

The Fortification of Pohansko by Břeclav

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Abstract

The fortifications are among the best-known and most frequently discussed elements of the Greater Moravian phase of the Pohansko hill fort, near Břeclav. The importance of the fortifications lies in those of their properties that anchor the settlement in time and space. They define the inhabited area, as well as the beginning and the end of the viability of the location. They served for protection, defense and demarcation in relation to the surrounding world. The fortifications of the central area with the Magnate Court, a church and a craftsmen's area were externally reinforced and separated off. Information on the Pohansko fortifications has been gathered since the very beginning of research into the area, and is in constant progress.

Research into the fortifications of Pohansko, near Břeclav, started in September 1958. Although initially derived from only a small-scale surface probe, first results made it obvious that the remnants concealed evidence of more complex constructions and traces of their destruction (log of the first visit to the site). The first major research into the fortifications, employing the results of the probe, began in 1961 and continued until 1963. Information provided by F. Kalousek, soon published, established that the Greater Moravian fort was a simple combined construction made of wood, stone and clay¹. Close collaboration with geologists (Prof. Štelcl from the Science Faculty of Brno University) revealed that construction of the fortifications had been highly demanding in terms of the transport of material, acquired from distant locations².

Further research was to follow; however, the archaeologists' attention shifted to the north-east section of the central fortified area, between the "Tree nursery" [Lesní školka] and the North Outer Bailey. A series of excavations at this location partially amended the accepted view on the construction of the fort and its dimensions. A partial analysis of outcomes at this stage, carried out by B. Dostál in 1979, went on to unify opinion concerning the construction of the Pohansko fort for a longer period of time, although it did not exhaust all the information gathered over the course of twenty years³.

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¹ Kalousek, F., *Velkomoravská pevnost Pohansko u Břeclavě*, in *Almanach Velká Morava*. 1965: Brno. p. 45–60.

² Štelcl, J., *Kamenné památky velkomoravského Pohanska. Petrografický průvodce po archeologických kamenných památkách Pohanska*. 1971, Mikulov.

³ Dostál, B., *K opevnění hradiska Břeclavi-Pohanska*. Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské university, 1979. **E 24**: p. 73-93.