

HEADS OF THROWING SPEARS I – VI C FROM THE SHUMEN REGION

STANIMIR STOYCHEV

The spear is a close and middle range weapon, and it consists of a metal (stone or bone) head and a wooden shaft. It is used for direct stabbing or close-range throwing. Due to their elementary production and great efficiency, spears are amongst the most widespread middle and close-range offensive weapons not only in the Antiquity. Of all finds connected with armaments, the spearheads are distinguished for greatest diversity of shapes. (The shape of the head depends on the way of usage and the defensive equipment of the enemy.)

According to their usage spears could be divided into two large groups:

1. Close fight spears
2. Throwing spears

The subject of this announcement is a group of light throwing spears (javelins) used in I – VI c. in the territory of the Shumen region. They were discovered in fortresses and settlements from that period*. The javelin is a throwing spear with a short head 0.12 – 0.25m with triangular or quadrangular section and average weight 40 – 80 gr. The proportion between the sleeve and the head is approximately 1 : 1, and most of the spears do not have rivet openings on the sleeves.

Javelins are effective weapons for offensive and defensive fight at close and middle distances not only for the infantry, but for the cavalry too. Apart from throwing by hand, javelins could be thrown by projectiles. Ancient authors describe the usage of throwing spears by infantry and cavalry during offensive and defensive fight (Flavii Book 2 / 2, 10, 14, 17; Book 3 / 4, 14, 20, 29, 44).

36 throwing spears of that kind are kept in the Regional Museum of History – Shumen. They could be divided into a couple of groups according to the section of the head. The large number of throwing spearheads discovered in the Shumen region suggests that this type of throwing spears were widespread in II – VI c. The lack of exact information about the place where they were found impedes from making a map with precise spreading.

Spearheads with triangular section

Prolonged pyramidal head with triangular section with nibs in the lower part.

The proportion of the sleeve and the head is 1 : 1.

The group is represented by two specimens – inv. № 12247 and 12248 with unknown place of finding. Size: total length 16.5 cm, length of the head 7.9 – 8.9 cm, section of the head 1.4 – 1.1 cm, diameter of the sleeve 1.6 cm. Weight 80 gr (Plate I / 1,2)

Similar spearheads were discovered in: “Kaleto” area, the village of Cherny Osum, Troyan District (the authors of the article define them incorrectly as “pilum” spearheads) (Христов/ Христова 2004, 73, fig. 9, 11), warehouse of the rampart in Carleon, Wales dated from III c. (Bishop 1989, 55, pl. 41 / 7), Dacia, dated from II – III c. (Bichir 1984, 60, pl. LVIII / 8)

Spearheads with quadrangular section

This is the largest group. It could be split in three groups according to the shape.

1. Spearheads with quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid.

Prolonged pyramidal head with evident border and gudgeon with relief rings between the head and the sleeve. The group is represented by 6 spearheads. Size: total length 12.0 - 18.0 cm, length of the head 7.9 – 10.0 cm, section of the head 1.4 – 1.1 cm, diameter of the sleeve 1.6 cm. Weight from 50 to 80 gr (Plate I/ 3-8)

2. Spearheads with quadrangular section, prolonged pyramidal head with evident border between the head and the sleeve. Specimens with a relief ring on the gudgeon are common. Size: total length 12.0 – 18.8 cm, length of the head from 6.3 to 10.5 cm, section of the head from 0.8 x 0.8 to 1.0 x 1.0 cm, diameter of the sleeve from 1.4 to 1.7 cm. Weight from 40 to 80 gr. (Plate I/ 9-16) The group is represented by 8 specimens. Similar spearheads are found: during archaeological works in villa rustica near the village of Mogilets, Turgovishte region, room №1 in the villa (Овчаров, 1969, с.31, 32, обр.7; Стойчев/ Иванов 2006), “Kaleto” area, the village of Cherny Osum, Troyan district (Хрис-

тов/ Христова, 2004, стр. 73, обр. 14), nowadays Serbia (Radman – Livaja 2004, 28, 60 – 61, tab. 5 / 17, tab. 22 / 102, 103, 114, 116), Germany (Haberstroh 2003, Abb. 23 / 4). That type of spearheads is found in the British provinces of the Roman empire, authors date it from III c. (Bishop 1989, 55, pl. 41/11)

