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## CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY IN TOWNS OF THE SOUTH OF UKRAINE DURING THE PERIOD OF 1785-1870

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**Abstract.** *The article focuses on the problem of bribery and corruption in towns in the south of Ukraine between the end of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. The main focus is on the activities of public officials and deputies of municipal self-government. It is noted that the flourishing state of corruption and bribery in the region began to form under the conditions of the new socio-cultural situation that resulted from the fast processes of incorporation, colonization, adaptation, and modernization. The distance from the centre weakened control on the part of the State, and therefore corruption and bribery acquired new forms in the south of Ukraine in comparison with other regions of the Russian Empire. Also regional features of the flourishing state of corruption and bribery have been noted. Conclusions are made that corruption and bribery became usual occurrences of local life against which municipal communities came out, permanently forming an interaction mechanism with civil society. It is also noted that the struggle of local communities with different cases of bribery had practical results: a lot of officials were punished, and eventually sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.*

**Keywords:** *corruption, bribery, municipal self-government, administrative measures, public officials, the south of Ukraine.*

**Raktažodžiai:** *korupcija, kyšininkavimas, vietos savivaldybės, administracinės priemonės, valstybės pareigūnai, pietų Ukraina.*

## Introduction

Under the modern conditions of the Ukrainian State's development and the realization of reforms on the principles of decentralization of local self-government, there exists a very actual problem of struggling against corruption. In this aspect, modern Ukraine inherited not only the former Soviet Union's corruption, but also that of the Russian Empire. At the end of the eighteenth century towns in the south of Ukraine began their existence with different opportunities, population, and land ownership. The government of the Russian Empire decided that it would suffice to grant land ownership to towns and establish local bodies of self-government, so they themselves could organize trade, lease lands, fill up their own budgets, and not rely on the state as much.

The government, wishing to shift the financing from the center on to the peripheral cities and towns, tried to lessen the burden of administrative measures over the regions of the Empire. The State based the "new" municipal relationships on the principle of decentralization, the main ideas of which were to facilitate modernization, municipalization, and capitalization.

According to this "new life" idea, it was necessary to develop extensive trade relations to provide merchants with the necessary tools, and to turn them into municipal leaders who would be able to further develop towns on the principle of self-sufficiency. In other words, the State planned to turn municipal communities into municipal self-governments and town's estate owners into bourgeoisie.

Decentralization of public government was declared in 1785, followed by the formation and functioning of municipal councils as self-governing bodies of local populations, which became an entirely new phenomenon in the history of the Russian Empire and in the south of Ukraine in particular.

The principal goal of this extensive reform was to shift the maintenance costs from the State's treasury on to towns, permitting self-governing bodies to form their own budgets. Towns became the subjects of budgets at the same time as municipal self-governing bodies acquired management functions. Self-governing bodies could, therefore, only use budgets rather than influencing them, as they were not their owners. According to the general plan, towns had to form and use local budgets, contributing nothing to the State's treasury. That way the government clearly divided the finances into municipal and official and, therefore, the population had to pay for municipal and state (official) expenses separately.

After shifting the burden of local financing on to towns, there began an innovation for the south of Ukraine in forming budgets using commercial and land leasing activity. This substantially differentiated the south of Ukraine from other regions, where the main levies were taxes gained from the local population. In the south of Ukraine, about 43% of these amounts were collected into budgets, whilst at the same time in other regions of Ukraine, Russia and elsewhere, these items of the budget were provided by inconsequen-

tial (1-2%) revenues (in most towns they were simply absent). Here, the main sources of filling budgets were valuation duties and taxes collected from the local population.

However, modernization and “new life” did not eliminate such negative phenomena **as corruption and bribery**. In the new life of the south of Ukraine they flourished, acquired new forms and growingrew to an enormous scale.

