

# BRVKENTHAL. ACTA MVSEI

## XIII. 1



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**MUZEUL NAȚIONAL BRUKENTHAL**

**BRVKENTHAL**  
**ACTA MVSEI**

**XIII. 1**

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**THE ARMED UPRISING IN THE SOCHI DISTRICT  
OF THE BLACK SEA GOVERNORATE IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE (1905–1906)  
AND ITS INTERPRETATION IN THE EXHIBITION OF THE REGIONAL MUSEUM**

**Konstantin TARAN\***  
**Rashad KURBANOV\*\***

**Abstract:** *The academic paper reviews the armed uprising in the Sochi district, Black Sea governorate, Russian Empire, in the period of the First Russian Revolution, and analyzes the interpretation of these events in the exhibition displayed in the Museum of the History of the Resort City of Sochi.*

*Sources used include documents from local, regional and central archival repositories of the Russian Federation. Key value can also be attached to the documents stored in the Museum of the History of the Resort City of Sochi. The methodology of the research was based on the principles of historicism, objectivity and systematic analysis. Additionally, we utilized a chronological method that enabled us to look at the events of the First Russian Revolution in their chronological order.*

*In conclusion, the authors suggested that social and political movements in the Sochi district of the Black Sea governorate acted in line with the social scenarios that determined their behaviors in the time of revolutionary events. The local authorities struggled to defend their positions, while the revolutionaries exerted pressure on them by making use of the population which they engaged in this process through various mechanisms. Any calls for protection of the tsarist rule, voiced by the Russian intelligentsia, were nipped in the bud by revolutionaries through physical destruction. The exhibition housed by the Museum of the History of the Resort City of Sochi depicts the revolutionaries as freedom fighters, rather than shows what they actually were – terrorists and expropriators. The museum exhibition also fails to reflect the killings of civilians, carried out by the revolutionaries, as well as has no materials on the seizure of property, robbery, separatism, nationalism and many other aspects. This is why the exhibition is specifically designed in the style so that the events of 1905-1906 in Sochi can be perceived in harmony with the official textbook on the history of the Communist Party of the USSR.*

**Keywords:** *armed uprising, Sochi, Russian Empire, 1905-1906, Museum of History of the Resort City of Sochi, exhibition.*

**Rezumat:** *Lucrarea face o trecere în revistă a revoltei armate din districtul Sochi, guvernoratul Mării Negre, Imperiul Rus, în perioada Primei Revoluții Ruse și analizează interpretarea acestor evenimente în expoziția aflată în Muzeul de Istorie al Stațiunii Sochi.*

*Sursele folosite includ documente din depozitele de arhive locale, regionale și centrale ale Federației Ruse. O importanță cheie o au și documentele păstrate în Muzeul de Istorie al Stațiunii Sochi. Metodologia cercetării s-a bazat pe principiile historicismului, obiectivității și analizei sistematice. În plus am folosit o metodă cronologică care ne-a permis să privim evenimentele Primei Revoluții Ruse în ordinea lor cronologică.*

*În concluzie autorii sugerează că mișcările sociale și politice din districtul Sochi al guvernoratului Mării Negre au acționat în linie cu scenariile sociale care le-au determinat în timpul evenimentelor revoluționare. Autoritățile locale s-au luptat să își apere pozițiile, în timp ce revoluționarii au exercitat presiune asupra lor folosind populația, pe care au cooptat-o în acest proces prin diferite mecanisme. Orice solicitări de protecție din partea regimului țarist emise de intelectualitatea rusă, au fost sufocate în fașă de revoluționari prin distrugere fizică. Expoziția găzduită de Muzeul de Istorie al Stațiunii Sochi prezintă revoluționarii ca luptători pentru libertate mai degrabă decât să arate ce erau de fapt – teroriști și expropriatori. Expoziția muzeului nu reușește să reflecte de asemenea uciderea civililor de către revoluționari și nici nu are materiale despre confiscarea proprietății, jaf, separatism, naționalism și multe alte aspecte. Aceasta deoarece*

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*expoziția este special concepută în modul ca evenimentele din 1905-1906 de la Sochi să fie percepute în armonie cu varianta oficială asupra istoriei Partidului Comunist USSR.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *revoltă armată, Sochi, Imperiul Rus, 1905-1906, Muzeul de Istorie al Stațiunii Sochi, expoziție.*

### 1. Introduction

The period of the First Russian and February Revolutions brought about transformation of the social structure of Russian society (Kalinina, 2017: 38-45). While the first event could not see the ultimate transformation as the revolutionary movement was suppressed, the February Revolution changed the structure of Russian society. In this paper, we will use the example of the Sochi district of the Black Sea province to provide an analysis of the transformation process that affected one of the frontier regions of the Russian Empire, as it turned from a tranquil provincial town into a revolutionary explosion.

