EXCAVATION IN THE FOREST NURSERY AT POHANSKO

The area designated after a forest nursery which was in operation on the site until 1974 was excavated in a total of 17 campaigns between 1961–1990 (Fig. 17). The digging did not take place every year. In 1961, the work involved just initial trial trenches. Large-scale excavation was not carried out until 1968/69. The standard of the research in those years was influenced by adverse climatic and socio-political conditions. Systematic excavation could not be realized there until 1974 when the forest nursery was closed and after the forest in the eastern half of the stronghold was cut down in 1979. In the final years of the excavation (1988–1990) the digging stopped at the edge of the newly

Fig. 17. Břeclav-Pohansko. The Forest Nursery. Excavation campaigns.
planted trees. After the start of the systematic work on the Forest Nurs-
ery site it was interrupted for organizational and financial reasons in
the years 1977, 1980 and 1983. The whole Great Moravian agglomera-
tion under investigation was delineated, on the southern and eastern
side, by a rampart, the excavation trenches of which—made in 1962,
1965, 1966 and 1975—were a continuation of the excavation in the
Forest Nursery.

The investigated area in the Forest Nursery amounts to about 1.9 ha.
The whole excavation was located within the basic square sector B
(500 × 500 m), set out together with the other sectors inside the area of
the stronghold in 1959.1 The sector was divided into a grid of 5 × 5 m
squares. During the excavations in the Forest Nursery a total of 762
squares were examined.

The top soil was first removed by heavy machinery and then, from
about twenty centimetres above the subsoil, it was done manually. In
this way the upper, dark humus layer 40 to 80 cm thick was scraped
down to the light coloured sterile subbase. Conspicuous stone or
daub destructions or concentrations of finds in the top soil were, if
captured, prepared and documented. Their identification was made
difficult by the fact that the forest nursery, after which the excava-
tion area is named, taking up approximately 2/3 of the whole excava-
tion, was previously tilled and ploughed and by the deployment of
heavy machinery itself. After the exposing of the subbase the fill in the
sunken-floor settlement features, grave pits and post holes was care-
fully scooped and any destructions, substructions or concentrations of
finds inside the dug up trenches were prepared and documented.

The basic find unit, documented either by a drawing or in writing
or photographically, was one feature or one grave. Throughout the
investigation in the Forest Nursery they were continually numbered
by particular numerical sequences. Occasionally, it was found from
the situation in the field that a settlement feature, initially thought
to be one whole, had to be divided into multiple independent parts.
In this case the original numerical feature identifier was extended by
an alphabetical suffix (e.g. 111a, 111b, 111c, 111d). In the course of
the investigation some (not all) above-ground poshole structures were
randomly designated by an identifier from the numerical sequence
of the sunken-floor settlement features (e.g. 102, 121, 260, 272). For the pur-

1 Kalousek (1971), 7.