### **Corruption and bribery in self-governing bodies in southern Ukrainian towns**

The problem of corruption and bribery in municipal self-government in the south of Ukraine remains insufficiently studied because of the unsatisfactory state of the information sources. Not many formulary cards of local deputies remain, in those which that contain a special column existed indicating whether a person was proven guilty of bribery or not. In some cards the column was not filled, in others there remain notices that a person was proven guilty of bribery. The biographies of some municipal figures sometimes contain records concerning such facts. There remain a few complaints noting that deputies and clerks took bribes, especially in large amounts. Those who refused to give bribes were imprisoned and severely beaten.

Even foreign travelers wrote about the phenomenon of corruption among the southern officialdom. For example, Mary Holders, an Englishwoman who stayed in the south of Ukraine from 1816-1820, stresses the fact that municipal life was, to a large extent, imbued with bribery. Being under the impression that this reflected the peculiarities of local customs, she cited in her memoirs a saying of local officials which gave an indication of the level of bribery: “We’re a long way from heaven, a long way from the Tsar”. Though portraits of the Tsar were kept everywhere, and all the officials behaved themselves as if he was present in their office, everybody knew that they were far away from the Tsar. That is why one could take a good many liberties (Gutri et al. 2012.; p. 65-91).

British citizen Robert Layal described in his memoirs “Travels in Russia, Crimea and Caucasus” (1825) life in Kherson, Katherinoslav, and Tavria provinces. In his impression of the situation, the south of Ukraine appeared as a separate country, the population of which consisted of Russians, Ukrainians, Jews and foreigners. In his view, Russians likewise clear bribe-takers, whereas Jews appeared were considered by him to be ‘swindlers’ (Gutri et al. 2012: p. 100-179).

Although the deputies of municipal self-government had to take an oath (according to which all deputies were to be guarantors of certain spiritual and ethical values: honesty, diligence, righteousness, in other words, to be “the most gifted and well-deserved”) it did not prevent them from taking part in corruption schemes. In the oath, members of self-governing bodies swore absolute loyalty to the monarchy, and to fulfill the orders and instructions of higher ranking officials. Moreover, the form of the oath for municipal figures remained unchanged neither during the Pre-Reform period, nor after the Reform. Representatives of municipal communities swore an oath to the Emperor and assumed obligations to fulfill all the orders of the higher administration irrespective of their posi-

tion (or subordination), to remain loyal to the last drop of blood, and not to take bribes (DAARC. F. 518. Op.1. D.2. P. 10-42).

The principle of electivity to public institutions under the realities of the southern Ukrainian region formed as a result of the population's fast adaptation to new commercial conditions of life. Whilst in other regions of Ukraine the establishing of public institutions was based on family-protection relationships (Volod'ko 2007), in the south of Ukraine new deputies were not connected with previous events in the region or social links between themselves. Their election took place mostly due to successful commercial activity, so they took their attitude of relative commerciality towards their official work in civil institutions. The figures who were elected, but had not been financially successful in the old regions wanted to quickly become rich in the south. The distance from the Empire's center along with fast adaptation, new social, national and religious conditions of life, and the declared principles of decentralization, rendered the financial direction of self-government activities into a leading one. That is why double and triple taxation of local populations became widespread, and so did the lucrative purchase of municipal property – probably over 10% of public assets became private property of the deputies. Corruption, bribery and bureaucracy flourished to an even greater extent than in older regions.

Then the question arises: what actions required bribery? Plenty of opportunities for the above-mentioned illegal deeds were available during the registration of town's estates, issuing of trading certificates, checking the norms of commercial activity, leasing municipal property, construction works, and etc. Taking the testimonies of the locals into consideration, it is known that documentation turnover was very slow, so, in all probability, a conclusion can be made that bribery in self-governing bodies was an absolutely routine thing.

The abovementioned was the norm especially during leasing land property, which, in fact, ran alongside selling land to other people. There was also a widespread practice of independent individuals getting hold of municipal lands, which made it possible to not pay much in taxes and “voluntary donations”.

