



Alexander A. Sinitsyn (Saratov / Saint Petersburg, Russia)

**AD SEXAGENSIMUM DIEM NATALIS
VALERII NIKONOROV PAULI F.**

„Nur rastlos betätigt sich der Mann“

Goethe, *Faust*, v. 1759.

On October 20, 2013, Valerii P. Nikonorov, a historian of antiquity and archaeologist, celebrated his 60th birthday. He is a renowned expert in the fields of ancient warfare and military archaeology. This includes the histories of the nomadic and sedentary peoples inhabiting Central Asia and the Iranian Plateau from the early Iron Age through the Early Middle Ages. Another field of his scholarly interests is the history and culture of western Central Asia from the Hellenistic period to Late Antiquity. His personal bibliography numbers more than 80 publications; in addition, at least 20 collected studies and monographs were published under his academic editorship.¹ His area of expertise also encompasses academic editorship and publishing.

Valerii Pavlovich Nikonorov was born in Leningrad on October 20, 1953. After serving in the Soviet Army, he entered the Faculty of History at Leningrad State University (now Saint Petersburg State University) in 1977. He earned his degree in Classical Studies in the Department of the History of Ancient Greece and Rome. Among his teachers in ancient history and culture were Eduard D. Frolov, Iuri V. Andreev, Nadezhda S. Shirokova, and Aleksei B. Egorov. He is also indebted to Vanda P. Kazanskene (Faculty of Philology of Leningrad/Saint Petersburg State University) for her patience and exceptional compassion in teaching the Ancient Greek and Latin languages.

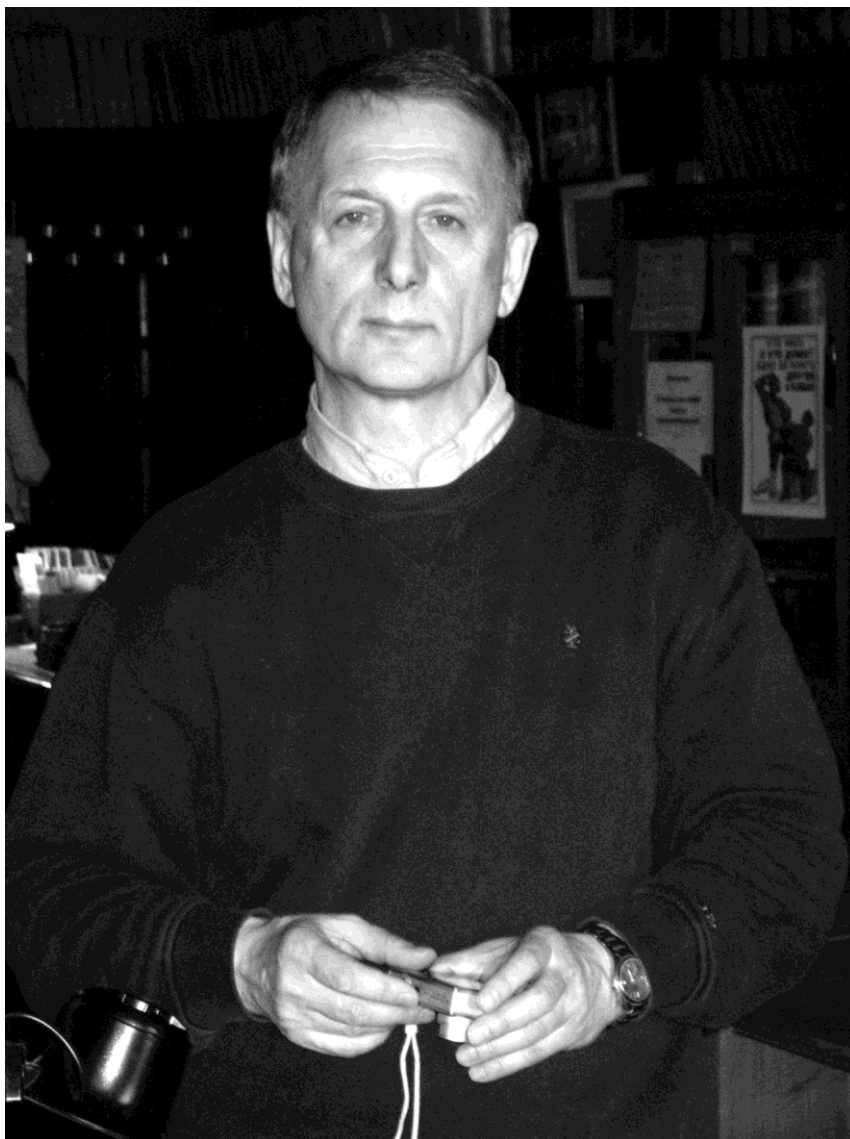
¹ See references to some of his works in the footnotes below; his full bibliography is given in A.A. Sinitsyn/M.M. Kholod (eds.), *KOINON ΔΩPON: Studies and Essays in Honour of Valerii P. Nikonorov on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday presented by Friends and Colleagues*, Saint Petersburg 2013, 25–32.



