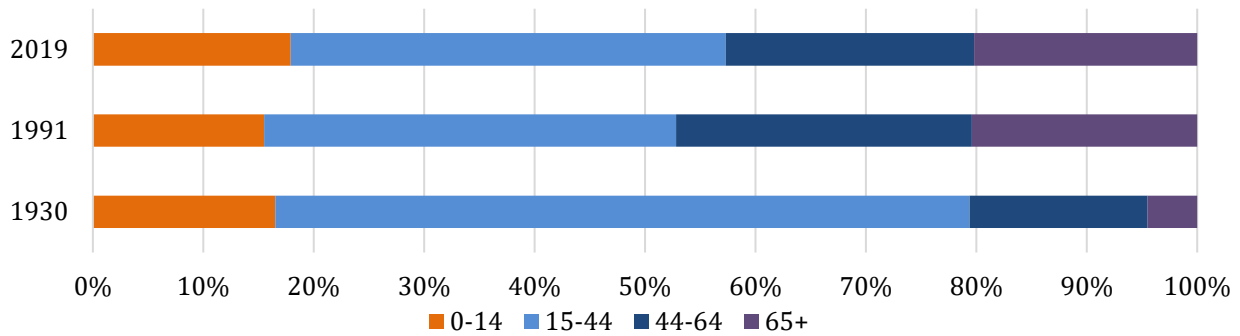


Figure 6.4: Age structure changes of the population in Dejvice.

Source: CZSO, 2020; SLDB, 1930; 1991.

Besides the socio-economic status, life in the district is affected by the age composition of inhabitants. The age structure of the inhabitants of Dejvice in 1930 (see Figure 6.4) was typical for dynamically developing localities. Mainly people of a young productive age moved into the newly built flats. Compared to the following periods, the proportion of young adults (especially aged between 15 and 44) was extremely high: they accounted for almost two thirds (63 percent) of the total population. On the contrary, very few seniors lived in Dejvice (only 5 percent).

In the socialist period, the population gradually aged and, as in many other inner-city neighbourhoods, many young families with children moved to newly built panel housing estates on the city outskirts (Špačková, Pospíšilová, Ouředníček, 2016). In 1991, seniors made up a fifth of the population and many of them lived in pre-war housing and houses built in the 1950s. However, the intensity of population aging was mitigated by new housing construction in several localities and younger age groups also remained represented in the population. Given the principles of socialist housing policy, it can be assumed that a significant part of young inhabitants lived in newly built flats in Baba in the 1970s and other (panel) apartment buildings.

At present, the age composition of the population is similar to the structure of the entire Prague population. Residents of a young productive age (30-49 years) are more strongly represented, although their share is not as high as in other inner-city neighbourhoods (e. g. Vinohrady, Karlín, Smíchov). However, in contrast to the time of the rapid development of Dejvice during the 1920s and 1930s, seniors are significantly more represented in the population.

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