One more reason for wide-spread corruption and bribery being characteristic of all southern Ukrainian towns was the intensive urbanization process which led to constant population growth. On the one hand it increased budget revenue from local duties and taxes, but on the conversely it lead to unfair tax composition. Taxation was shifted onto the townspeople and artisans, who were often charged two to three times the normal amount.

The constant growth in population in new southern Ukrainian towns permitted police to carry out uncontrolled raids, robbing local populations on municipal lands – they confiscated crops and money and arrested and beat those who refused to pay. Although legal donations could be made to the police (via charities or police donations) that varied from 500 to 3,000 rubles, depending on national situation (occurring most often in provincial towns). The ethnic groups that resided close together and were in the majority had certain privileges, but the municipal population being in the minority suffered double or triple tax rates. For example, ever since its founding the town of Grygoropol (DAHO. F.

14. Op.1. D. 1303. P. 3-11; DAHO. F.14. Op. 1. D.961. P. 3-24) was home to a majority of Armenians, so other nationalities paid much larger amounts towards the budget. The Armenians were well represented in the municipal self-government, so their delegates lessened taxation for their own people. In 1870 the Greeks of Mariupol made a decision that municipal lands should belong to them, thus making use of the fact that Greeks constituted a large portion of the city's population (Konstantinova 2011: p. 193-220). The south of Ukraine was a borderline of settlement for Jews, but they were not allowed to work in self-governing bodies until 1870; they solved their own problems through the estate's self-government and paid box taxes.

On the whole, though official ideology tried to represent the south of Ukraine as Russian territory, in fact the region did not become truly Russian in reality. In all of the descriptions and characteristics, the south of Ukraine did not look Russian neither culturally, nor spiritually. The contrast between Russian territories and the southern Ukrainian region was very evident. Moreover, the south was always characterized as better than Russian provinces. Life in the region looked better than in Russia, the population was more well-off, and prices were lower. Residents of the south were not Russians though, but Ukrainians, Tatars, Jews – foreigners with old traditions and interesting historical pasts. Townspeople became Europeans according to their social-cultural tradition and mentality. The only thing which connected the region with Russia was corruption, plutocracy, and bribery. In other aspects the south of Ukraine was in sharp contrast to other Russian territories, and, in the opinion of travelling foreigners, it was Europe – the most civilized region in the Russian Empire. All nationalities residing in southern Ukraine were modernized, as well as socially stratified. Even Russian nobility who still wore beards spoke French and German better than Russian.

It seemed that new life in new lands was going to force out such 'Russian' phenomena as corruption and bribery, because newcomers from the Russian remote districts were very unhappy with such things in old regions, and they planned to begin a decent trade-based life in the south of Ukraine. Moreover, the Russian government had a practice of appointing foreigners to municipal and administrative posts who were ideological enemies of corruption. It seemed that traditions of bribery and corruption were doomed to disappear under the new conditions of decentralized government. But, in reality, the situation was different, as foreigners became accustomed to corruption faster than Russian settlers. For example, D. Kortazzi, who considered himself a foreigner (the Mayor of Odessa), did not speak any Russian, and all of his documents were composed exclusively in French. He worked out a corruption scheme based on the purchasing of broken stone on municipal lands, of which he was later convicted (Chizhevich 1894: p. 26-28).

A lot of representatives of municipal self-government were unsatisfied with their public duties for different reasons: low salaries, no possibility to start their own business, imperfect legislation, low social esteem. The only motivation to act was coming from the interest in their own personal gain. Moreover, they used municipal budgets for their own needs, disguised as "maintenance of self-governing bodies", which amounted to 10% of the budget.

Absolute apathy towards communal or state interests became the dominant behavioral model, and at the same time the highest effort was made in the interest of personal enrichment.

