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## Review on the book “Historical Essays about Life on the Islands of the Northern Dvina Delta” by M.A. Lukina\*

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**Abstract.** The book is the result of a great work of M. A. Lukina on the history of villages in the Delta of the Northern Dvina River. The book is the first study of the island colonization, establishment, and centuries-old development of settlements in the mouth of the Northern Dvina River. The author combined the traditional historical approach to the data presentation and the method associated with the study of the value change over the centuries and historical memory.

**Keywords:** *review, islands, the Northern Dvina Delta, archives, memories.*

The book is the result of many years of work by M.A. Lukina over the history of the villages located in the delta of the Northern Dvina River. It is the first study devoted to the processes of colonization of the island territory, the formation and centuries-old development of settlements located at the mouth of the Dvina River (these include Voznesen'ye, Konetsdvor'ye, Baykalovo, Lastola, Studimenskoye, Onishovo, Vagino). M.A. Lukina devoted a book to the study of the history of her small homeland - the village of Vaginsky Navolok of the Primorsky district of the Arkhangelsk Oblast. As she explains, the reason that prompted her to work on the book was a desire to find out the history of her birthplace and understand what happened to peasant culture in the 20th century. The book combines the traditional historical approach to the presentation of the material and a method similar to *École des Annales*, associated with the study of the change in value attitudes over the centuries and the problems of historical memory.

For many years M.A. Lukina has been working in various archives in Moscow and the Arkhangelsk Oblast: the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA), the State Archive of the Arkhangelsk Oblast (GAAO), the archive department of the Municipal Administration of Primorsky District, and others. In addition to archival materials, M.A. Lukina uses other sources in the book: annals, monographs, encyclopedias, articles, periodicals and regional studies, memoirs of old-timers, archaeological reports, etc. For the first time, it introduces a large number of hard-accessible archival materials (metric books and spiritual paintings, confessional books, census records, census of households, population censuses, agreements, contractual acts, worldly sentences, etc.). Material for the book was collected, as she writes herself, “bit by bit”. The list of sources impresses with its quantity and variety. It gives the study a fundamental character.

Based on the data of archeology, M.A. Lukina writes that the coast and islands of the White Sea were already settled in the Mesolithic and Neolithic. The book convincingly reveals the fea-

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tures of the Slavic colonization of the lower reaches of the Northern Dvina associated with the development of the territory on which the native Finno-Ugric population already lived. In this regard, I would like to point out the inaccuracies in explaining the ethnonym chud and the lack of references to the scientific literature on this issue in the book. Reference to the book A.A. Tungusov is incorrect since this is a local history publication. There are many studies on the meaning and origin of the word chud'. All of them are considered in the book of N.V. Drannikova "The Chud in the Oral Tradition of the Arkhangelsk North" (Arkhangelsk, Publishing House of Pomor. University, 2007). M.A. Lukina, raising a question who is the chud, doesn't answer it. However, in science, there is a prevailing opinion that the chud' is an aboriginal Finno-Ugric population (most often the Baltic-Finnish population) who lived in the territory of the modern Russian North before the Slavs came there and subsequently assimilated with it (see Drannikova N.V. "The Chud in the Oral Tradition of the Arkhangelsk North", Arkhangelsk, Publishing House of Pomor. University, 2007).

The historical periods of the development of the island territory at the mouth of the Northern Dvina from the Novgorod volost of Zavolochye, the Dvinskaya Zemlya to the Dvinsky and Arkhangelsk uyezds of the Russian state are revealed consistently and deeply in the book. The system of portages along which the development of the northern part of the modern Arkhangelsk Oblast was proceeding was considered by M.A. Lukina using information from the book of T.A. Bernshtam "Pomors. Formation of a group and system of economy". She pays great attention to the history of church parishes and the role of the church in the life of the peasant. The merit of the book is a section dedicated to the socio-political life of the peasantry in the 20th century. Many of the materials in this section are published for the first time.

Separately, I want to say about the sections "Socio-political life in the 1917-early 1930s." and "Collectivization of peasant farming and dekulakization in the 20th century." I think their inclusion in the book is essential. Arkhangelsk historians rarely turn to these periods of history; therefore, the study reveals "white spots" not only in the history of island settlements but throughout the Arkhangelsk Oblast. M.A. Lukina uses archival materials and testimonies of old-timers who witness these events.