Fig. 1. Excavating at Kampyrtepa. May 1990. Photo from the private archives of V. P. Nikonorov.



Fig. 2. Visiting Kampyrtepa after a 19-year break... From right to left – Konstantin Sheiko, Marek Jan Olbrycht, Nigora Dvurechenskaia, Valerii Nikonorov, Sergei Bolelov. Early November 2009. Photo: Oleg Dvurechenskii.



**Fig. 3. In the Library of the Institute of the History of Material Culture (in St. Petersburg).
November 2010. Photo: Alexander Sinitsyn.**

In 1983, V.P. Nikonorov graduated from the university with honors, having defended a graduation thesis entitled *Rome and the Sasanians in the Third Century* written under the supervision of A.B. Egorov. In the same year, Nikonorov was encouraged by Vadim M. Masson (1929–2010), the then director of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the

USSR (now the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences), to pursue his postgraduate studies at the Department of Middle Asia and the Caucasus (now the Department of Archaeology of Central Asia and the Caucasus). In 1987, he was offered a job in the same department and has worked there as a senior research fellow ever since. Under the academic supervision of V.M. Masson, he completed a Ph.D. thesis entitled *Armament and Warfare in Parthia*, which he defended in 1988.

Since 1982 Valerii P. Nikonorov has frequently participated in archaeological excavations at various ancient sites related to the Neolithic age through the Early Middle Ages, mostly in Turkmenistan (Jeitun, Altyn-Depe, Iylgynly-Depe, Old Nisa, and Erk-Kala in Old Merv) and Uzbekistan (Zartepa, Kampyrtepa, Kalajik), as well as in Ukraine (Kitei and Geroevka in eastern Crimea), Russia (near Gelenjik in the Northern Caucasus), Moldova (near Ungheni) and Vietnam (in the Saigon region). His instructors in the mud-brick archaeology of western Central Asia were Vadim M. Masson, Vladimir A. Zav'ialov (Leningrad/Saint Petersburg), and Edvard V. Rtveldze (Tashkent).

V.P. Nikonorov took an interest in the military history of ancient civilizations in general, and of Iran and Central Asia in particular, when he was a four-year student of the Faculty of History. It was then that he chose as a theme for the term paper the generalship of Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate, who lived a very short but eventful life (AD 331/332–363). The emperor's campaign against the Persians, in which he was killed, excited in Nikonorov further interest in the pre-history of the Roman-Persian opposition starting soon after the collapse of the Parthian rule in Iran and the accession of the Sasanian dynasty to power there ca. AD 224–226. Naturally, one of the most important aspects of frequent Roman-Sasanian wars in the third century was the conditions of the armies of the hostile states and peculiarities of their warfare. Yet while the Roman military practices during the Late Principate and Early Dominate had already been adequately examined in the available scholarly literature by the early 1980s, the early Sasanian warfare was still calling for exploration. This inspired Nikonorov so greatly that not only did he attempt to elucidate the matter in his graduation paper, but also he devoted his would-be Ph.D. thesis to the Parthian warfare that, as he was fully convinced, had a very serious impact on the Sasanians, and what is more, had never been properly investigated before in any satisfactory way. Drawing upon the works of such outstanding researchers as Anatolii M. Khazanov and Boris A. Litvinskii (1923–2010), whom he regards, together with Vadim M. Masson, as his principal teachers in the field of historical studies, he completed his research.