### 2. Materials and methods

The materials used include documents from the Archive Department of the Sochi City Administration, abbreviated here as AOAGS, (Sochi, Russian Federation), Center for Documentation of the Contemporary History of the Krasnodar Krai, abbreviated here as TsDNIKK, (Krasnodar, Russian Federation), Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, abbreviated here as RGASPI (Moscow, Russian Federation), State Archive of the Russian Federation, abbreviated here as GARF, (Moscow, Russian Federation), as well as documents kept by the Museum of the History of the Resort City of Sochi.

The methodology of the research was based on the principles of historicism, objectivity and systematic analysis. Additionally, we utilized a chronological method that enabled us to look at the events of the First Russian Revolution in their chronological order.

### 3. Results

The armed uprising in the Sochi district of the Black Sea governorate broke out in December 1905, and in early January 1906 the uprising was put down. The events of this period were characterized by the politically active socialist parties, namely the Socialists-Revolutionaries and Social Democrats who mounted armed actions against the tsarist administration.

On the eve of the armed Sochi uprising, the Social Democrats and Socialists-Revolutionaries were locked in the struggle over

influence and stronger backing among the local population. This development was driven by the overall split in the camp of the Social Democrats and members outflow from this organization to the group of the Socialists-Revolutionaries, whose leaders took measures to further promote the program of their party. The trend for a stronger position of the Socialists-Revolutionaries in Sochi could be seen across entire Russia as the network of SR organizations, especially in 1905-1907, expanded at a higher speed than that of their opponents from the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), and their role in rural areas was significant. It was a party of peasants and workers, which took part in the All-Russian October political strike and Moscow armed uprising of 1905 (Urilov, 2005: 61).

In the first fortnight of December 1905, leaders of the Socialists - Revolutionaries, Semyonov and Poyarko, came to the owner of a printing house, Anisimov, and requested to print 1,000 copies of the Financial Manifesto, where they proposed the population not to invest money in savings banks, but, on the contrary, withdraw the savings to cut the government off the financial support. Semyonov had a printed original of this manifesto, signed by the central committees of the Socialists-Revolutionaries and Social Democrats as well as Polish and peasant unions, but Anisimov refused to accept this order (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 124).

On December 15, the home of I. Odintsov became a venue for a meeting by the Charity Society and commissioners of the city administration (*gorodskaya uprava*) with the commissioners being represented only by Odintsov and Godzi. The meeting was also attended by Semyonov, Khutsishvili and delegates of workers. The leader of the Social Democrats, Khutsishvili, expressed criticism against the existing city self-government that it was elected by an insignificant number of citizens and did not actually meet its purpose and did not care about the needs of the working people. With these attacks on the city administration, Godzi and I. Odintsov announced that they would resign as commissioners (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 13).

Additionally, the meeting discussed the issue of providing aid to the unemployed and

starving groups, and when given the floor, revolutionary Khutsishvili said that those suffering from famine should not be taken care of because “*they are subhumans*” (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 51).

As the organization of the Socialists-Revolutionaries continued to build up influence in the social and political life of the *posad* (a commercial and industrial center) and the district and their position among the local population strengthened, Social Democrat leaders initiated the foundation of the Sochi City Revolutionary Administration (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 75).

To this end, December 16, 1905, members of the Social Democratic Party communicated a printed proclamation “To male and female citizens of Sochi” (TsDNIKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 62. L. 68). This proclamation informed the *posad* people of the following: a meeting of citizens, which was held in Odintsov’s house December 15, found out that the existing Sochi city administration was unable to function, and the meeting decided to replace it with a new one based on the principles of universal, equal, direct and ballot vote. For this reason, the *posad* population was invited to attend a meeting at 2 pm December 16 to elect a commission that would manage the elections to the new city revolutionary administration by all citizens, without discrimination on gender, ethnic or religious grounds (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 13).

The Sochi *posad* witnessed five days of rallies at which the leaders of the Social Democratic organization imposed on the population the idea of changing the city administration by election and creating a city revolutionary self-government. However, as the Sochi Socialists-Revolutionaries, the liberal intelligentsia and members of the Armenian diaspora did not support these elections, the campaign launched by the Social Democrats was limited to the census of the *posad* population (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 14-16; MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 52).

At the rallies, Gvatua said that the Russian rule was powerless in Georgia in the midst of the revolution, and Vorontsov-Dashkov, the tsar’s governor general (*namestnik*) in the Caucasus, resigned and surrendered power to representatives of the Social Democrats (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/8. L. 57).

The idea to restore the Georgian statehood and include the territory of the Sochi district into

Georgia resonated with many Slavic representatives of the Social Democratic organization because their role in the overthrow of the tsarist rule outlawed them, and the government would inevitably take repressive measures against them. At the same time members of the Khosta Social-Democratic organization, which consisted predominantly of Slavs, did not like this presentation of the cause. A member of the Khosta RSDLP organization, engineer Petr Shelekhov turned to Dr. Gordon with a proposal to join forces to “*suppress the Georgian Batumi organization*” (Taran et al., 2016: 521).

