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## THE SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF ESCHATOLOGY IN MACEDONIAN FRESCO PAINTINGS

Abstract. The themes with eschatological meaning take an important spot in Macedonian religious painting. In this paper, we will try to capture all the social elements built into the complex theological themes of the compositions with eschatological content, to identify the reasons for their appearance within a certain social and time dimension and determine the influence that they have had and still have on the consciousness of believers. A work of art persists and acts in an inseparable bond with at least three constituent elements: the author of the work, who even though is an individual, nevertheless lives and acts within certain social relations; the medium i.e. "the matter" through which the piece is realized; and the receiver, i.e. consumer of the piece of art. Because of this, researching the socially-historic dependence and functions of the themes with eschatological meaning, that is to say, the way in which the social pulse reflects through the piece of art as both a conditional and constituent element, will take a central role.

Keywords: eschatology, piece of art, fresco painting

In orthodox Christian art, frescos and icons are not just a representation of the bible in paintings, nor are they just decoration of sacral objects; they are a manifestation of sacred meanings, equal in value to the holy word or sacred rituals. The painters draw with perfect strokes and apply certain colors, but in fact they form sentences, write messages. Sacral painting is just a way to plunge into the depths of spiritual secrets.

The greatness of the painter's conception, the intense dramatic subject and the deep theological thought have always inspired great interest for eschatological themes. This especially rises from the fact that modern scientific thought and the whole scientific insight have yet to answer the many questions related to the finality of death. Eschatology on the other hand, as a part of Christian dogma, through the promise of the afterlife gives hope and solace to believers for their short lives on earth. The idea for the kingdom of god marks the end of this objective world and the creation of a new metamorphosed world. Theology explains this the following way: As we started counting time since Christ's birth, so shall time stop with Him. The last day will be the second coming. "During the first coming he endured the cross, in the second he will come with glory, followed by an angelic

army... The Savior will come not to be judged, but to judge those who judged him..." (Popovic 1978: 781). These theological concepts reflect themselves in fresco painting through eschatological themes.

Before the establishment of ottoman rule on the territory of the current-day Republic of Macedonia, fresco painting mainly had a task of illustrating the contents of the old and New Testament, shape them in understandable forms and present them as a clear illustration of religious contents. The complex socio-political conditions during Ottoman rule reflect themselves in sacral art, breaking the strictly canonized forms and inputting social elements into the complex religious theme. This undoubtedly proves that in all epochs, there were progressive forces of social development that developed human minds, encouraged events and showed resistance against the official government, when that government went against national interests.

The Christian Orthodox Church occurs as a main censor while choosing themes, as well as the way they will be spatially and stylistically implemented in sacral objects. To allow the masses to somehow come closer to God, it must be presented in a recognizable form. But, every attempt to symbolically portray god through a picture is simultaneously a risk to lose his absolute mystic nature. When God is embodied in a visual form, there is a risk of idolatry, the worship of his external form, and forgetting his internal contents, i.e. the believer admires the beautiful more than he respects the spiritual. From here is the great resistance of the Orthodox Church towards the new tendencies of religious painting in western-European art and against any type of modernizing art. In such a stunted artistic environment, disguised as an attempt to preserve orthodoxy, artists found their inspiration in Athos which was a powerful artistic centre in the Balkans. Therefore the spirit and style of art on the territory of current-day Macedonia from the XVth to the middle of the XIX century is in an inseparable bond with the continuous course of Byzantine and post-Byzantine art.