The book convincingly shows how the process of "disintegration of the peasant class" took place in the northern villages, starting from the surplus appropriation system and agricultural tax in kind to dekulakization. The process began immediately after 1917, and it was slowed down by the landing of the Entente troops and the creation of the Supreme Administration of the Northern Region (VUSO). The tragic pages of Soviet history are revealed by M.L. Lukina profoundly and comprehensively. Navigation, marine fishing, and sea-hunting products provided residents with good earnings; they had a high standard of living compared to peasants living in the agricultural part of the Arkhangelsk province. It fell sharply after 1924 when the NEP was abolished. The Soviet government immediately divided the peasantry into "kulaks" and "poor", which led to an aggravation of relations between them. The poor were exempted from taxes that more affluent villagers were supposed to pay, which led to conflicts in local communities.

Since 1930, repressive measures against the village intensified. Peasants began to be taxed by numerous taxes depending on their social and property affiliation. Many of them were deprived of suffrage, subjected to self-taxation, agricultural taxes. Contracting, firm supply and purchase of agricultural products at the lowest prices began. The Government stopped issuing passports to peasants, restricted their freedom of movement, imposed unregulated heavy physical labor and subscriptions for loans and bonds. There was no food and clothing in the villages. Laws on compulsory natural disasters insurance, a resolution on the government delivery depending not on the harvest but on the number of hectares of land and so on were enacted. The Government proceeded financial mobilization of the population, demonstrative selsoviet offsite meetings similar to the show trials began. The northern villages survived the famine of 1921 and 1933, which was caused by the economic policy of the state towards peasants - the seizure of grain. The village was sacrificed to industrialization: in 1930, the state switched to complete collectivization. In January 1930, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks adopted a resolution "On measures to eliminate the kulak farms in areas of continuous collectivization". The mass deportation of "kulaks" to uninhabited lands and more northern areas began. The high standard of living of the inhabitants of the island settlements led to the fact that many of them were dispossessed and subsequently repressed. These events caused the peasants to flee from the village to the city, and they get a job at the sawmills and the shipyard 402 in Molotovsk (Severodvinsk). State policy towards the village led to its poverty and a sharp decline in living standards. M.A. Lukina shows with concrete examples and figures how these processes took place in the villages located in the delta of the Northern Dvina.

The same fate befell the church. In 1929, almost all churches were closed, and their buildings were destroyed or dismantled, and the icons were burned. Instead of churches, reading houses, clubs, schools were created, training in them is carried out according to new programs, pioneer and Komsomol organizations appear. The materials published in the book make it possible to understand how the process of creating a new Soviet man took place, associated with a change in generational values.

The book has an excellent reference matter. It contains the "Dictionary of terms, concepts", which includes dialect and archaic vocabulary. I would like to point out that the meaning of not all words is given in it is true; in particular, the term "bratan" is explained as a nephew, although in northern dialects, a "bratan" means a cousin [1]. The book includes eight annexes in which hard-to-reach archival materials are published (information about the clergy of the Voznesenskaya Church in the 19th century, the General Census of the Population of the Russian Empire in 1897, and metric certificates of those who passed examination in 1901 in the Kontsdvorskaya Church parish school, etc.). I consider the appearance of the book "Historical Essays about Life on the Islands of the Northern Dvina Delta" by M.A. Lukina as an essential event in the scientific and cultural life of the Arkhangelsk Oblast. The book is of great interest not only to Arkhangelsk scholars, regional leaders, and residents but also to the entire Russian scientific community. It can be an

example of scientifically conscientious, sincere, and multi-aspect work for all Arkhangelsk researchers and local historians. In conclusion, I would like to wish the author to reprint such a valuable book in a more convenient form for reading: there is so much material in the book that it led to a decrease in the font and an increase in the amount of information that makes reading difficult. In my opinion, the book should be reprinted in two volumes.

### **References**

1. Getsova O.G., ed. *Arkhangel'skiy oblastnoy slovar'* [Arkhangelsk Regional Dictionary]. Moscow, MSU Publ., 1982, vol. 2, Bereza-Byashe, 216 p. (In Russ.)