3. Spearheads with quadrangular section, prolonged pyramidal head with no evident border between the head and the sleeve. Size: total length 12.0 – 22.0 cm, length of the head from 12.0 to 22.0 cm, section of the head from 1.0 x 1.0 to 0.8 x 0.8 cm, diameter of the sleeve from 1.5 to 1.8 cm. Weight from 40 to 80 gr. (Plate I / 17-19, Plate II / 18-36) The group consists of 20 specimens. Similar spearheads are discovered in nowadays Serbia (Radman–Livaja 2004, 60 - 61, tab. 23 / 109), Germany – the author dates them back to the Merovin age (Haberstroh 2003, Abb. 23 / 4), Catterick, England, dating from IV – V c. (Bishop 1989, 63, pl. 52 / 5)

* Most of the spearheads are donated or bought off, that is why the data about the places where they were found should be received with reservations.

CATALOGUE

Spearheads with triangular section

1. Inv. № 12247. Iron, prolonged pyramidal shape of the head, with triangular section of the head. There are ribs in the lower part. A rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.5 cm, length of the head – 8.9 cm, section of the head – 1.2 x 1.1 x 1.1 cm, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6 cm. Weight - 80 gr. Found in the Shumen region. Plate I / 1

2. Inv. № 12248. Iron, prolonged pyramidal shape of the head, with triangular section of the head. No rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.5 cm, length of the head – 7.9 cm, section of the head – 1.35 x 1.20 x 1.20 cm, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6 cm. Weight - 80 gr. Found in the Shumen region. Plate I / 2

Spearheads with quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid

3. Inv. № 8913. Iron, quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid, prolonged pyramidal head with evident border and gudgeon with relief rings between the head and the sleeve - 3. The gudgeon is with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 12.4 cm, length of the head – 5.6 cm, section

of the head – 0.9 x 0.9 cm, diameter of the sleeve 1.4 cm. Weight 50 gr. Found in the Shumen region. Plate I / 3

4. Inv. № 11874. Iron, quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid, prolonged pyramidal head with evident border and gudgeon with relief rings between the head and the sleeve - 2. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 12.9 cm, length of the head – 8.6 cm, section of the head – 0.9 x 1.0 cm. Weight - 50 gr. Found in the Shumen region. Plate I / 4

5. Inv. № 6493. Iron, quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid, prolonged pyramidal head with evident border between the head and the sleeve. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 13.2 cm, length of the head – 6.5 cm, section of the head – 0.9 x 0.9 cm, diameter of the sleeve – 1.4 cm. Weight - 50 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 5

6. Inv. № 6489. Iron, quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid, prolonged pyramidal head with evident border between the head and the sleeve. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 14.4, length of the head – 7.5, section of the head – 1.0 x 0.7, diameter of the sleeve – 1.3. Weight - 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 6.

7. Inv. № 3335. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 18.0, length of the head – 10.0, section of the head – 1.1 x 1.1, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight - 80 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 7 .