According to Garidis the disappearance of Constantinople as a political and religious centre that spreads dogmas and forms, lead to a sure decline in strict orthodox iconography, which opened the doors for innovation, incorporating certain influences from outside (Garidis 1984: 92-9). We have to point out that this phenomenon of leaving established tradition in byzantine iconography is also present in the neighboring countries which were under ottoman rule and shared the same fate as the Slavic population in the territory of the Republic of Macedonia<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> On the territory of Greece, famous are the representations of the last judgment in the church "St. Nicholas" in Meteora (1527); "St. Athanasius" in Lavra, Athos (1512); The monastery Vatoped in Athos (XVIth century). On the territory of Serbia and Montenegro: the monastery Moraca (1577), "St. Nicholas of Dabar" near Priboj (1571), "St. Nicholas" in

In this paper, the greatest emphasis will be put on sacral paintings that deal with eschatological issues, in a very turbulent period, the period of ottoman domination of Macedonia.

From the period of ottoman rule there have been discovered a great number of Christian sacral objects whose walls are covered with themes of eschatological meaning. This tendency culminates during the time of the renaissance when the ottoman government had a more liberal approach when it came to the building of churches. The most commonly represented theme is the Second Coming of Christ, or the Last Judgment, which I abundant in scenes of everyday life.

Here we will try to answer the question: what were the reasons for violating the strictly canonized religious themes by inputting new realistic, profane elements. Fact is, that before the coming of the Ottomans to this region, fresco paintings had only a task of illustrating the contents of the old and new testament, and in that way to bring the bible closer to the masses and make the complex religious contents more easily digestible.

The second important question which we will try to answer is in what way the complex socio-political situation reflects on fresco painting.

But, to determine which elements are created in the Composition Last Judgment, we need to explain the basic concept of this composition which visually was shaped in the XIth century, and mark the core elements which underwent the least changes during its millennial existence. In byzantine religious paintings, great attentions was paid to the sources from which ideas were taken and on which the painters thought was based on in the development of the idea of the last judgment. As an inspiration for this complex composition served: the Revelations, the book of Enoch, the visions of some prophets such as Isaac and Ezekiel as well as the gospels, especially the gospel by Mathew.

The basic idea of visually shaping this composition is the last judgment, or the court of humanity and because of this emphasis is put on the judge (Jesus Christ), who takes a central place in the composition. The divine judge is presented on a throne surrounded by angels. Around him are Mary and St. John the Baptist as well as 6 apostles on both sides. The basis for this part of the composition is given in the Gospel by Matthew 19:28, 25:31 and 16:27<sup>9</sup>, as well as the book of Revelations 20:11 and 4:2<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> "Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Velika Hodza (1577), "St. John" in Velika Hodza (end of the XVth century), the monastery Gracanica (Kosovo), the church "St. Peter and Paul" in Tutin (Sandzak). On the territory of Bulgaria: the church "St. Arsenie" in Arbanasi (1612) "St. Irina" in the village Hotnica (1836, Preobrazhenskiot Monastery (1849) and others.

The painters who worked on the sacral objects in the territory of current-day Macedonia during ottoman rule, following the traditions of byzantine art, in the representation of Jesus Christ as a judge, they never transgressed the boundaries set by Christian dogma – Calm attitude of the judge, strict and magnificent, with wounds on his hands and feet as a sort of witnesses for his love and redemption of humanity by divine blood. In orthodox Christianity, particular attention is paid to the divine nature of Jesus Christ in the composition the last judgment. Always represented as a stern, worthy and full of love judge, while in western art, some human elements are emphasized like anger, irritation and revenge. <sup>11</sup>

The second important segment, carrier of the composition who is usually painted under the judicial tribunal is the Hetoimasia (the prepared throne) in which the Gospel dominates and takes the role of law in the last judgment and is the embodiment of justice. On both sides of the Hetoimasia or sometimes under it are Adam and Eve, who according to theological literature are the first people and the first sinners who were exiled from heaven. Under the Hetoimasia, in post-byzantine art, is the hand of god which holds the scales of justice on which the good and bad deeds are measured. The scales of justice are mentioned in the book of Job 31:6<sup>12</sup>, and in the new testament in the book of revelations<sup>13</sup>.