For example, there existed a way of imposing extra taxes and duties upon a municipal population, the revenues from which bypassed municipal budgets and went directly into the pockets of municipal figures. A double or triple increase in taxation was a widespread practice in towns of the region. A lot of deputies held the dubious distinction of being embezzlers of public funds and unreasonable users of the budget's resources. A well-known case referred to two members of self-government who took 3,528 rubles from the municipal budget, (DAHO. F. 14 Op. 1. D. 1391. P. 1-5) supposedly for the purpose of carrying out public inspections, but they used the money for their own needs instead. They were sentenced to several years in a penal colony by Kherson court. According to this behavioral model, municipal figures involved in corruption schemes tried to retain their decorum by any means, so they hid the results of their own actions in different ways, and those who tried to unmask them ended up being used as scapegoats with their stores getting demolished. For example, Dioshand, head of the artisan's guild in Simpheropol, used to severely beat those who wrote complaints about his taking bribes instead of fulfilling his duties (DAARC. F. 183. Op. 1. D. 317. P. 70-112).

The practice of private profiteering by manipulating municipal land ownership in collaboration with local police was widespread in nearly all towns of the southern Ukrainian region. For example, townspeople were leased municipal lands for a year and after they had grown crops, municipal deputies would take the harvest by force with the help of the police, and sell it for their own profit (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 1579. P. 2-14). One of the first attempts to change the situation was a grievance of Kherson townspeople and merchants against the unlawful activity of municipal self-government deputies in 1797-1798 (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 438. P. 2-50). The grievance was submitted to the Emperor Paul I. The representative of Kherson's citizens' interests, Scheka, brought a collection of 29 documents to Saint-Petersburg. Perhaps he would have been able to prove the truth of his case if had he not killed an officer on watch duty in Ordonanz Gauzi with a rifle in order to attract the Emperor's attention, as he did not wish to disclose the details of the case to anyone else. Scheka was sentenced to death by the Emperor's order in Saint-Petersburg's court on June 27, 1800. He died on July 5 and was buried in Volkov's cemetery. Only after the incident were the documents he had brought with himself examined in the Senate.

With the help of those documents, Kherson's townspeople and merchants testified that the municipal council, together with the Magistrate, overtaxed local population with unlawful duties and taxes for the amount of 20-30 rubles from each person to cover unknown expenses. At the same time, the municipal self-government together with Mayor Zorin took the grain harvest from the townspeople every year by force. Municipal communities sent complaints to the gubernator of Novorossiysk in March, 1798, and June 15, 1798. The gubernator's administration did not examine this case, though Mayor Zorin was imposed a fine of 25 rubles (which he did not pay), whereas Scheka was called to account for complaints from Kherson twice, and he was also imprisoned and cruelly

treated. The first time he was sentenced to a public punishment of lashing, and the second time he was put behind bars. Kherson townspeople and merchants wrote a new complaint to the gubernator's administration, in which they testified about the cruel treatment of Scheka. The administration wanted explanations from the Magistrate and the Mayor but they waited in vain, although Scheka was later released later. Realizing that there was no justice on the local level, Scheka was chosen as *charge d'affaires* by Kherson's townspeople and merchants, who gave him a passport of the Black Sea Kazak Samodin. They sent him to Saint-Petersburg "to seek the truth".

By the end of 1801 the Senate made a resolution that municipal taxes and duties imposed by the Kherson self-government were unlawful and had to be revoked. Members of the magistrate's office were removed from their posts, and at the same time the Magistrate was given an order to allocate municipal taxes with the approval of each citizen.

There were other complaints from representatives of local self-government, but they were mostly of a commercial nature, and were therefore examined by the Chamber of Civil Court in Kherson and the Commercial Court in Odessa, though the central government did not pay any attention to them. The verdicts were not severe, the plaintiffs were not charged with substantial fines, and some concessions were made in favor of the defendant.

Personal characteristics such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and caring for peoples' well-being began to appear undesirable when it came to municipal employees. For example, the Mayor of Odessa N. Novoselskiy was criticized for such character traits (Review of the activities of the former mayor of Odessa N. A. Novoselskiy, 1880: p. 2-36).