Additionally, rallies carried out by the Social Democratic organization were no longer attended by members of the Armenian community, who refused to listen to the speeches of the leaders of the Social Democrats. Importantly, some Georgian revolutionaries, for example, Ormotsadze, delivered speeches in Georgian, and this did not please not only the Armenian population, but also members of other ethnic groups (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/8. L. 14; MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/3. L. 46).

Following these events, with the Social Democrats holding rallies for their supporters in the marketplace, the Socialists-Revolutionaries installed another rostrum in Sochi and addressed to the members of the Armenian diaspora, asking to provide armed security guards (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 52).

We should assume that the members of the Armenian diaspora had intelligence that ethnic conflicts occurred in Tiflis in late November 1905, in which Armenians suffered. Particularly serious riots erupted in the Borchaly *uezd* (an administrative and territorial unit that was part of a governorate), Tiflis governorate, which caused the losses of up to 2 million rubles to the Armenian population. Entire Armenian villages were completely ruined (Abramov, 1940: 208).

The difficult inter-ethnic relations in Georgia are referred to in a statement by I.V. Stalin: “... *There is no any serious anti-Russian nationalism in Georgia, and it is, first of all, because there are no Russian landowners or major bourgeoisie which could nourish such nationalism in the masses. There is anti-Armenian nationalism in Georgia, but this is because there is also a major Armenian bourgeoisie which, by beating the petty emergent Georgian bourgeoisie, is pushing the latter towards anti-Armenian nationalism*” (Stalin, 1937: 12).

Conclusions offered by I. Stalin are confirmed by researcher D. Amanzholova who

speaks of the Armenian-Georgian conflict related to the dominance of the Armenian commercial, usurious and manufacturing capital in Georgia. Additionally, Tiflis, the Akhalkalaksy, Akhaltsikhsky and Borchaly *uezds* and other southern areas of the Tiflis governorate had the community of the former Turkish Armenians accounting for about 47% of the total population, and this was the reason why their ethnic representation in local authorities and land ownership constituted the root cause of the ethnic conflict (Amanzholova, 1999: 7).

The Georgia developments affected the relations between Armenians and Georgians, which lived in the Sochi district. The leader of Armenian tenants who lived in the estate of Grand Duke Michael in the Loo and Vardane villages, teacher A.R. Rostomyan informed M. Martirosyan, a resident of the Sochi *posad*, that Armenians “*shall not help the committee of Mingrelians and Imereti*” (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/16. L. 11).

Gvatua and his supporters among the Social Democrats insisted that Armenians stopped paying rent. Armenians pretended that they did not pay the rent, but they actually did the opposite. This fact is known from the words of B.F. Alek, the manager of the Vardane estate, owned by Grand Duke Michael: “*Armenians paid their fees regularly, but asked me not to speak of it as natives forbade them to do so*” (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/16. L. 13).

Minosyan’s statement can be regarded as accurate since the program of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party contains a point that proposes the introduction of federal relations for “*independent peoples*” (RGASPI. F. 274. Op. 1. D. 33. L. 29). Moreover, the idea of the Socialists-Revolutionaries to alienate landed estates in favor of the peasantry was also close to the Armenian population in the Black Sea governorate.

Additionally, the agrarian program offered by the Socialist-Revolutionaries was distributed among peasants of rural communities in the Black Sea governorate. The propaganda campaign initiated by the Socialists-Revolutionaries facilitated the close-down of rural governments and the election of new village chiefs (*starosta*) and heads (*starshina*) in the Volkovskoye and Aibginskoye rural communities. In the first community, this was brought about by the propaganda activities by agronomist L. Aleksandrov and three Zhilinsky brothers, and in the second community through the efforts by teacher Ye. Slavgorodskiy (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 174).

To enhance their backing, representatives of the Socialists-Revolutionaries stepped up agitation activities December 20, 1905. On this day, Semyonov, Salnikov, Poyarko, V. Fronstein and Williams placed an order for 500 copies of the party program with the Anisimov printing house. Anisimov delivered the order, but since the printer continued to resist it, Semyonov threatened to kill him (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 124).

Considering the fact that no revolutionary city government was established, and the activity rolled out by the Socialists-Revolutionaries won increasing support among the population of the Sochi district, Gvatua, to earn workers’ trust, made populist statements that they would not be left unemployed, and promised to set up a mint to make money. Meanwhile, the authorities had intelligence about a settler from the Plastunka village, Khriste Uchadze, who was engaged in making counterfeit coins (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 17).

Before Grechkin arrived in Sochi with an armed detachment of his supporters from Novorossiysk, Gvatua went to Gagra to urge supporters of the Social Democratic organization to come to Sochi and purchase weapons. Gvatua planned to secure armed support after the failed attempt to create a city revolutionary government and the resulting political disagreements between the leaders of Sochi social organizations (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/8. L. 91).