After the giving of the final judgment in which a basic role plays the behavior of every individual, the Last Judge determines the final resting place of all mortals- heaven for the righteous and hell for the sinners. Even though according to theological literature the future bliss cannot be fully

"For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done."

"At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it."

<sup>&</sup>quot;When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne."

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them."

Especially interesting for its dramatic nature and originality is the composition last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel. Here Michelangelo represents the judgment day as a day of wrath. The whole composition is filled with a lot of wrath and vengeance, and the fear and desperation is felt everywhere. Even in the groups of righteous we can see a strong distress. The artist in this work doesn't portray Christ as a strict but just judge, filled with love, but a wrathful judge who is ready for vengeance.

<sup>12</sup> let God weigh me in honest scales and he will know that I am blameless-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand

expressed in tactile forms (the first epistle of the Corinthians)<sup>14</sup>, still some elements given in the new testament helped the painters, who using their entire imaginations succeeded in connecting these parts in a unified composition. Here, above all, we think of the noble criminal Dimas who both in the older and newer examples of the Last judgment is always painted in heaven. The idea for his representation is according to the Gospel by Luke 23:42<sup>15</sup>. Behind the gates of heaven in the frame of heaven, often placed is Abraham whose lap is full of human souls. The inspiration for this portrayal also came from the Gospel by Luke, more accurately the rich and the poor Lazarus, 16:22<sup>16</sup>.

In Macedonian fresco painting from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in the composition last judgment, more attention is paid to the righteous that are painted in separate choirs or groups of apostles, bishops, Old Testament righteous people, prophets and holy women waiting at the gates of heaven.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the painters concept in a large part changes and more and more space is dedicated to the portrayal of hell <sup>17</sup>. It is completely natural for the thought of the religiously exhilarated painter to always sop with great interest at the hellish torture, portrayals which are electrified with terrible premonition of hellfire, restless worms, or in other words the dark picture of Hell. The painting of hell served as a fulcrum in the portrayals of it in the New Testament. As torture devices sinners will be subjected to are the eternal flame (Gospel by Matthew 25:41<sup>18</sup>), then the restless worms (Gospel by Mark 9:44<sup>19</sup>) and finally the darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth (Gospel by Matthew 25:30<sup>20</sup>). Hell, in the form of a fire lake, is mentioned in the book of revelations 20:10<sup>21</sup>.

15 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>But just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>From the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the Republic of Macedonia, only one sample of the last judgment is recovered, in the church "Saint Mary" in the village Tepavce, near Bitola (1795). Based on that only sample we cannot make a serious analysis on the painters' tendencies in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it comes to the last judgment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

<sup>19</sup> Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup>And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup>And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The main focus in the painting of Hell is placed on the fiery river which in accordance with the book of the prophet Daniel 7:10<sup>22</sup> rises from beneath the feet of Jesus Christ.

In Macedonian fresco painting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, painters paid more attention to the collective tortures, while the portrayal of individual suffering took off during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For this part of the composition Las Judgment, except for the data given in the New Testament, as sources for its visual formation served a large number of other texts such as "Book of Enoch" "The journey of The Virgin Mary through suffering" "The hagiography of Saint Vasilius the New" "The Sermons of St. Efrem of Syria" and others. Yet the most influential in the artistic development of this subject was the imagination of the painters, who succeeded in the frame of the composition or in a separate frieze under it to paint a whole plethora of sinners and their eternal suffering.

The complex political situation, even more complicated with the process of islamization in the first 2 centuries of Turkish domination of Macedonia was reflected in the representation of groups of sinners with clear national and ethnic characteristics placed within the group of Jews let by Moses. It was a group of Turks who were portrayed in the group of Jews in the church "Saint Clement" in Ohrid in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the church "The holy Archangels" in Kucishte from 1631.

