

The role of the Communist party in national district emergening (based on the sample of Bystrinsky district)

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Abstract. The article analyzes different opinions of historians and documents to reveal the role of the Communist party in national districts formation in 1920-s on the sample of Bystrinsky district, Kamchatka. The author used archive materials, books and collected documents and materials of Ethnographic expedition of Vitus Bering Kamchatka State University to Anavgay in 2005. The basic methods are analysis and classification. The topic of the article is actual because of modern re-estimation Soviet period of Russian history and the role of the Communist party in different historical processes. Based on Soviet and Russian authors' books.

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Introduction

In 1920-s Soviet government started the campaign of forced economical development of Kamchatka and its integration in the Soviet state. One of its aspects was the foundation of national districts and settling of the nomads. It was necessary to integrate the region into Soviet economy and efficient usage of natural resources.

The main trend of Soviet Historiography was to show and even enlarge the role of Communist Party in every process. That's why authors of Soviet period wrote that the role of Communist party in the emergening of national administrative units. In 1980s after the beginning of Perestroika many national minorities started to study Native History. According to their position the main role in formation of national administrative units belonged to ethnical elites. So the study of the process nowadays requires detailed analysis of archive documents, notes of eyewitnesses and different works of historians.

This article analyzes the process of Bystrinsky national district emergening. Because of nomadic lifestyle and traditional mode it was too difficult to rule the Kamchatka's natives. One of the nomadic ethnoses was Evens (also written as Tunguses in the documents of XIX-th century and Lamut, Orochon – in the beginning of XX-th century). Before the Soviet period they hadn't any administrative unit in Kamchatka. It's also important to note that Evens apperared in the region in 1830-1840-s and some clans came to the territory of modern Bystrinsky district. There they lived preserving traditions, native language and even ethnical endogamy.

There's no foreign works devoted to the problem of Kamchatka's national districts emergening in 1920-s and the role of the Communist party in the process in Kamchatka or other regions. Foreign ethnology, anthropology and historiography

is more interested in the history of Soviet Communist party as a separate unit, inner-Party struggle and its role in the totalitarian system emergening [1]. Ethnologists study cultural development and changes in traditional culture happened under the pressure of Soviet national policy [2] or national identity in the Soviet period [3]. That's why the paper is concentrated on works of Soviet and Russian authors.

Soviet historiography

Since 1924 the problem of national administrative units formation became very important and Far-Eastern Revolutionary Committee was ordered to "organize the propagation work among the natives to form administrative bodies in the regions of their inhabitance" [4]. The first steps of the Committee were exploration of the region and population census. In order to save the budget money it was decided to combine the Polar Census and ethnographic expedition in 1926-1927.

To simplify the process and organize its control Soviet Government in 1925 created the special Committee aimed at help in economical and cultural development of national minorities of Far North and Far East (in Russian Comsod). Also the system of local Comsods was established. One of their functions was to support the process of national administrative units formation. Being official establishment Comsod was closely connected with the Communist party.

The formation of Bystinsky district in Soviet period studied K. Kuzakov. He appreciated the Soviet reforms positively; he wrote that in national settlements wide streets, many new comfortable houses, educational establishments appeared [5, p. 75]. He visited the district in 1960-s as a member of Academic Expedition 1958-1964. He described the contribution of E. Orlova in the studies of Evens and Polar Census 1926-1927 and first steps of socialist

system building. Also he stressed the guiding role of the Communist party in every process and the profits of living according to socialist ideology. Special attention in his works was given to the personality of V. Lenin [6]. So, it's possible to say that the role of the Communist party in the Bystrinsky national district to Kuzakov's mind was decisive.

The compilers of collected documents "Sovety Severo-Vostoka USSR (1928-1940)" – V. Goncharov, B. Mukhachev and others – while creating the book in 1970-s also gathered documents, reflecting the important contribution of the Communist party in the national administrative units appearing [7]. In the Preface they also wrote that "due to the assistance of Soviet workers and the Communist party primitive tribes of national minorities got the opportunity to live in socialist society without long capitalist period" [7, p.13]. They also stress the role of Soviet administrative structures – Revcoms (Revolution Committees), Comsods, TuzRIKs (Tuzemny raionny ispolnitel'nyi komitet – municipal administrative bodies) – in the territorial transformations, settling the nomads, emerging national administrative units. Because of close connection of administrative bodies and the Communist party it's difficult to separate the party's policy itself and Soviet state policy. The importance of socialist ideology is also stressed by the compilers of collected documents.

In conclusion it's necessary to note that according to official Soviet ideology every achievement in political, economical and cultural spheres was the result of the Communist party's activity.

Ethnical historiography

In 1980-s because of Perestroika and appearing of new historical paradigms in USSR one more assessment of the Communist party's appeared: the studies of local history by ethnical intelligence. In Bystrinsky district one the most influential local historians in 1980-1990-s was K. Cherkanov. He collected a lot of notes of eyewitnesses, documents, photos, folk songs, folk stories, etc. He wrote the materials in the block of notebooks. Nowadays they haven't been published. He also made an attempt to write the History of Kamchatka's Evens.

As a person who was brought up in the Soviet period he supposed that Soviet reforms influenced the life of Evens positively. He also noted that Evens were ready to contact with the state authorities and pay taxes, they also learned Russian and had had their own school by 1916 [8].