V.P. Nikonorov's contribution to ancient historical studies is vast. He based his research on critical analysis of sources (viz. all the available kinds of evi-

dence: the actual finds of military equipment, pictorial and written testimonies, the basic components of warfare (offensive and protective weaponry of warriors and horse equipment, armed forces and their tactical employment both on battle fields and in the course of siege operations, the military organization) related to the events that took place in Iran during the Parthian (predominantly) and Sasanian epochs,² as well as in Bactria from the Early Iron to Early Middle Ages,³ and among the European Huns.⁴

In addition, he has written a number of articles devoted to more particular matters related to the wide-ranging topics mentioned above, including Parthian-Sasanian history,⁵ Bactria⁶ and European Huns.⁷ Among his other important stud-

² *Vooruzhenie i voennoe delo v Parfii* [*Armament and Warfare in Parthia*]: a PhD summary, Leningrad 1987; ‘K voprosu o parfijskom nasledii v sasanidskom Irane: voennoe delo [On the Parthian Legacy in Sasanian Iran: the Case of Warfare]’ in V.P. Nikonorov (ed.), *Tsentral’naia Aziia ot Akhemenidov do Timuridov: arkhologiiā, istoriā, etnologiiā, kul’tura. Materialy mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii, posviashchenoi 100-letiiu so dniā rozhdeniā Aleksandra Markovicha Belenitskogo* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2–5 noiabrīa 2004 goda), St. Petersburg 2005, 141–179; ‘K voprosu o vklade kochevnikov Tsentral’noi Azii v voennoe delo antichnoi tsivilizatsii (na primere Irana) [On the Contribution of the Central Asian Nomads to the Warfare of the Antique Civilization (by the Example of Iran)]’ in I.V. Ierofeieva/B.T. Zhanaiev/L.Ie. Masanova (eds.), *Rol’ nomadov evraziiskikh stepei v razvitiu mirovogo voennogo iskusstva. Nauchnye chteniia pamiati N.E. Masanova: Sbornik materialov mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii*, Almaty 2010, 43–65.

³ *The Armies of Bactria, 700 B.C. – 450 A.D.*, vols. 1–2, Stockport 1997.

⁴ ‘Voennoe delo evropeiskikh gunnov v svete dannykh greko-latinskoī pis’mennoi traditsii [Warfare of the European Huns in the Light of the Data of Graeco-Latin Literary Tradition]’ *Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdeleniā Rossiiskogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva*, New Series 1 (26), St. Petersburg 2002, 223–323; ‘*Svistiashchie strely*» *Maodunīa i «Marsov mech» Attily: Voennoe delo aziatskikh khunnu i evropeiskikh gunnov* [The «Whistling Arrows» of Mo-tun and the «Mars Sword» of Attila: Art of Warfare of the Asiatic Hsiung-nu and the European Huns] (Militaria Antiqua 6), St. Petersburg – Moscow 2004 (in co-authorship with Iu.S. Khudiakov); ‘«Like a Certain Tornado of Peoples»: Warfare of the European Huns in the Light of Graeco-Latin Literary Tradition’ *Anabasis: Studia Classica et Orientalia* 1, Rzeszów 2010, 264–291.