Of the painting of Turks in the group of Jews in the Moldavian monuments Humor (1535), Moldavica (1537), Vronec (1547) and Suchevica (after 1600), writes Garidis who connects this phenomenon with the contemporary military confrontation of the country of Petru Rareş with the Ottoman empire. In the group of Jews led by Moses in the Russian and Moldavian monuments other groups were painted as well with clear differentiated national and ethnic marks, signified as Tatars, Armenians, and Arabs. Garidis points out the fact that in the countries that were under ottoman rule, because of fear of negative consequences, there were no Turks in hell (Garidis 1985: 91-95). Here we have to point out that in Athos and other sacral objects in Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, there were no Turks in Hell. However, the discovery of these two examples of the last judgment in Macedonia which portray Turks in hell refute these views of Garidis and show that this episode wasn't unknown in the structure of the last judgment in the Ottoman empire.

The great Macedonian byzantologist academic CvetanGrozdanov writes about this phenomenon and points out that the implementation of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup>A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

Turks in the group of Jews in the last judgment in Macedonian monuments is a direct reflection of Moldavian painting because of the ties between the Ohrid Archbishopric and the Romanian countries that were very close in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. According to the published documents in the Turkish archives, it is confirmed that Moldavia acknowledged the church rule of Ohrid in the time of the archbishop Prohor (1250-1550) (Grozdanov 2007: 392-393). But here we have to point out the fact that the church Holy Archangels in the village Kuchishte, near Skopje, in the period when it was painted was under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchy.

The portrayal of the group of Jews is a usual décor in the composition last judgment in the postbyzantine period. In front of them is always Moses who points to the triumphant second coming of Jesus Christ and the judgment that awaits them. Their portrayal is directly linked to their involvement in the crucifixion of Christ.

The phenomenon of portraying Turks in Hell along with the group of Jews in Macedonian monuments in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was explained until now with the fact that both groups are representatives of a different confession who didn't accept Christ. But here we have to point out that this phenomenon had a deeper and multidimensional social context. This phenomenon can be explained by the negative attitude of the church towards the Turks as an oppressive factor, but the portrayal of the Turks together with the Jews in hell can be explained by the process of islamization in Macedonia understood as a second symbolic crucifixion of Christ.

The process of islamization was a serious attack on orthodox Christianity which was especially strong in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and according to historic data in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century; between a quarter and a third of the Muslim population in the cities were converts (Sokolovski: 1975: 75-89). It is known that the Islamized Slavs had to wear a fez when they were outside their homes, and because religion was equated to national, the Slavic population that accepted Islam was labeled as Turkish.

The massive acceptance of Islam isn't connected to some forced or systemic organized islamization from the Turkish government. The acceptance of Islam from the Slavic population for the most part was voluntary. However, we have to mention the economic factor (the increase of tax and obligations of Christian population) as an important one in the conversion to Islam. Historic sources state that during the rule of the Sultan Murad IV in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the tax of the Christian population increased 40 times and exempt from thee taxes were families with at least one member who has accepted Islam.

Before these facts, the church couldn't stay indifferent and had to react with a certain message directed at the Christian population. In fact the Turks portrayed in Hell were most likely the converts who for their desertion of Christ had to answer before the court. In this period, the main mechanism for building identity was religion. Those who accepted Islam were excommunicated from the Christian population and were called Turks. Because of this, the disturbance of canonic conception and the implementation of Turks into the group of Jews can be linked with the actual socio-political situation and the great interest of the church in protecting orthodox Christianity despite all the political and economic pressure from the Turkish government.

