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Regional Organization of the RCP (B) of the Votyak Autonomous Oblast in 1921–23: Difficulties of Formation Process. Based on Archival Materials

Abstract

The author draws on archival materials of the State Archive of Social and Political History of the

Udmurt Republic and Central State Archive of the Kirov Region to study formation and development of the Votyak (Udmurtian) regional organization of the RCP (B) in 1921–23. The article is to analyze the process of formation of the Votyak regional organization of the RCP (B) and to identify its specifics. The author reveals specific features of the process of organization formation and analyses the conflict between “Glazovites” and “Izhevskites,” “locals” and “appointees.” The novelty lies in the fact that it is the first attempt since 1991 to analyze objectively the process of formation of regional organization of the RCP (B). The article is written on archival material using principle of historicism and historical institutionalism. The Votyak regional organization of the RCP (B) was formed in January 1921, shortly after the autonomous region emergence. The specific features of social and national development of the region sprang from the fact that Izhevsk population was proletarian (mainly Russian), while Glazov population was non-proletarian and Udmurt. It was on this basis that the two opposing groups were formed. Lack of trained party workers in Soviet structures manifested itself in lack of trained Udmurt party workers. The Central Committee circulars demanded their participation in order to be mindful of local specifics. The situation worsened due to famine in many regions of the country and negative results of the New Economic Policy. Shortage of trained party workers resulted in greater responsibility of local party elite from the Udmurt intelligentsia. In 1921, a conflict between “Glazovites” and “Izhevskites” broke out, paralyzing the work of the party organization in 1922–23. The Central Committee repeatedly and vainly tried to resolve the conflict. The situation was defused by transfer of the party workers. Analysis of formation of the regional organization of the RCP (B) has shown that from the very beginning it faced great difficulties, as it consisted of two parts: one part was peasant in its social composition and ethnically Udmurtian, second part was workers and predominantly Russian. Having removed most active and irreconcilable supporters of both groups from leadership, the Central Committee replaced them by loyal party workers. The new party leadership, headed by Grigory Aronshtam, started the policy of korenizatsiya or rooting regional Soviet and party apparatus in 1924–26, in fact, implementing many of the proposals put forward by Trofim Borisov and his supporters.

Keywords

Historical sources, Votyak regional organization of the RCP (B), regional committee, ukoms, party personnel shortage, conflicts, “Glazovtsy,” “Izhevtsy.”

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