Horse police officers informed the district chief that Prince of Gagra A.K. Inal-Ipa, purchased 1.6 thousand rifles from an unknown sailing vessel, and Gvatua went to him to negotiate the purchase of the weapons. Additionally, influenced by Gvatua’s propaganda, Gagra supporters of the Social Democrats organized a fighting squad December 23, 1905 (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 190).

The chairman of the Gagra Social Democrats, Prince Inal-Ipa, following a fleeting clash between the Socialists-Federalists and Social Democrats, agreed to provide Gvatua with volunteers from the fighting squad and weapons in the quantity of 65 rifles (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 182).

Importantly, foreign vessels illegally delivered weapons to Georgia to members of the parties of Social Democrats, Socialists-Federalists and Socialists-Revolutionaries. It was one of these batches of Swiss-type weapons that came into the hands of Prince of Gagra Inal-Ipa. These weapons were to go to the representatives of the Georgian Socialist-Federalist Revolutionary Party, who after they formed their organization in 1904,

advocated the Georgian autonomy under the slogans: “Freedom! Equality! Unity!” (GARF. F. 102. Op. 233. D. 5. Ch. 19. L. 2).

Additionally, Gvatua and his supporters enlisted sympathies of 138 members of the Georgian community in the Plastunka village, who bought 48 rifles from the Autonomous Transcaucasian Committee for 200 rubles. As a result, almost three hundred armed Georgians came to the Sochi *posad* December 26–27, 1905 (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 182).

The agitation efforts by the Socialists-Revolutionaries succeeded in securing help of the Armenian diaspora that in its majority was unwilling to take part in the armed clash with the authorities, but eventually sent 300 people on its part. This decision was made by the local committee of the Dashnaksutyun party (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 59, 182).

Consequently, when the armed revolutionary forces clashed with representatives of the Russian administration, many of the Armenians took up the call of the Socialists-Revolutionaries to provide them support, and Armenian tenants came to Sochi carrying weapons on them. Besides them, armed Shilovsky Armenians, led by a priest, came to Adler together with members of other parties and seized weapons from the Adler population (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/10. L. 55).

After December 27, 1905, Grechkin and a group of his supporters came to Sochi, the Socialists-Revolutionaries had at their disposal an armed force consisting of two detachments – one was deployed in the Khludovsky Park and the other in the Uta Bakhia eating house. Despite the fact that Grechkin announced the victory of the revolutionary forces in Novorossiysk, most of people who lived in the Sochi *posad* had information that the Soviet of Workers' Deputies was liquidated in Novorossiysk, because the postal and telegraph office operated for some time December 27, 1905 (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/8. L. 59; MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/11. L. 36).

Additionally, the Sochi *posad* knew that armed uprisings in Moscow and Rostov-on-Don were quelled December 21, 1905, as was the case in other Russian cities before that. To maintain order in the Sochi district, Chief Rozalion-Soshalsky had only insignificant troops, especially after the lower ranks of the company of the Kherson regiment were demobilized in November 1905 (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 10).

To make things worse, peasant republics continued to function in the territory of Guria, and

this aggravated the already destabilized situation in Transcaucasia (Pervaya revolyutsiya, 2005: 376–379). For this reason, members of Sochi social and political associations intensely armed themselves, but, on the other hand, no one masterminded an armed clash with the authorities.

On the morning of December 28, the district chief received a message that a group of armed people marched out of Adler for Sochi. An attempt to stop the invasion of this group in the *posad's* territory failed, and this resulted in a skirmish that took place between the group and the guards near the Mamontovsky Slope and a new market (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 20).

Favorable positions were secured by the supporters of revolutionaries, who used fire to force the law enforcement troops led by the district chief and officer of the guard, Cornet Popov, to retreat (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 21).

In the clash, the guards suffered casualties, one was killed and seven guards were wounded (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 118. L. 19). Their opponents also suffered casualties – two people were killed and one wounded. Of the people who turned up in the scene of the skirmish by accident, two people were killed and as many wounded (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 22).

The killing of random people followed after Spiridon Kubladze, a Social Democrat and Georgian by nationality, shouted the words “*all Russo should be shot down!*” And fired his weapon “... *on the crowd where there were many Russians*” (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 21, 24).

After the skirmish, the guards retreated to the city administration building and the apartment of the district chief, where they were joined by the local police officer Zalevsky with a team of policemen. It was decided to retreat to the disposition of the company of the Kherson regiment to mount defense together with soldiers. The district chief declared a martial law in the Sochi *posad* and offered treasurer N.K. Usachev to hand over the Treasury's cash in the total amount of 140,231 rubles 66 kopecks for safe keeping by himself and the company commander of the Kherson regiment, Captain V.I. Gerasimov, which was done (TsDNIKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 62. L. 107; AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 22).