This conclusion is indicated by the numerous examples of the last judgment in the 19<sup>th</sup> century wherein in the group of sinners which represent contemporary societal groups is a boy with a fez on his head right next to a figure signifying a landstealer. Through the boy with a fez, the painters wanted to show that all Islamized Christians, as in the portrayal of the "landstealer", steal land from their neighbors.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the frieze wherein the individual sufferings are portrayed, the main focus is put on Christians who converted to Islam and those who collaborated with the Turks. In the Church "St. Nicholas" in the village Klisura, near Demir Kapija, which was painted in 1879, there are 2 scenes with the inscriptions: "These are the ones who became Turks and desecrate Christ" and "These are the ones who betray their brethren to the Turks". The same Year in the church "St. Athanasius" in the village Bohula, near Tikves, in the frieze of individual suffering, there are figures signified as "those that convert into Turks". The "betrayers" are subjected to individual suffering in hell in the last judgment painted in the church St. Stephen in the village Konopiste near Tikves. The last judgment in the church "St. Athanasius" in Chiflik, near Demir Kapija also shows "those who betray their brother to the Turks"

The above stated samples of the Last Judgment show that the problem with the acceptance of Islam still hadn't been overcome in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But this problem was followed by another, which is the collaboration with the Turks and the betrayal and defamation of their brethren (the Christian population) to the Turks. This phenomenon to the passing of 2 important documents from the Turkish government: The Edict of Gülhane (1839) in which complete equality of the population is proclaimed regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation; and The Imperial Reform Edict (1856) in which complete religious and ethnic equality are promised for all ethnic groups in the Ottoman empire, as well as mixed judges, the right of Christians be civil servants, to serve in the military and have their own representatives in the state council. These two documents not only increased the rights of the Christian population but also encouraged the interaction between the Slavic and Turkish population. The larger interaction

increased the risk of conversion into Islam, especially in women who married Turks and converted.

From this, we can conclude that the orthodox Christian church in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had to intervene to stop conversion into Islam of the Christian population. The political circumstances reflected themselves onto the themes with eschatological meaning. The Orthodox Church expressing its negative attitude towards converts and those who collaborate with the ottomans through the messages visually portrayed in the last judgment tried to affect the consciousness of the Christian population in preserving orthodoxy.

The transfer of moral norms from the social life to the spiritual authority is an expression of certain needs, or the acceptance of principles, beliefs and norms which express themselves in the human mind through ethics. The meaning of moral norms can be seen in that it secures some permanence and certainty to human interactions. The connection between religion and moral leads the individual to constantly control his actions and try to acts in accordance with those elementary norms which religion portrays as an expression of the will of god. In fact, when the believer identifies with the sacred, he accepts all the rules which it imposes. The transcendent to these rules and values gives them strength and justification and the individual maximally identifies with them. In that case the transcendent becomes immanent i.e. the holy becomes internal, human. In this way, we can explain every moral which that has a religious background. That's how the social group replaces the mechanisms of external control with mechanisms of internal control-conscience. He individual who has accepted the religious template as his own and supports it in their behavior not just because of external sanctions but because of their own conscience which imposes itself as an external factor. If he departs from the rules imposed by his religion he goes in conflict with the holy. The belief that god will finally give everyone their wage depending on their deeds on this world can be interpreted as a human unwillingness to accept the triumph of evil, or an expression of the human pursuit of the triumph of good. The main goal of Christian ethics is the fight against narcissism and the development of an unselfish love. But this goal is unreachable without human self-denial. Selfdenial is prerequisite and mark of Christian life because without it narcissism cannot be beaten and real love towards god and our neighbors cannot win. Even though Christian theologists emphasize love towards god and love towards our neighbors as basic elements which make the individual respect social norms, they still state that "the obedience because of love is still necessary to include the motive of reward and punishment which rest on gods righteousness| (Pavičević 1974: 82-83).

A large number of deviant phenomena, spatially and time determined found themselves within the themes with eschatological meaning. The church through the common portrayal of these social negativities tried to affect the consciousness of believers to overcome them. In conditions when the Christian population wasn't politically organized (didn't have its own state and law), the primary role of the church was for it to regulate the rights and obligations of its believers. In that context, we can say that the church also had a method of coercion, but unlike the state which threatened with the law, the church threatened with the last judgment. The church in the ottoman period adeptly used this, portraying all the socially negative phenomena which were characteristic for the time period and place and with the very act of exalting these acts to sin, great pressure was put on the consciousness of the believers. Sin exists only if god exists because we cannot measure the gravity of sin without God. If there is no table of values with a highest one at the top (God), then everything is equally valueless. Particular attention draws the fact that from the whole plethora of portrayed sinners and their suffering, a very small portion is dedicated to the trespasses of religious character.