There were cases where municipal employees wanted to work for the good of the people, but they were met with bureaucratic or formal character obstacles. For example, the secretary of Grygoriopol self-government, F. Torpanov, wished to fulfill his duties honestly, for which he was cruelly beaten by the Chief Police Officer Pogorzelskiy. This case had been reviewed at the Kherson Court for four years (1831-1834), and finally made headway only due to F. Torpanov's grievance to the Minister Of Justice D. Dashkov, in which he noted: "*not only driven to financial ruin, but to the last measure of disaster.*" However, in Kherson Court the case was considered as "*pending*" and was never concluded (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 1336. P. 1-3).

A lot of representatives of local self-government were absolutely content with the existing situation and did not think it was necessary to change anything in their private, social, or state lives. They successfully adapted to the existing order of things, and felt comfortable, especially if there was no need to do anything. They never did any official work, even with considerable delay, thinking that there was no need for it and they would not be punished anyway.

A lot of deputies in self-governing bodies were, or appeared to be, at least half-educated. Such facts were known in provincial towns, but on the subordinate level the situation was even worse. For example, it took decades to solve cases regarding local population in Bobrinez, and municipal employees were not even present at their offices in Onan'ev and Ovidiopol. There was much disorder in the office-work in Elizavetgrad, so the Mayor of Odessa P. Zelenyi (1890: p. 6) thought that representatives of Elizavetgrad's self-govern-

ment did not even know the requirements of their job. An interesting fact was noted in Ochakiv: the man who was supposed to do office work in the municipal self-government was revealed to be completely illiterate and he had therefore not done any work at all.

In the towns of Katherinoslav and Tavria, office work was done very slowly due to incompetent employees of the self-government. They wrote complaints against each other, or mostly fictional honest and hard-working deputies of municipal councils. It is obvious that such behavior was not considered shocking at all – it had a lot of supporters.

At the same time there were municipal figures that made an effort to fight corruption and bribery in this environment. For example, Turchaninov, who was elected as the Ratmann by Kherson community in 1790, worked in this job for 3 years, and was characterized as a responsible, diligent, and conscientious employee. In 1797 he transferred himself from Tahanrog to Mykolaiv merchants. He provided significant assistance to the town's development, and the same year the community elected him as leader. Turchaninov had opportunities to deal with peoples' protection issues and well-being, increased the town's revenue, engaged in honest trading, and struggled against corruption and bribery. Due to his ethical economic activity he was respected by Mykolaiv merchants and townspeople alike, and he was elected as the town's mayor during the opening ceremony of the Rathaus (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 455. P. 1-4).

One of the examples of organized fighting against corruption are the deeds of I. Androsov, who was not native to the south of Ukraine. Nevertheless he became one of the most passionate advocates of honest work practice in the self-government, for the sake of the development of the south Ukrainian territories. He was born in Brjansk (Orlovskaja province), approximately in the second half of the eighteenth century. He received primary education from his father who was engaged in trade. He started his career in the Office of the Briansk Magistrate. 6 years later he moved to Elisavetgrad to work as a trader where he married A. G. Sinevska. Soon the family moved to Odessa to do business. Later that same year (1797) he was elected as the Ratmann in the municipal self-government, where he noticed a lot of misdoings and examples of the old ways, so he came to believe that corruption or bribery should not have a place in the "new life". During his years in public service he revealed the illegal actions of the municipality office workers, and he became the first local reformer. After his revelations, the provincial administration brought the self-government in line with the "rule of law".

Collegial registrars of Oleksandrovska Rathaus I. Mazaikov, O. Vasilchenko and V. Pashkov were also characterized as intelligent, hard-working employees – they never took bribes or participated in corruption schemes, and they never received any penalties which was quite a rarity in the mid nineteenth century. In contrast, Ratmann Psovaha and Mayor Zachariev worked only for the sake of their own profit, earning up to 600 rubles per month by selling municipal property during their tenure. At the same time, the official salary of mid-level deputies varied from 800 to 1,000 rubles, so additional illegal income was not an insignificant supplement to one's monthly salary (DAZO. F. 21. Op. 1. D. 14. P. 15-51).