In the barracks, command over the combined garrison was taken by company

commander of the Kherson regiment, Captain Gerasimov. The size of the garrison was about 100 people. At night, the garrison started to arrange defenses of the barracks and dig trenches. The barracks had a sufficient stock of weapons, ammunition and food. In parallel with the garrison, the revolutionaries also began to construct trenches around the besieged barracks and barricaded a number of nearby streets. Guard posts were set up at the Sochi lighthouse, the church bell tower, in the house of the Appanage Office and other buildings (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 23).

Taking advantage of the riots in the city, nationalists set fire to the homes of Turks who lived in the Turetsky Ovrag quarter. The severe fire forced Turkish and Persian women with children to flee and cross the Sochi River to the Khludovsky quarter on the evening of December 28. They settled outside the building of the Russian Steam Navigation and Trading Company (ROPiT), asking the agent of this society for help (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/10. L. 40).

The next day on December 29, 1905, wives and children of policemen and guards came to the besieged barracks. The rebels did not interfere with them as they expected to exert pressure on their opponents. They planned that this step would accelerate the early surrender of the garrison (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 24).

The Social Democrats led by Gvatua, Khutsishvili, Konyaev and A. Khorava gathered in M. Khorava's eating house that was located at the corner of Sadovaya and Bulvarnaya Streets. Here rioters were provided with food, drinks, as well as weapons and ammunition (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 118. L. 19).

Another point of obtaining free food and rest by the supporters of the Socialists-Revolutionaries and Social Democrats was Uta Bahia's hotel, located on Prirechenskaya Street. Additionally, Socialist-Revolutionary supporters were stationed in the People's House, where meals and food products were distributed by N. Poyarko. Poyarko also brought his family to the People's House December 29.

These points also accepted cattle stolen from Khludov's country house and taken away from the local house owner, Gersevanov, as well as pigs that were owned by the guard officer, Cornet Popov, and poultry of police officer Zalevsky. A considerable amount of flour was taken away from the warehouse of merchant Khristofi. The property of guards, which they left behind when surrendered the barracks, was also

plundered. The building of the Appanage Office and the state-owned wine shop were also looted, and the stolen drinks were sent to the above eating house, hotel and People's House. Some products and materials were taken away by revolutionaries on the basis of notes issued and signed by one or several members of the revolutionary organization. Such notes were submitted to the ROPiT agent to provide flour and to merchant Chernomordik to provide barbed wire that was required to construct barricades and other fencing (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 25).

On the morning of December 29, armed guardsmen went door to door and took away from Sochi residents live ammunition, gunpowder, bladed weapons and firearms. As for the latter, the local administration permitted in 1904 that people living in the district and *posad* could have firearms for a small fee – 2 rubles, so that they could protect themselves from wild animals (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 118. L. 19).

Under the pretext of seizing weapons, guardsmen also took away money, jewelry and essential supplies from the local population. Later, part of the plundered items was found by the Russian administration at the participants of the uprising, but most of the loot would be taken out on chaises by Gagra hunters and supporters of revolutionaries, who did not want to be arrested by the Russian administration (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/10. L. 88).

After the uprising broke out, head of the experimental station Lyakhovetsky urged people of the Razdolnoye village to help the besieged garrison. When Gvatua and Khutsishvili learned about this, they sent a group of three armed Georgians led by R. Kutsiya to the experimental station on December 29, who shot Lyakhovetsky dead (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 28). Kutsiya was chosen deliberately, as he had a personal conflict with Lyakhovetsky in the past. There is also information that Gvatua paid Kutsiya 15 rubles for killing Lyakhovetsky (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/8. L. 61).

December 29, 1905, the Social Democrats distributed a leaflet among the population of the Sochi district, informing people of the start of an armed uprising and urging them to take up arms and join the revolutionaries (TsDNiKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 62. L. 34). In addition to this proclamation, the Social Democrats sent out instructions to the localities in the district, in which they with threats required to dispatch people to the fighting squad and provide the rebels with weapons and gunpowder (Taran, 2015: 126).

Threats and pressure from the Social Democrats made the Volkovskoye community to organize a detachment of armed settlers, which was led by village chief I.F. Krylov. The detachment arrived in Sochi on the night of December 29 to 30 and took part in the seizure of weapons and gunpowder from the people in Navaginki (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/2. L. 3, 22; TsDNIKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 1454. L. 5).

December 30, 1905, the Estonka village was visited by Social Democrat Yanovich, shopkeeper Kudinov, as well as an unknown Caucasian. They came to the village from Adler. They offered Estonians to give people for the fighting squad to mount resistance to the authorities. In case of refusal, they threatened: *“Others will come after us and will shoot down the whole village”*. The Estonians collected 91 rubles from their fellow villagers, gave them to 16 volunteers and sent them to Sochi (TsDNIKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 62. L. 75-76).