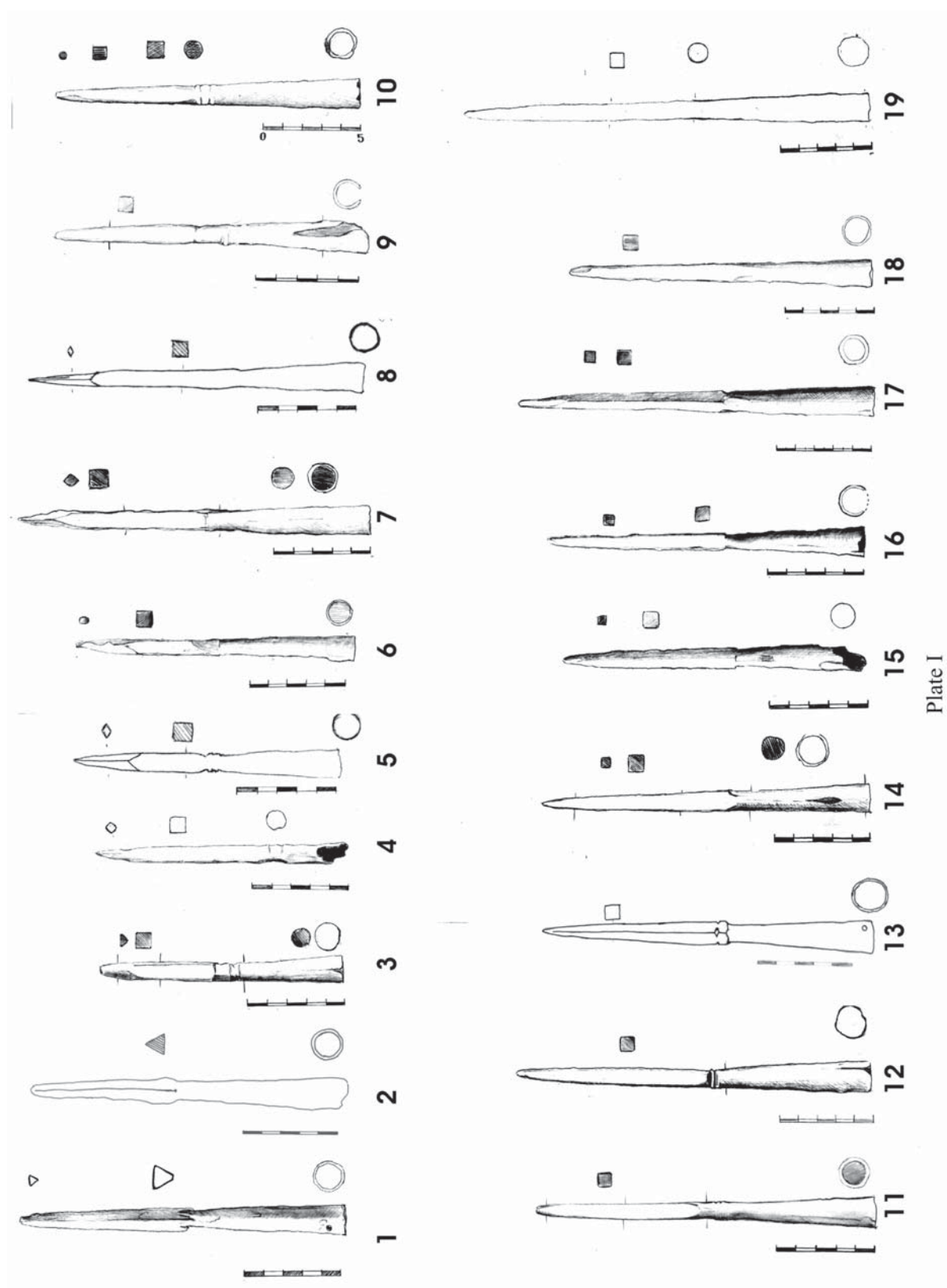
8. Inv. № 6494. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section, in the upper part turning into rhomboid. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 17.0, length of the head – 10.3, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.8 Weight - 80 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 8

Spearheads with quadrangular section

- With a relief ring on the gudgeon

9. Inv. № 6499. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. Relief rings on the gudgeon - 3. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.0, length of the head – 6.5, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 9

10. Inv. № 3080. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. Relief rings on the gudgeon - 3. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.4, length of the head – 6.3, section of the head – 0.9 x 0.9, diameter