K. Cherkanov supposed that "Soviet system was close to the nomad's mode of life, they were ready to live in the socialist society" [8]. He stressed

the fact that first Soviet administrative units were formed with the help of the natives, they were ready to work at administrative bodies. According to his materials 80 % of bureaucratic staff of Bystrinsky district were Even or Koryak people [8]. These people were literate, spoke and wrote Russian an even knew who V. Lenin was.

Later this position was supported by the local intellectuals. They also stressed the importance of ethnical elites in creation of Bystrinsky district as a national administrative unit, the readiness to form a new territorial unit because of political events.

In fact, the studies of local historians helped to reveal the role of Even people in Bystrinsky national district emerging, but the lack of archive materials make some historians doubt in the conclusions.

Official documents and archives

The first stage of establishing national administrative units in Kamchatka was the formation of administrative units and bureaucracy limit. According to archive materials in 1923/24 it was decided that the structure of typical national district should be the following: the district administration (so called national/aboriginal soviet) and several such units as rodovoy soviet (kinship committee). There were 3 members, who were paid fixed salary, and 2 volunteers (in Russian candidates), who didn't receive any money, in every administrative body. In some cases the quantity of paid members could be reduced. Members and candidate were elected by open voting. The person who received the simple majority of votes became a member or candidate. According to the official documents the local population should offer several persons per one magistrate, but in fact there were few people who could enter administrative bodies (there was educational census) and they were enlisted before the elections. So voting in some cases was formal. Also Kamchatka's regional authorities supposed district administrations and rodovye sovety should be under their control. But in cases of remote administrative units like Bystrinsky district it wasn't always possible.

Local management institution, rodovoy soviet, was established for a group of 40 or more men [9]. The first meetings of new committees were supposed to be held in the center of Kamchatka region, in Petropavlovsk [10]. In order to form the separate national administrative units among the nomads the special magistrate was established. The magistrate was called emissary (in Russian "upolnomochennyi"). There were several emissaries in Kamchatka. They worked in Kamchaka's national minorities sub-committee. Emissary had a lot of

functions besides the control of formation and functioning of national administrative units. For example, they had to study the natives' lifestyle, economic and cultural mode, collect the data for censuses; they also had to organize and maintain the pre-election campaign (meet the locals, explain the Soviet policy and propagate ideals, explain the advantages of Soviet state and disadvantages of former political system) and the elections (organize the voting, count votes, fill in the papers and write detailed reports, teach new members of administrative units) [11]. To organize their work properly Comsods prepared special instructions for emissaries, these papers were called instructions (in Russian "instrukcia"). According to the official papers emissaries should speak to national minorities in their native language. They were obliged "to explain Soviet national policy's advantages to the natives in clear, bright and easy words and expressions" [11].

So we can see that the role of Soviet state in the forming of national districts among the nomads was important. Due to close connection between state power and the Communist party we may also conclude that the party influenced the process of national districts emerging significantly.

At the same moment archive funds of Russian Far Eastern State Historical Archive include the decision of Lamut and Koryak clans meeting about the establishing a new administrative unit (in 1920-s it was called "volost") in the Bystraya river valley (the territory of modern Bystrinsky district). The document dated 1924 April, 4. It was also certified by the Lamut Clan stamp. In the paper Lamut and Koryak people also declared the necessity of collaboration with the Soviet power [12].

But the main reason of Bystrinskaya volost establishment was the taxation problem. In 1923-1925 Evens and Koryaks who wandered in the Bystraya river valley were to pay taxes to 2 administrative units simultaneously: Tigil and Ust-Kamchatsk districts. It happened because of nomad mode of life and absence of wandering boundaries. That's why Soviet officials couldn't account the taxed families properly. Evens and Koryaks separated the clans into 3 groups: Anavgay, Kekuk and Lauchan [12].

Later in 1926 Soviet emissary Bauerman created 3 administrative units – rodovye soveti – and Bystrinsky district [5, p. 66-67]. He also used the paper to pave the way when he was sent to the territory of modern Bystrinsky to establish the national district. The costs for forming Bystrinski national district in 1926 were 1734.40 rubles. Transportation expenditures were 221.6 rubles, the cost of interpreter's service – 200 rubles, per diem –

400 rubles, meetings and election expenditures – 500 rubles [13]. So we can see that the most expensive aspects were transportation, interpreter's service and organizational costs. According to the remoteness of a newly formed district the transportation expenditures could increase. The sum of 1734.40 rubles was quite big sum of money in 1920-s [14].

Finally we can say that there were 2 sides in the process of national districts forming: local population and Soviet state. The main reason to establish a separate administrative unit, in fact, wasn't the readiness to live under Soviet power or deep understanding of V. Lenin's ideas. It was the practical necessity.

Conclusion

Because of modern trends in History (case-study, local history studies, etc.) the problems of local history are rather actual. Changes in historical paradigms also determined more detailed studies of some questions. The role of the Communist party in many processes has been re-appraised and sometimes even neglected. Detailed studies of archive materials, official documents and books by different historians elicited that the role of the Communist party as the integrative part of Soviet state in national districts formation was significant. Also it's important to note that national minorities of Far East also supported the process and sometimes showed initiative. In most cases the reasons to form a separate national administrative unit were obvious: collaboration with new Soviet state, regulation of taxation, geographical location of the territories inhabited by nomads, etc. Worth mentioning the fact that Soviet scientists studied many aspects of Far Eastern national minorities' traditional mode of life. Local historians' studies allowed exploring the process from the national minorities' side, also the historians collected interesting data. Modern historian when studying 1920-s and coming into being Soviet power in Russian Far East should take into account all distinctive features of every historiographical period and study the books and documents critically.

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