Despite potential repressions that could follow from the Social Democrats, peasants of the Razdolnaya village, Sikorsky and Ryabenko went to the barracks to the district chief to offer their assistance. This happened after, on the morning of December 29, Social Democrats Burdzhiniani, Torchinava, Grigolia, Chkhetiani and Sichinao took away weapons from peasants in Razdolnaya and threatened them with violence (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/6. L. 81-82; MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/12. L. 67).

When the Social Democrats seized weapons from the population in the district and *posad*, they aimed not only to replenish their arsenals, but they also feared that the people would decide to use their weapons against the supporters of the Social Democrats, who flooded the Sochi *posad*. In the Pilenkovo and Baranovka villages, peasants did not give weapons to the Social Democrats who came from Adler. Moreover, in Baranovka, local people fired from their rifles at the revolutionaries (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/12. L. 40-41).

There was a situation when an 18-year-old villager, I.V. Yudin from the Vtoraya Rota village, refused to shoot at the representatives of the authorities besieged in the barracks, and Georgians, from among the supporters of the Social Democrats, locked him in an isolated room for a day (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/14. L. 78).

After the firefight with the besieged garrison began, the rebels decided to restore an ancient cannon that was manufactured in 1795 in England at the factory of D. Gascoigne (MIGKS.

OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 215) and was installed as a relic on the church square near the lighthouse. The idea to restore the cannon belonged to Socialist Revolutionary Grechkin who ordered to send the cannon to the locksmiths' workshop where it was repaired and successfully tested. How to use the cannon was explained by retired officer Lavrov who was previously sent to Sochi to exile by the Russian administration (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 17, 33).

During the days of December 31, 1905 and January 1, 1906, shots were fired from the cannon at the barracks every half hour. The revolutionaries fired about 40 shots, making 18 holes in the front wall of the barracks and knocking out the outer door. The besieged soldiers when they understood that the shells were not explosive they got used to cannon shots and took them easy. Moreover, the retaliatory fire from the barracks wounded the cannon crew – injuries were received by L. Cherednichenko and L. Petrosyan (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 34, 36).

The above developments made the revolutionaries also realize that it was pointless to continue the firefight. The question of the possibility to storm the barracks was also closed. The lever that affected the district chief was his pregnant wife arrested by the revolutionaries at the apartment of engineer Gofman December 29.

At around noon on January 1, 1906, the leaders of the uprising raised a white flag at the cannon and proposed the district chief to start negotiations. Socialists-Revolutionaries Grechkin, Aleksandrov, Rozen, Social Democrat Gvatua and city doctor Gordon as a private party participated in the negotiations with the district chief. It was the city doctor who informed Rozalion-Soshalsky that his pregnant wife was held captive by the revolutionaries (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/1. L. 187). This news shifted the balance, and the district chief took a decision to surrender the garrison.

According to the terms of the garrison's surrender, life was guaranteed to all the besieged. Soldiers with weapons were supposed to stay in the barracks, and amounts from the treasury were to be returned as appropriate. The guards and policemen were to be disarmed and had to leave Sochi. They were to hand over their weapons to the district chief who would send them to the Black Sea governor.

We should note that the Sochi population stayed indoors, suffering hunger and enduring other hardships, once the initial firefight broke out

between the guards and revolutionaries and up to the surrender of the besieged garrison. People ran grave risk struggling to procure food, because the revolutionaries controlled the issue of bread and meat, which were given to civilians in specific rations based on the size of each family (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 30).

The revolutionary forces did not have much time to celebrate their triumph in Sochi. At about 9.00 p.m. January 1, 1906, 3 or 4 hours after the garrison's surrender, the Sochi harbor saw the destroyer "Zavidny" and the transport ship "Nikolay" arriving from Batumi with a detachment of hunters (volunteer soldiers) (AOAGS. F. R-282. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 40). This triggered the outflow of the revolutionary forces from Sochi.

The arrival of government troops in Sochi resulted from the fact that December 29, 1905, a telegram was sent from Gagra to Batumi to the chief of artillery, Lieutenant-General Reshetilov, which forwarded the news from Adler that in Sochi "crowds of revolutionaries beat the Russian population". Reshetilov ordered immediately to dispatch to Sochi a small group of hunters, manned by the personnel of the mine company of the Labinsk Cossack regiment and Kherson infantry regiment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Trzhepetsky (TsDNIKK. F. 1774-r. Op. 2. D. 231. L. 3).

The unexpected appearance of the destroyer "Zavidny" and the ROPiT's steamer "Nikolay" stunned the revolutionaries and compelled the masterminds of the uprising, the Social Democrats and their supporters, to leave Sochi for one day (TsDNIKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 62. L. 101).