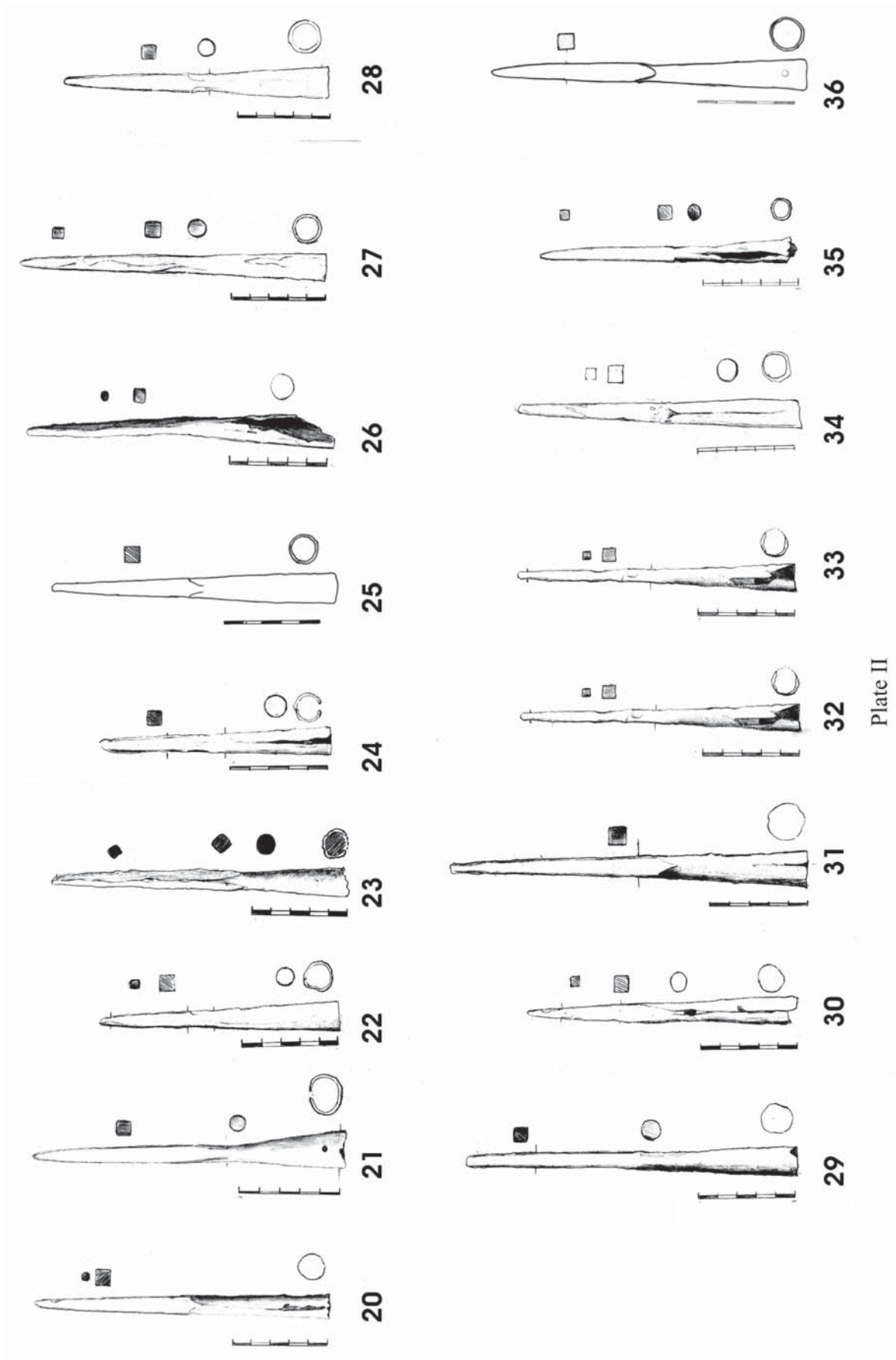


Plate II

of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 10 .

11. Inv. № 3379. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. Relief rings on the gudgeon – 3. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.9, length of the head – 8.0, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.4. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 11 .

12. Inv. № 3387. . Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section, 1 relief ring on the gudgeon. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 18.8, length of the head – 10.5, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 80 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 12 .

- With evident border between the head and the sleeve

13. Inv. № 13999. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is a rivet opening. Size: total length – 17.8, length of the head – 10.1, section of the head – 1.0 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.7. Weight – 75 gr. Found in Zhulud. Plate I / 13 .

14. Inv. № 13065. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.6, length of the head – 9.5, section of the head – 1.0 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 14. .

15. Inv. № 6500. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.3, length of the head – 8.8, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 15.