⁵ For Parthians and Sasanians, see: ‘K voprosu o parfijskoī taktike (na primere bitvy pri Karrakh) [On the Parthian Tactics (by the Example of the Battle at Carrhae)]’ in A.M. Iliushin (ed.), *Voennoe delo i srednevekovaia arkhologiiā Tsentral’noi Azii*, Kemerovo 1995, 53–61; ‘The Use of Musical Percussion Instruments in Ancient Eastern Warfare: the Parthian and Middle Asian Evidence’ in E. Hickmann, I. Laufs, R. Eichmann (eds.), *Studien zur Musikarchäologie. II: Musikarchäologie früher Metallzeiten. Vorträge des I. Symposiums der International Study Group on Music Archaeology im Kloster Michaelstein, 18.–24. Mai 1998* (Orient-Archäologie 7), Rahden 2000, 71–81; ‘Parfijskie litavry [Parthian Kettledrums]’ in V.Iu. Zuev (ed.), ΣΥΣΣΙΤΙΑ: Pamiati Iurii Viktorovicha Andreeva, St. Petersburg 2000, 167–174; ‘K voprosu o sēdlakh parfijskoī kavalerii [On the Saddles of the Parthian Cavalry]’, in Iu.S. Khudiakov, S.G. Skobelev (eds.), *Voennoe delo nomadov Severnoi i Tsentral’noi Azii*, Novosibirsk 2002, 21–27; ‘O sēdlakh parfijskoī konnitsy [On the Parthian Cavalry Saddles]’ *Miras* 2002/4 (Ashkhabad), 45–48, 97–100, 149–151; ‘K voprosu o pekhote i eē roli v voennom dele parfiian i Sasanidov [On the Infantry and Its Role in the Warfare of the Parthians and the Sasanians], in Sh. Myratgulyeva, O. Pimepesova, N. Smirnova (eds.), *Drevniāia material’naia kul’tura Turkmenistana i eē mesto v razvitiu mirovoi*

ies of the ancient art of war are those considered the most controversial aspects of the origins and development of the cataphract cavalry⁸ and such important elements of equestrian equipment as horse armor, saddles of rigid construction, and stirrups.⁹ Nikonorov has brought to academic light certain works of art from antique Bactria and gave them historical and cultural interpretations. He also highlighted the presence of typical Greek emblems on works of art and coins

tsivilizatsii: Materialy Mezhdunarodnoĭ nauchnoĭ konferentsii, 7–8 aprelĭa 2011 goda, Ashkhabad 2011, 166–173; ‘The Parade Hatchet-Klevets from Old Nisa (A Contribution to the Study of the Combat Hatchets and Their Cult in Ancient Central Eurasia)’ *Anabasis: Studia Classica et Orientalia* 4, Rzeszów 2013, 179–232; ‘Fragmety pantsirnogo dospekha pozdnesasanidskogo vremeni iz Togolok-depe [Armour Fragments of Late Sasanian Times discovered at Togolok-Depe]’ *Izvestiĭa Akademii nauk Turkmenskoĭ SSR, seriĭa gumanitarnykh nauk* 1991/4, 77–79 (in co-authorship with V.Iu. Vdovin).

⁶ Bactria: ‘New Data on Ancient Bactrian Body-Armour (in the Light of Finds from Kampyr-Tepe)’ *Iran* 30, London 1992, 49–54 (in co-authorship with S.A. Savchuk); ‘More about western elements in the armament of Hellenistic Bactria: the case of the warrior terracotta from Kampyr-Tepe’ in G. Lindström/S. Hansen/M. Tellenbach/A. Wiczorek (eds.), *Zwischen Ost und West. Neue Forschungen zum antiken Zentralasien* (Archäologie in Iran und Turan 14), Darmstadt 2013, 187–204.

⁷ ‘Gunnskoe voinstvo Attily: konnitsa ili pekhota? [Attila’s Hun Host: Cavalry or Infantry?]’ in V.A. Alĕkshin et al. (eds.), *Drevnie kul’tury Evrazii: Materialy mezhdunarodnoĭ nauchnoĭ konferentsii, posvĭashchenoĭ 100-letiiu so dnĭa rozhdeniĭa A.N. Bernshtama*, St. Petersburg 2010, 192–196.