Since the prisoners were in the hands of the revolutionaries, Staff-Captain Stark was tasked to conduct difficult negotiations on behalf of the command of the detachment that came to the Sochi harbor. The process was described in detail by a participant in the events, V. Fronstein, in his recollections: "Stark came ashore, he was calm, congratulated on the victory over the oppressors, visited key positions taken by the rebels, admired the refurbished cannon, advised on digging trenches. Further, Stark said that rumors had reached Batum saying of civilians massacred and outrages committed in Sochi. But since all was quiet, we should go back, and asked to give officers and soldiers, "and you can hang police bastards at night, when I leave." He went around Sochi not with representatives of the revolutionary forces, but with intellectuals. At Stark's request, the captured officers and soldiers

*were washed in a bathhouse, fed and handed in to him with weapons, and also returned the treasury amounts. In the evening, Stark said goodbye to us. Before that, he proposed that the city be put in order and plant mines along the coast, because the transport ship carrying Cossacks would be sent in three days, and left for his vessel. Stark's behavior can be called almost revolutionary, everyone listened to him open-mouthed"* (TsDNIKK. F. 2830. Op. 1. D. 1454. L. 6).

Encouraged by this attitude, on the afternoon of January 3, 1906, armed representatives of all political movements, singing revolutionary songs and chanting: "Long live freedom and people's governance!" – carried out a large-scale demonstration in the streets of the Sochi *posad*, which was attended by approximately 300–400 people. After the demonstration, the supporters of the Social Democrats and Socialists-Revolutionaries left Sochi for Georgia, as the armed forces of the authorities came to the city.

Semyonov explained his role in the armed uprising by the fact that he and his supporters "took part in the armed uprising, and he joined it, like other Socialists-Revolutionaries, to prevent Gvatua and the company from gaining the upper hand in the situation". Semyonov and Poyarko feared for their lives and did not trust the leader of the Social Democrats, pointing out "... that the ultimate goal of Gvatua and his adherents was to enforce sentences against many Russian revolutionaries" (MIGKS. OPI. OF – 10426/8. L. 61-62). It meant physical elimination of their political opponents.

But these concerns did not become an obstacle to the temporary consolidation of the Socialists-Revolutionaries with local nationalist rebels who had no interest in socialist ideas and had nothing in common with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, except for hatred towards the Russian administration. This can be evidenced by the Sochi armed uprising. The trend towards a united front of revolutionary forces developed on the outskirts of the Empire, in particular, in the Caucasus where militant nationalists quickly put aside ideological differences for the sake of immediate action (Geifman, 2013).

Meanwhile, the military authorities build up an armed group in Sochi. January 2, 1906, the steamer "Borzhom" additionally came to Sochi and brought a supply of food, two mountain guns with crews and ten foot scouts (*plastuns*). It was followed by the mine carrier "Dunay" with an assault party led by Colonel Krylov who commanded an infantry detachment of 300 people

and 4 guns (TsDNIKK. F. 1774-r. Op. 2. D. 231. L. 6).

There is no sense in overplaying the role of the Social Democrats in the Sochi armed uprising. The leader of the Social Democrats, A. Gvatua, and his opponent, Socialist-Revolutionary V. Semyonov were confronted with an accomplished fact, since no one planned the armed clash between revolutionaries and horse police officers, which occurred December 28.

The Moscow armed uprising was more ambitious and meaningful, but these events also demonstrated that it was not political leaders who orchestrated the action, but a combination of circumstances dictated them where to move (Leonov, 1997: 206). However, different conclusions are also suggested that the Moscow uprising was a risky undertaking schemed by the Council of Workers' Deputies and put into operation under the profound influence of the Socialists-Revolutionaries and Bolsheviks (Volobuev, 2002: 64).

We should proceed with a brief description of the museum exhibition devoted to the events of the armed uprising in the city. The Museum of the History of the Resort City of Sochi displays the cannon and two stands for the public, covering the events of the First Russian Revolution and accordingly the armed uprising in Sochi in December 1905 and January 1906. An important fact is that this exhibition was designed by the museum in the Soviet period, and for this reason the historical events were distorted by ideology and censorship of the government. Since the time, no changes have been made to the exhibition. This why the stand features the *Iskra* newspaper and the work "What is to be done?" by V.I. Lenin, which are irrelevant to the Sochi events.

The same link explains the presence of a police sabre and prison shackles, which were intended to demonstrate the arbitrary behaviors of the tsarist rule and its purely repressive policy towards the population. The museum exhibition even today represents the revolutionaries as freedom fighters, rather than terrorists and expropriators or criminal elements, which they actually were. The museum exhibition also fails to reflect that a number of civilians who objected to the revolutionaries were killed by them. Nor has the exhibition materials on the seizure of property, robbery, separatism, nationalism and many other aspects of the events. This is the true reason why the exhibition is specifically designed so that the events of 1905–1906 in Sochi can be perceived in

harmony with the official textbook on the history of the Communist Party of the USSR.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Thus, social and political movements in the Sochi district of the Black Sea governorate acted in line with the social scenarios that determined their behaviors in the time of revolutionary events. The local authorities tried to defend their position, while the revolutionaries put pressure on them, using the support of the population that the revolutionaries involved in the process by various means. On the other hand, the liberal democrats continued to oppose the authorities and blamed the government for delay in implementing reforms, but they clearly did not express sympathies to the extremist methods of struggle. The Russian government was strong enough to keep the situation under control, while the revolutionary parties did not yet have real power.