Among the first deviant behaviors which appear in fresco painting is the miller who steals from the flour given to him to grind and the innkeeper who waters down wine, painted in 1505 in the village Trnovo, near Kriva Palanka. In fact these are societal negativities with which the Macedonian villager faced since the dawn of time, and which couldn't be properly sanctioned even if a Christian court existed because guilt was hard to prove. Because of this the church tried to sanction these behaviors through the portrayal of these kinds of sinners in hell and their punishment for the deed in the individual sufferings.

In the composition last judgment particular attention is paid by the painters in the painting of hell, both in the collective and individual suffering. In the 19th century the portrayal of individual suffering is larger than the one of collective suffering depending on the wants of the founder of the church. They started depicting the suffering in hell of trespassers of social life in greater measure, all those negative behaviors which the population faced, or in other words the environment they were painted in. In addition to this statement is the fact that the painters who painted in this period and whose painters' handwriting can be noticed in many sacral objects in R. Macedonia, during the painting of the last judgment in different churches used different motifs and the number of individual sufferings was different. This qualitative and quantitative discrepancy can be explained only by the request of the founder for certain problems in the environment to be portrayed as a kind of threat to believers. The fantasy which the painters used in painting the different sufferings in hell for different trespasses couldn't leave the faithful indifferent (Matevska 2011:38).

The portrayal of deviant behaviors, characteristic to the social life and spirit of the times in which they were painted, in the themes with eschatological meaning, in a large part is connected to the ruling of Macedonia by foreigners and the rejection of ottoman judicial regulative which in a large part was based on the Sharia and Hadith. If this is followed by the famous Turkish "rüşvet" (bribe) which was a regular occurrence in the ottoman system, we can conclude that law and justice were always on the side of the rich. As a result of this, the state transformed into a pillar of religious national and political discrimination of the masses, especially the Christian part of the population in R. Macedonia (Pandevski 1979: 24-25).

Because of this, the Christian population looked for protection within the church. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the parish educational councils dealt with some court cases in the realm of civil and criminal law. For the cases there was no special judicial institute, the members of the municipality council had the role of judges. The councils above all, dealt with cases of trade character or related to real estate. But they prosecuted minor crime as well: Theft, fraud. The large offenses were still under the authority of Turkish courts where the punishments were much more rigorous (Lape, 1956: 5-6).

Because the councils didn't have a monopoly on the means of justice, they used the last judgment and from here is their insistence that all negative social phenomena be portrayed in the eschatological themes and a special emphasis be put on the suffering of sinners who didn't respect moral codices and Christian values.

In this context we can point out that one of the most famous painting handbooks in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which was used by many painters-Ermenija by Dicho Zograf, in the explanations how to paint the last judgment few types of sinners are given and Dicho ends the text with the words: All bad things that man has wronged should be painted in Hell. From this we can conclude that the choice of the types of sinners which will be portrayed in sacral objects depended on the environment they were in.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the most exploited motifs in the last judgment in all Christian temples are the miller and innkeeper which leads us to conclude that these deviant behaviors still weren't overcome. In some churches the grocer with scales in his hand is portrayed next to them. The only way to affect these professions to stop abuse was the fear of the last judgment and the punishment they can expect in the second coming because in the consciousness of believers there is a deep-rooted belief that god sees and hears all. A common occurrence in this period is the taking of land from neighbors and because of that figures marked as "landthiefs" found themselves in portrayals of the last judgment in many churches in R. Macedonia. Loan sharking was also a common occurrence in the ottoman period. The frequent droughts, natural disasters as well as the theft