⁸ ‘Iluratskiĭ katafraktariĭ (K istorii antichnoĭ tĭazheloĭ kavalerii) [A Cataphract from Iluraton (To the History of the Antique Heavy-armed Cavalry)]’ *VDI* 1987/1, 201–213 (in co-authorship with V.A. Goroncharovskii); ‘Sredneaziatskie katafraktarii kak produkt vzaimodeĭstviĭa voennykh shkol Zapada i Vostoka v epokhu rannego ellinizma [The Central Asian Cataphracts as a Produce of the Interaction between Military Schools of the West and the East at the Early Hellenistic Epoch]’ in V.M. Masson (ed.), *Vzaimodeĭstvie drevnikh kul’tur i tsivilizatsii i ritmy kul’turogeneza: Materialy metodologicheskogo seminara* (Arkheologicheskie izyskaniĭa 13), St. Petersburg 1994, 47–51; ‘Cataphracti, Catafractarii and Clibanarii: Another Look at the Old Problem of Their Identifications’ in G.V. Vilinbakhov, V. M. Masson (eds.), *Voennaĭa arkheologiĭa: Oruzhie i voennoe delo v istoricheskoi i sotsial’noi perspektive. Materialy Mezhdunarodnoĭ konferentsii (2–5 sentĭabrĭa 1998 g.)*, St. Petersburg 1998, 131–138; ‘«Katafrakty» ili «katafraktarii»? Eshchĕ raz po povodu dvukh oboznachenĭ antichnoĭ pantsirnoĭ konnitsy [«Cataphracti» or «cataphractarii»? Once more on the Two Terms to designate Antique Armoured Cavalry]’ in Iu.S. Khudiakov, S.G. Skobelev (eds.), *Vooruzhenie i voennoe delo kochevnikov Sibiri i Tsentral’noi Azii*, Novosibirsk 2007, 66–72.

⁹ ‘Razvitie konskogo zashchitnogo snarĭazheniĭa antichnoĭ epokhi [The Development of Horse Defensive Equipment in the Antique Epoch]’ *Kratkie soobshcheniĭa Instituta arkheologii Akademii nauk SSSR* 184, Moscow 1985, 30–35; ‘Dereviannaĭa osnova sedla iz kerchenskogo kurgana vtoroi poloviny IV v. do n.e. [A Wooden Saddle Core of the Latter Half of the 4th Century B.C. from a Kerch Barrow]’ *Bosporskie issledovaniĭa* 22, Simferopol – Kerch 2009, 127–134 (in co-authorship with Iu. A. Vinogradov); ‘K voprosu o roli stremĭan v razvitiĭi voennogo dela [On the Role of the Stirrups in the Development of Warfare]’ in Iu.Iu. Piotrovskii (ed.), *Stepi Evrazii v drevnosti i srednevekov’e*, bk. 2, St. Petersburg 2003, 263–267.

from western Central Asia and northwestern India.¹⁰ He has contributed to the study of the data of Greek-Roman literary tradition of Apollodorus of Artemita, a Greek-Parthian historian, and his lost *Parthika* (*Parthian History*), and on Margiana, a historical and cultural region in the Murghab River delta (modern southern Turkmenistan).¹¹ Finally, he initiated and prepared for publishing a translation of the classical, and still unique, monograph by the American historian N.C. Debevoise on the political history of Parthia (published in 1938),¹² which had never before been translated into any other European languages. Here Nikonorov acted as a translator, scholarly editor-in-chief, author of an introductory article (in co-authorship with Marek Jan Olbrycht), and compiler of the unprecedented extensive bibliographic supplement that is almost 600 (!) pages long and numbers approximately 10,500 publications related to the history, culture and social and economic life of the Parthian empire and adjacent territories for the period from 1938 to 2008.

Nikonorov has taken part in more than 30 international scholarly conferences held in the Russian Federation, Poland, England, Germany, the United States, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. He has continuously conducted research and given lectures in many foreign academic, research, educational and cultural centers, such as Yale, Harvard, Columbia,