There were not many honest public servants in the Mariupol self-government. For example, the good personality of merchant-deputy K. Danilov stood out among others



and he was elected to office in 1876. Due to his hard work he managed to hold the position successfully until 1892. Special respect was commanded by the Mayor of Mariupol A. Chebanenko for his diligence, enthusiasm and achievements in modernization; the same can be said about the members of the board K. Popov and K. Avertanov. Among others, the personality of a member of the Mariupol board, A. Karamanov, was distinguished for hard work and enthusiasm, and he simultaneously took positions as the registrar, member of the board, deputy of the city council. and member of the valuation and market commission from 1888 until 1895 (DADO. F. 113. Op. 1. D. 127. P. 2; DADO. F. 113. Op. 1. D. 190. P. 20).

### **Corruption and bribery in the administrative bodies in the south of Ukraine**

From the very beginning of the first half of the nineteenth century, there are grounds for mentioning corruption within the administration. The first complaint against acts of corruption by the administration of the Kherson province in 1815 was addressed to the Senate, appealing for a decision in this case. Ivan Linenko, leader of the nobility in Grigopol, made a complaint against the vice-governor of Kherson province, Karageorgiy, regarding his unlawful dismissal from his post. I. Linenko testified about being subject to the abuse of power by the authorities (DAHO. F.14. Op. 1. D. 864. P. 1-6). Prior to that, he submitted a complaint to the Senate, regarding the absence of help from the provincial administration. It appeared that the vice-governor did not regard the provincial administration as an authoritative institution, and the decisions of the collegial body were of no importance to him, as he made and confirmed all the decisions himself. One could only guess what the vice-governor's attitude towards the self-governing bodies was, as he was not going to take into consideration the decisions of the collegial administrative body, which he and the gubernator had turned into a submissive unit.

The situation repeated itself once again in 1818, when the leader of Elisavetgrad's nobility, Abertasov, made a complaint to the Senate against the gubernator of the Kherson province for illegally removing him from his post, citing abuse of power (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 903. P. 2-21). After the gubernator had learnt about the content of the complaint he called Abertasov to his office and tried to persuade him (as demonstrated by a 6-page-long collection of evidence) to cease his complaints, or he would end up causing harm to himself and to the city. As a result, after the case had been examined, the gubernator of Elizavetgrad doubled municipal and provincial taxes and removed Abertasov from his post, whilst the Senate was informed that those duties were necessary for the city's development and funding of charities (disabled care and orphanages). Thus, it was shown that municipal and group cases should not fall under the jurisdiction of self-governing bodies, but under that of the gubernator.

There were known cases when the administration of the Novorussia and Bessarabia territories fired the employees of Odessa Magistrate's office. For example, Secretary Mischenko was fired for illegal doings in 1828 (registered on the lists of Odessa's foreign townspeople and runaway convicts), but he labored to fix his mistakes and was later reinstated (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 1369. P. 2-22).

There were other complaints against representatives of the administration, and on occasion officials complained about each other, but they did not resonate with either the public or the central government of the empire. Municipalities lacked funding for nearly everything, which was often the subject of complaints made by the deputies to the government. However, these issues were completely ignored.

A true testament to the level of corruption is the so-called wine payoffs in Odessa. In 1818-1819 some deputies of the municipal self-government (as evidenced by 77 signatures) made a complaint to the Senate, describing how the mayor and the head of the magistrate colluded in a criminal scheme, in which wine payoffs were to be granted to the person who offered the largest bribe. By law, such payoffs were supposed to be given out in an open auction. This happened in addition to the large sums already taken from the municipal budget for their personal needs. They omitted an estimated 400,000 rubles worth of expenses from the official reports, giving the leadership positions in the municipal council to people who "benefited from them". Those that dared to oppose them were imprisoned and severely tortured in an attempt to collect more money. As a result, the corrupt officials were able to extort an additional 200,000 rubles from the local merchants.

The Head of the Magistrate explained these complaints very simply: *"I have nothing to do with it, everything is done in compliance with the law, the money is used for the benefit of the people, all the taxes are balanced, and those who are imprisoned are guilty of murder and misdoings"* (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 952. P. 192).