Separatist sentiments among the Georgian population of the Sochi district, inspired by the leaders of the Social Democrats, gained no support from other social, political and national associations in the district. The Socialists-Revolutionaries, as well as the leaders of the All-Armenian "Dashnaktsutyun" party and the *posad's* liberal intelligentsia, rejected the idea imposed by the Social Democrats to remove the local administration and replace it with a revolutionary city government. They perceived here separatist sentiments maintained by the leaders of the Social Democrats, who planned to take the lead in the political life of the Sochi district.

Members of the national "Dashnaktsutyun" party joined the uprising responding to the call of the Socialists-Revolutionaries, but the leaders of the Armenian diaspora made no bold statements, as they had to take into account several factors. First, in case the Sochi district became a part of Georgia, the leaders of the Social Democrats pledged not to oppress those who participated in the uprising, while those who sidestepped were supposed to be relocated from the inhabited lands. Second, in case the revolutionary forces suffered defeat, the retaliation of the Russian authorities to Armenians who were Turkish subjects would be harsh. In turn, the Socialists-Federalists from among the Georgians, who lived in Gagra, refused to be involved in the armed uprising, because their action plan aimed to seek autonomy for Georgia within the Russian Empire.

Calls for the protection of the existing regime were brutally crushed, and this was the consequence of the murder of Lyakhovetsky, the head of the experimental station. The revolutionaries took the district chief's wife hostage, while the woman was at the final stage of pregnancy, and this was the primary reason why the district chief surrendered the besieged garrison. At the same time, numerous supporters of the revolutionaries – their number exceeded the

forces loyal to the government – refused to mount resistance to the reinforcements in the form of a destroyer and military transport ship that came to rescue the local administration. The population in the Sochi *posad* and district took the side of the revolutionaries whose supporters actually spread terror among the local population and plundered it on the pretext of seizing weapons for revolutionary purposes.

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Fig. 1

Fig. 2



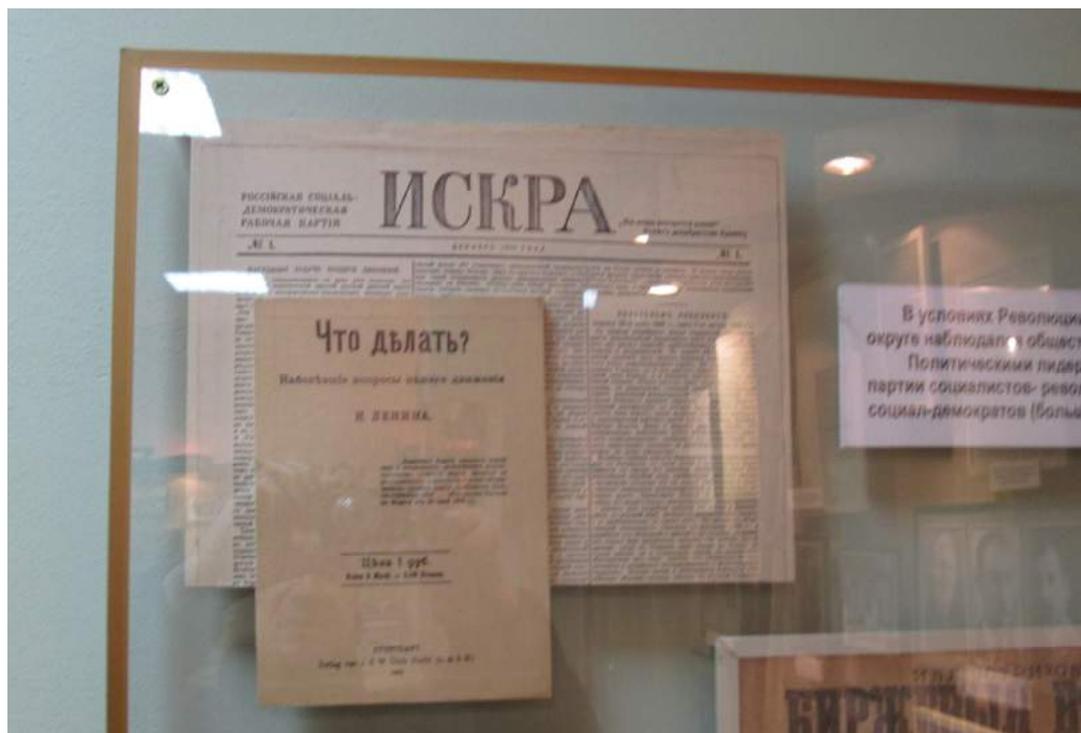


Fig. 3