¹⁰ 'Nekotorye rezul'taty raskopok Baktriĭskoĭ ekspeditsii na gorodishche Kampyr-tepe: pamiatniki iskusstva [Some Results of the Excavations of the Bactrian Expedition at Kampyr-Tepe: Works of Art]' in Iu.E. Berėzkin (ed.), *Vzaimodeĭstvie kul'tur i tsivilizatsii: V chest' ĭubileia V.M. Massona* (Rossiĭsko-turkmenskĭe kul'turnye vzaimodeĭstviia i svĭazi 1), St. Petersburg 2000, 160–176; 'Unikal'nyĭ greben' iz Kampyrtepa [A Unique Comb from Kampyrtepa]' *Materialy Tokharistanskoĭ ekspeditsii* 1, Tashkent 2000, 131–138; 'A Unique Comb from Kampyr-Tepe (Northern Bactria)' in J. Chochorowski (ed.), *Kimmerowie, Scytowie, Sarmaci. Księga poświęcona pamięci Profesora Tadeusza Sulimirskiego*, Kraków 2004, 317–329; 'Novye terrakoty iz Kampyrtepa [New Terracottas from Kampyrtepa]' in E.V. Rtveladze, Sh.R. Pidaev (eds.), *Drevniata i srednevekovaia kul'tura Surkhandar'i. Sbornik nauchnykh stateĭ, posviashchennykh arkhelogicheskim issledovaniĭam v Surkhandar'inskoĭ oblasti Respubliki Uzbekistan*, Tashkent 2001, 39–43; 'Perun Zevs na «Dal'nem Vostoke» antichnogo mira [Zeus' Thunderbolt in the 'Further East' of the Classical World]' in V.A. Alėkshin et al. (eds.), *Kul'tury stepnoĭ Evrazii i ikh vzaimodeĭstvie s drevnimi tsivilizatsiiami: Materialy mezhdunarodnoĭ nauchnoĭ konferentsii, posviashchĕnnoĭ 110-letiiu so dniia rozhdeniia vydaĭushchegosia rossiĭskogo arkheloga Mikhaila Petrovicha Griaznova*, vol. 2, St. Petersburg 2012, 496–504.

¹¹ 'Apollodorus of Artemita and the date of his Parthica revisited' in E. Dąbrowa (ed.), *Ancient Iran and the Mediterranean World: Proceedings of an international conference in honour of Professor Józef Wolski held at the Jagiellonian University, Cracow, in September 1996 (Electrum 2)*, Kraków 1998, 107–122; 'Margiana i Merv v antichnoĭ istoriografii [Margiana and Merv as described in Classical Historiography]' in M.A. Annanepesov (ed.), *Merv v drevnei i srednevekovoi istorii Vostoka* [1], Ashkhabad 1990, 39–42.

¹² N.K. Dibvoiz, *Politicheskaia istoriia Parfii* [N.C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia*], St. Petersburg 2008. See its review by R.S. Wójcikowski: *Anabasis. Studia Classica et Orientalia* 3, 2012, 347–350.

Houston, Rutgers and Montana Universities, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Numismatic Society, the Institute for Advanced Study (United States); the University of Münster, Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg and the German Archaeological Institute (Germany); Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, the University of Rzeszów and the University of Gdańsk (Poland). Nikonorov belongs to the editorial staff of the historical and archaeological book series at the Press of St. Petersburg State University Faculty of Philology. He is the editor-in-chief of 1) *Memoirs of the Oriental Department of the Russian Archaeological Society*, New Series (Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation); 2) *Militaria Antiqua*, the book series on ancient and medieval military history (St. Petersburg, Russian Federation). In addition, he is a member of the editorial boards of the international annual *Cultural Values* (Ashkhabad, Turkmenistan) and the international scholarly journal *Anabasis. Studia Classica et Orientalia* (Rzeszów, Poland), as well as member of the editorial council of the scholarly almanac *Metamorphoses of History* (Pskov University, Russian Federation).

Those who do not know the scholar well enough think he is not easy to approach; he is reserved and selective in choosing new acquaintances. Yet with those he favors he is always generous and straightforward, willing to share his ideas, personal contacts, time, and books. Generosity is his core element, his natural gift. Nikonorov's friends appreciate his integrity, his staunch civic position, his resolve to defend his views. He is a good speaker, yet he is also a good listener. His sense of humor is widely appreciated. In addition to his learning, which encompasses a profound knowledge of history, erudition, and the ability to make the best of available information, he is a brilliant symposiast and a welcoming host. He personalizes the Petersburg goodwill and hospitality, and deserves the name of Valerius "Polyxenus" ("Very Hospitable").

Valerii Pavlovich Nikonorov's friends and colleagues are happy to congratulate him on the occasion of his milestone anniversary and to wish him Siberian health, Caucasian longevity, and fruitful research – the Hellenic way – for years to come.

ΧΑΙΡΕ, ΦΙΛΕ ΠΟΛΥΞΕΝΕ!

ΑΓΑΘΗ ΤΥΧΗ!

The editors of Journal "ANABASIS" join in congratulating Valerii P. Nikonorov