16. Inv. № 6487. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.2, length of the head – 9.0, section of the head – 1.1 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.65. Weight – 50 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate I / 16.

- Without evident border between the head and the sleeve

17. Inv. № 3078. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 18.5, length of the head – 10.7, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 17.

18. Inv. № 3079. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.8, length of the head – 9.5, section of the

head – 0.9 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 70 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 18.

19. Inv. № 3380. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 22.0, length of the head – 12.0, section of the head – 0.9 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 100 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate I / 19.

20. Inv. № 3381. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.4, length of the head – 8.7, section of the head – 0.9 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.2. Weight – 50 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate II / 20.

21. Inv. № 3382. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is a rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.3, length of the head – 9.0, section of the head – 0.9 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.9. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo the ruins. Plate II / 21.

22. Inv. № 3384. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 12.4, length of the head – 5.2, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate II / 22.

23. Inv. № 6319. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.4, length of the head – 9.6, section of the head – 1.0 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.45. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 23.

24. Inv. № 6488. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 11.8, length of the head – 4.8, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.45. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 24.

25. Inv. № 6493. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 14.3, length of the head – 7.0, section of the head – 1.0 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate II / 25.

26. Inv. № 6494. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.8, length of the head – 8.7, section of the head – 0.6 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.7. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 26.

27. Inv. № 6495. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 16.0, length of the head – 8.5, section of the head – 0.9 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.4. Weight – 60 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 27.

28. Inv. № 6496. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 14.3, length of the head – 7.0, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 28.

29. Inv. № 6498. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 17.1, length of the head – 9.5, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.8, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 80 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 29.

30. Inv. № 8551. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 13.3, length of the head – 7.3, section of the head – 0.95 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 30.

31. Inv. № 8912. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 18.0, length of the head – 10.5, section of the head – 1.0 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.8. Weight – 80 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 31.

32. Inv. № 11942. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 14.5, length of the head – 9.0, section of the head – 0.7 x 0.7, diameter of the sleeve – 1.4. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo. Plate II / 32.

33. Inv. № 11943. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 13.8, length of the head – 9.6, section of the head – 1.0 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 50 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate II / 33.

34. Inv. № 12262. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 14.5, length of the head – 7.4, section of the head – 0.9 x 1.0, diameter of the sleeve – 1.6. Weight – 60

gr. Found in the Shumen region. Plate II / 34.

35. Inv. № 12557. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 13.1, length of the head – 7.0, section of the head – 0.8 x 0.7, diameter of the sleeve – 1.3. Weight – 40 gr. Found in Dragoevo – the ruins. Plate II / 35.

36. Inv. № 14000. Iron, prolonged pyramidal head with quadrangular section. There is no rivet opening. Size: total length – 15.8, length of the head – 8.4, section of the head – 0.9 x 0.9, diameter of the sleeve – 1.5. Weight – 55 gr. Found in Zhulud. Plate II / 36.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Flavii Vegetii Renati. *Epitome rei militaris* кн. 2 / 2, 10, 14, 17; кн. 3 / 4, 14, 20, 29, 44,

Христов, И./ Христова, В. 2004. Колективна находка на римско нападателно въоръжение от района на централна Стара планина ИНИМ XIV.

Овчаров, Д. 1969. Вила рустика до с. Могилец, Търговишко. - Археология 1.

Стойчев, С./ Иванов, С. 2006. Върхове за копия от фонда на ИМ Търговище - IV – III пр. Хр. – V в. - ИИМШ 13, под печат

Bishop M./ Coulston, J. 1989. *Roman military equipment*, London.

Bichir, Gh. 1984. *Geto – Dacii din Muntenia în epoca romană*. Bukurești.

Radman – Livaja, I. 2004. *Militaria Siseiensia – Nalazi rimske voine opereme iz Siska u fundusu Arheološkoga muzeja u Zagrebu*. Zagreb.

Haberstroh, J. 2003. *Der Reisberg bei Scheßlitz-Burgellern in der Völkerwanderungszeit*. Germania 81.

Stanimir Stoychev

History Museum - Shumen

Dept. of Archaeology

Bulgaria

s_stoichev@abv.bg