

OBITUARIES

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NINA ANDREEVNA FROLOVA
(НИНА АНДРЕЕВНА ФРОЛОВА)

(24/1/1936 – 20/x/2015)



Nina Frolova (at the Hermitage in 2010)

One of the famous Russian specialists in ancient Greek and Roman coinage, curator of Classical and Byzantine coins in the State Historical Museum (Moscow, Russia), Nina Andreevna Frolova died on October 20th, 2015.

Nina Andreevna Frolova was born in Serpukhov in 1936. In 1960 she graduated from the archaeological department of the Historical Faculty of the Moscow State University. During these years she was studying ancient history, classical archaeology and epigraphy under the guidance of the great Russian archaeologists B.N. Grakov and V.D. Blavatsky. Thanks to them, N.A. Frolova began to practice archaeology. Her thesis was devoted to the study of the Kuban region based on the archaeological sources. Since that time N.A. Frolova regularly took part in archaeological expeditions exploring different Greek settlements in South Russia. This experience clearly affected her study and interpretation of numismatic material, especially coin hoards.

In 1960, Nina Andreevna Frolova became curator of Classical and Byzantine coins at the State Historical Museum. From that time her life was inextricably linked with the Museum and its collection. During those years the Museum's collection of Greek and Roman coins, one of the greatest collections in Russia, was continually augmented by new coins and hoards and systematized according to modern numismatic knowledge. In the course of her work with the collection N.A. Frolova paid the most attention to the coins of Greek colonies in the Black Sea region, especially the coinage of the Bosphorus Kingdom.

In 1967 she wrote her PhD thesis 'Coinage and monetary circulation of the Bosphorus in 69/69–210 AD' under the scientific supervision of the famous Russian numismatist D.B. Shelov. In 1960–1980 she published a series of articles, with detailed studies of the coinage of the Bosphorus Kings based on her own catalogue of Bosphoran coins from many collections, with the analysis of coin dies and hoards. She was one of the first Russian scholars who started to use numismatic sources for the reconstruction of the history of the Bosphoran Kingdom, its royal genealogy, the economic and political relations between Bosphorus and Rome as well as Chersonesus Taurica. This work was generalized, translated into English and published in Oxford in 1979 ('The Coinage of the Kingdom of Bosphorus AD 69–238' (*BAR IS 56*)). Four years later the second volume of this study ('The Coinage of the Kingdom of Bosphorus AD 242–341/342' (*BAR IS 166*)) followed.

During these years N.A. Frolova worked with coins from museum collections of many South Russian cities (Odessa, Yalta, Kerch, Anapa etc.). She also took part in archaeological excavations of the ancient Greek settlements of Gorgippia and Phanagoria and published coin finds from these sites.

In 1970–1990 N.A. Frolova studied the Coinage of the Bosphoran Kingdom of III–IV c. AD, collecting new numismatic material, comprising all new coin hoards from ancient settlements of the Crimea and Taman peninsula. As a result, she corrected dates of many Bosphoran coin issues, the most important of which was the date of the last Bosphoran coins. In 1985 she defended her doctoral dissertation 'Coinage of the Bosphorus of the first

centuries AD'. That work was devoted to the history of Late Bosporan coinage and a Corpus of the coins from archaeological excavations and many Russian, European and American collections supplemented by metrological data and die studies. It was published in Russia in 1997 ('Монетное дело Боспора (середина I в. до н.э. – середина IV в. н.э.) – Coinage of the Bosporus (from the middle of the I c. BC to the middle of the IV c. AD)').

At the end of the 1980s N.A. Frolova worked on the study of problems of Bosporan coinage of VI–I c. BC. She explored early coinage of Panticapaeum, Phanagoria, Theodosia and Nymphaeus. In 1996 she published the first corpus of the Sindian coins. That work was summarized in a fundamental monograph 'Die frühe Münzprägung vom Kimmerischen Bosporos (Mitte 6. bis Anfang 4. Jh. v. Chr.). Die Münzen der Städte Panti-kapaion, Theodosia, Nymphaion und Phanagoria sowie der Sinder', which was published in 2004 in Berlin.

Further study of Bosporan coinage dwelled upon an attempt to solve problems of monetary circulation of IV–I c. BC. The exploration and publication of the hoard from the Polyanka settlement played an important role as it gave additional information on the problem of coin organization in the Mithridatic period. As a result the joint work of N.A. Frolova and S. Ireland 'The Coinage of the Bosporan Kingdom from the First Century BC to the First Century AD' (BAR IS 1102) was published in 2002.

As a Curator of the State Historical museum N.A. Frolova paid a lot of attention to publishing the collection of Classical and Byzantine coins. In the last 20 years she published a large collection of coins of Tyras, Olbia and Chersonesus Taurica, the catalogue of gold coins from the collection of the State Historical museum and a collection of Roman coins.

The scientific activity of N.A. Frolova was organized in accordance with the best traditions of Russian classical numismatics initiated by A.V. Oreshnikov, A.N. Zograf, D.B. Shelov and K.V. Golenko. She generously shared her experience with colleagues and was extremely helpful. N.A. Frolova was a very communicative person. She regularly took part in Russian and international numismatic conferences. In 2009, at the 14th International Numismatic Congress that took place in Glasgow, she was elected an honorary member of the International Numismatic Council.

In the hearts of her friends and colleagues Nina Andreevna Frolova will always be one of the greatest Russian scholars of the old school as well as a very supportive person who kept the best traditions of Russian spiritual culture.