committed by the tax collectors and bandits made the Christian population look for their salvation in moneylenders. According to historians during the 1th and 17<sup>th</sup> century, loans could be obtained from large landowners, mostly Turks and Jews, but also the churches. The interest rates were very high and a large number of villagers were thrown in prison for failure to repay them. Loan sharking took its swing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but now the newly rich Slavic population becomes the loan sharks. This negative occurrence was also reflected in Macedonian fresco painting in regards to the last judgment wherein those who suffer are signified as: "these are the ones who are greedy and loan money for profit" in the church St. Stephen in the village Konopishte and profiteers in the church St. Athanasius in the village Berance near Bitola. In most sacral objects in R. Macedonia they are marked as the greedy.

The next deviant behavior in frequency was alcoholism and alcoholics had a place in the individual sufferings. Alcoholism was the easier act to evade the grim reality of. Many Christians went toward drink. The church had an especially negative attitude towards these people, especially because of the fact that alcohol, because it destroyed the user's rationale, served as a precursor to other deviant behaviors. Because of this, this type of sinners was often portrayed in Christian sacral objects with the goal of

overcoming the societal negativity which took its swing<sup>23</sup>.

Another problem which certain villages encountered were children born out of wedlock. These types of sinners are also portrayed in the frieze of individual suffering. These portrayals only appear in 2 churches: St Athanasius in village Bohula, Tikves and the Boshava Monastery near Kavadarci. If we judge by the number of portrayals of bandits, thieves, thugs and pyromaniacs, we can conclude that these deviant behaviors were much more widespread in the territory of R. Macedonia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Usually one human figure is presented as representatives of all the trespassers of that type painted on the frieze of individual suffering. They are most commonly shown hanging upside down by their legs, with their head toward the eternal fire

According to the above stated we can bring a general conclusion that the parish educational councils exposed the deviant behaviors within the context of the last judgment. The type of sinner they chose was in accordance with the competency the municipality had in the judicial system. The councils settled cases connected to land ownership (a common occurrence of the time was taking land from your neighbors), and so they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> We can find evidence for the widespread use of alcohol in the texts of renaissance writers such as Joakim Krchovski. In his work "A speech about the last judgment and the second coming of Christ" published in 1814, he points out that "Alcoholism is of all sins a bigger sin. All drunks are gagged and saddled by the devil who leads them to eternal suffering.

ordered for these types of trespassers to be portrayed in the last judgment frescos. Among the competencies of the councils was the prosecution of smaller crime like theft, fights and pyromania. Emphasis was put on the suffering of these sinners to stop the spreading of this phenomenon which worsened the situation of the Christian population in the Ottoman Empire.

Through the frequent portrayal of deviant behaviors in environments they were present, the church wanted to affect believers to stop that behavior, so we can say that the effect from visual activity of the sinners, their sins and punishments in the last judgment had the role of a keeper of morality. The portrayal of the suffering of the sinners in which the painters used their imagination to the maximum to increase the expressive power as well as the consciousness of believers that this is reserved in the afterlife for the sinners which made the believers correct their behavior in accordance with Christian moral norms.

We can conclude that the goal of the eschatological themes was to affect the believers from the place the composition last judgment is presented and its dimensions. For this composition a whole wall of the church (except the church St. Athanasius in Teovo, near Veles) is used, unlike the other walls where numerous biblical events are portrayed. Because of the impressiveness of this composition but also because of the place where it was put (the wall opposite to the entrance or around the entrance on the outer walls), it was the first thing believers noticed when entering the church or the last thing before exiting (around the entrance on the inner walls) it would live on in their memory long after leaving the temple, we can conclude that the main function of the portrayal of the last judgment was to make believers think about the consequences of their immoral actions and affect them to live a more moral and perfect life. In addition to this statement is the placement of the portrayal of the individual suffering. It is exactly at eye-height so that the viewer cannot miss the different types of sinners and the suffering they endure because of their actions.

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