The above-mentioned actions seemed to be just part of some plot against him, as there were parties in municipal self-government interested in claiming the wine payoffs, and organizing production and the free trade of vodka in the city. If that were to happen, the municipal budget would suffer from deficits, so the conditions of wine payoffs should remain unchanged.

In response to this proposition, the deputies of Odessa demanded that the Senate examine the core of the matter, and make the head of the Magistrate find other methods of earning money, *"so that merchants of the city could be allowed to freely take part in the auction for wine payoffs and the head of the Magistrate should do it openly"*.

The head of the Magistrate was unable to understand Odessa's merchants, because in his view he was the one to whom the merchants should be grateful for organizing the wine payoffs in the first place, and now they dared to make complaints against him *"because bad people want to get a hold of the wine payoffs, which would cause a lot of harm, and factories would profit from it, not the city"* (DAHO. F. 14. Op. 1. D. 952. P. 62).

The Senate's resolution concerning this case was passed on November 28, 1819, and it read as follows: wine payoffs were not to be changed and the contract with traders was to be regarded as legal. Interceding for Odessa's socially active people, the head of the Magistrate was ordered not to overtax poor residents of the city, and to conduct wine payoff auctions openly and place their revenues in the budget to be used for commercial purposes.

Being unhappy with the decision, merchants Pavel Varvarov and Osip Sapozhnikov made complaints against the city's police officials, saying that they were not allowed to

take part in the wine payoffs (auctions), for which the policemen imprisoned and beat them. As a result, the police officers received fair penalties. The case was resolved by the Senate, which ordered the police “*not to cause harm to Odessa’s merchants*”.

Thus, the municipal self-government in Odessa found a certain balance in the relationship between the socially active members and the head of the Magistrate, proved that not all activities of the administration were regarded as positive, and that it was possible to legally find the truth while not always following orders of the “*higher ranking officials*”. A significant feature was the negative attitude towards municipal self-government, displayed by the General-gubernator, the civil gubernator, the vice-gubernator, but also by the head of the Magistrate. It is possible that in the cases mentioned previously, the head of the Magistrate was following the direct orders of the Novorussia and Bessarabia General-gubernator.

The extent to which bribery and corruption became usual occurrences can be glimpsed, seen if we examine the special investigation in Kherson in the 1820-30s. In 1828 some anonymous grievances were submitted to the Ministry of Justice against officials of the Kherson province on charges of bribery. At first the Ministry postponed the investigation, as the complaints were anonymous. Then, new grievances were received from Mayor Doné against the vice-gubernator Rul’, accusing him of taking a bribe amounting to 250 rubles from land owner Petkovich, meanwhile the Kherson prosecutor Shulzhenko did not start a criminal investigation of the case either. After the investigation by the Ministry of Justice was complete, it was discovered that Mayor Doné had died six months before the grievance was even written, and that the signature on it belonged to another person. The mediator in this case of bribery had been Official Kasperov, but he had been removed from his post long before the incident began.

General-major Scheremetev was commissioned to investigate the case of bribery in Kherson. He interrogated all the persons of interest, who were mentioned in the grievances, and came to the conclusion that land owner Petkovich was himself the author of the grievances. He was denied a position at the Kherson criminal court by the nobility in 1827, so he promised to provide a horse and 250 rubles. During his interrogation Petkovich revealed that land owner Marzyn witnessed him giving the bribe. It was also discovered that prosecutor Shulzhenko was supposed to cover up the bribes and to conceal the grievances.

The case was brought to court. Vice-gubernator Rul’ was judged in Moscow, the other participants in Kherson by 1830. After the public questioning of Kherson’s residents it was found that all of the officials were large-scale bribe-takers and that uber-prosecutor of the Senate Zhuravlev covered for prosecutor Shulzhenko. The Kherson gubernator could do nothing to prevent it.

It was revealed at the trial that all of the officials took bribes, but only when the gubernator was not present in the office. For example, bribes of 200-700 rubles were given by men wanting to avoid getting enlisted in the army. Jewish townspeople said that vice-gubernator Rul’ made them give bribes in the amount of 1,000 rubles. One rich Jew, Fanung, was forced to pay 8,000 rubles for supposedly “hiding deserters”, for which they promised not to prosecute him. On this occasion, A. Rul’ was assisted by his personal

secretary, and prosecutor Shulzhenko. Christian townspeople said that A. Rul' and Shulzhenko took bribes in the amount of 200-1,000 rubles. They also accepted items such as horses, wine, clothing, etc. Kherson gubernator Komstadius was revealed as a weak person, who did not control his own officials. The local population was too scared to act in the face of such extensive bribery.

As a result, all the participants of those legal proceedings were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, except for the uber-prosecutor of the Senate, Zhuravlev.

## **Conclusions**

As a result of important geopolitical changes at the end of the eighteenth century, the south of Ukraine was incorporated into the Russian Empire which made the central government start the reforms of renovation and modernization. New municipal self-government was established on the principles of decentralization. It should have facilitated the transition of the Russian Empire from backwardness to prosperity. But the majority of ideas did not come to pass, as the newly established system of regional and municipal governments turned out to be saturated with corruption and bribery on all levels of the administration. The problems of corruption and bribery in the south of Ukraine acquired a strong stimulus for flourishing because of the region's distance from the centre, which lessened the State's control. Immediately after the establishment of new municipal and administrative bodies, officials of different levels started to openly take bribes and take part in corruption schemes, which was evident not only to the local population, but to travellers from Western Europe who came to the south of Ukraine for the purpose of meeting people or having a look at life in the new region. Local communities were outraged and scared of those processes; it resulted in their writing complaints aimed at getting some level of protection against dishonest local officials.

Every level of regional power acquired its own niche in the abovementioned processes. Local public servants took bribes for a wide range of acts, such as registration in town's estates, redistribution of municipal land property, facilitation of documentation turnover, etc. Over time, taxes paid by local communities could be latently raised, municipal property could be sold, and local budgets could be redistributed between officials themselves.

The administrative bodies developed corrupt schemes of wine payoffs, the selling of state property, and the distribution of the State's finances. They took bribes for not getting recruited into the army, for the facilitation of various legal proceedings, and the remission of responsibility for the infringement of the law.

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## Korupcija ir kyšininkavimas pietų Ukrainos miestuose 1785-1870 laikotarpiu

Anotacija

Šiame straipsnyje aptariama kyšininkavimo ir korupcijos problema pietų Ukrainos miestuose XVIII a. pabaigoje – XIX a. pirmoje pusėje. Pagrindinis dėmesys skiriamas valstybės tarnautojų ir savivaldybių įstaigų pavaduotojų veiklai.

Pažymėtina, kad klestinti korupcijos ir kyšininkavimo padėtis regione pradėjo formuotis dėl naujos socialinės-kultūrinės situacijos, susijusios su greitais regiono įsitraukimo, kolonizacijos, adaptacijos ir modernizacijos procesais. Nuotolis nuo centro susilpnino valstybės kontrolę, dėl to pietų Ukrainoje korupcija ir kyšininkavimas įgavo naujas formas, lyginant su kitais Rusijos imperijos regionais.

Be to, nemažas dėmesys kreipiamas į regionuose klestėjusių korupcijos ir kyšininkavimo būklę. Iš to galima daryti išvadą, kad korupcija ir kyšininkavimas tapo įprastais vietos gyvenimo įvykiais, dėl kurių vietinių savivaldybių bendruomenės nuolat kūrė bendradarbiavimo mechanizmą su pilietine visuomene. Taip pat pažymima, kad vietos bendruomenių kova su skirtingais kyšininkavimo atvejais buvo rezultatyvi: daugybė valstybės tarnautojų buvo nubausti ir nuteisti ilgomis laisvės atėmimo bausmėmis.

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