

Scientific article

УДК 94 (47).084.1+94(47)+94(470.343)+930.253

DOI 10.28995/2073-0101-2022-2-384-395

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Features of the Process of Formation of the Regional Organization of the RCP (B) of the Mari Autonomous Region in 1921–23: Archival Materials

Abstract

The article draws on archival materials from the State Archive of the Mari El Republic and Central State Archive of the Kirov Region to study the emergence and development of the Mari regional organization of the RCP (B) in 1921–23. It is to analyze the process of formation of the

Mari regional organization of the RCP (B) and to identify its specifics. The author sets himself two tasks: to clarify the features of the process of formation of the organization and the course of the intra-party conflict between “krasnokokshaytsy” and “kozmodemyantsy,” “local” and “appointees.” The novelty is determined by the fact that this is the first attempt since 1991 to analyze the process of formation of the Mari regional organization of the RCP (B). The research is written on archival material using principles of historicism and historical institutionalism. The Mari regional organization of the RCP (B) was formed in January 1921, shortly after the creation of the autonomous region. The first provisional bureau of the obkom and the revkom included the same people, producing a unified management system. This circumstance slowed down the formation of the party structures. The situation was aggravated by the fact that there were practically no industrial enterprises and corresponding infrastructure, and cultural level of the population was insufficient. The personnel shortage in the party and Soviet structures had its specifics: there were not enough trained Mari workers. However, circulars from the Central Committee demanded their engaging, as well as taking into account local specifics. In 1921–22, the situation in the party organizations worsened due to corrupting influence of the New Economic Policy, famine, and fires engulfing the region. Due to lack of educated, dedicated, and active communists, a huge responsibility fell on the local party elite from among the Mari intelligentsia. At the end of 1921, the “kozmodemyansky” conflict broke out, which nearly ended in armed clashes. The Central Committee intervened, sending party workers. Analysis of the process of formation of the Mari regional organization of the RCP (B) has shown that from its early days it faced great difficulties in its activities; in terms of social composition, it was a peasant organization. Ethno-cultural peculiarities of the region left an imprint on the relationships between the party members and caused conflicts. Overcoming them was hampered by arbitrariness of the “appointees,” as well as their resorting to repression and using contradictions between groups in their own interests.

Keywords

Historical sources, Mari regional organization of the RCP (B), regional committee, kantkoms, personnel shortage, conflicts, “krasnokokshaytsy.”

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Submitted 25.11.2021, published (for citation):

TIMKIN, Yu. N. Osobennosti protsessa stanovleniya oblastnoi organizatsii RKP(b) Mariiskoi avtonomnoi oblasti v 1921–1923 gg. Po arkhivnym materialam [Features of the Process of Formation of the Regional Organization of the RCP (B) in the Mari Autonomous Region in 1921–23: Archival Materials. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik arhivista / Herald of an Archivist, 2022, no. 2, pp. 384-395. doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2022-2-384-395

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Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .