

SOCIO-ECONOMIC-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BOSNIA BEFORE THE OSMANLI CALIPHATE: PRECEDENTS TO THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF WAQF

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Received: 28 February 2024, Reviewed: 7 March 2024, Published: 31 March 2024

Abstract: *Socio-economic-political development was always the backbone of every civilization. This paper focuses on the socio-economic-political development of Bosnia before and after the coming of the Osmanli Caliphate in a comparative fashion. It aims to reveal the significant differences of socio-economic-political development structures after the spread of Islam in Bosnia. The third sector's "waqf" is the focus as an institution of wealth distribution and redistribution and catalyzer of socio-economic-political development. The objective of this paper is to indicate how the role of the charitable practices of the Bosniak Church before the Osmanli Caliphate rule in Bosnia facilitated acceptance of waqf and conversion of most Bogomils, the old inhabitants of Bosnian territory, to Islam – most of Bosnian Muslims today. Likewise, the objective is to identify similarities of Bogomil practices as factors among other circumstances that motivated conversion to Islam. The outcomes of this paper reveal how the institution of waqf played a crucial role in that process, built trust and fostered community development in Bosnia and other parts of the Islamic civilization (IC) as well. In conclusion, recommendations point out the unwavering potential of waqf for socio-economic-political development and practical guidelines for waqf roles and development today with reference to modern waqf practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) and few other countries.*

Keywords: *Socio-Economic-Political Development, Charities, Waqf, Bosnia and Osmanli Caliphate.*

INTRODUCTION

All civilizations aimed for socio-economic-political development. Surely, earlier civilizations did not have accurate procedures of attaining it as we have today, but such procedures are not a universal paradigm even today that promise genuine development. Older civilizations were very tribal, followed tradition and pursued religion. Religion was integral to the identity of older civilizations in addition to philosophy in making the living more meaningful (Drolet, 2004; Nasr, 2010, 2006).

Instead of going deeper into the historical discourse of older civilizations, it suffices to refer to most recent Persian, Greek and Roman and Islamic civilizations to reflect an ever-present striving towards socio-economic-political development. Politics and economics were never separable in social structures and development involved both. Since religion played a major role in shaping socio-economic development, it may be characterized as the source of socio-economic-political inspiration. As far as the western civilization (WC) is concerned,

religion was gradually discarded from the 16th century enlightenment, followed by later reformation, agricultural, industrial and scientific revolutions until the modern technological era (Chapra, 2016; Hunt, 2016).

It must be admitted that these revolutions reflect an increasing degree of socio-economic awareness. But at the same time, it must be admitted that the revolutions were not a result of WCs efforts alone. Much of WCs achievements must be credited to the Islamic civilizations' (ICs) achievements which systematically preserved, synthesized, analyzed and enhanced Persian, Greek, Roman and any other civilizations knowhow (Acikgenc, 2014; De Bellaigue, 2017).

No civilization is insignificant and each pioneered during its times widely. Many civilizations exchanged knowhow in peace and unfortunately many times through wars. This reflects an ever-existing competition for socio-economic-political development. Moreover, each of the referred civilizations perceived religion and philosophy as the 'civilizational positioning system' (CPS). The 16th century enlightenment emphasized objectivity, cause-effect and later positivism as the new CPS of WC. Due to its imposing nature, based on historical accounts, it became the 'global positioning system' (GPS) (Hunt, 2016; Heilbroner & Milberg, 1995). It was from about 1950s when the post-modernist/constructionist writings re-summoned re-emphasis on values due to the pure science-based GPS proved destructionist and unsustainable for development.

Evident is again a gauging for a value-based socio-economic-political development in WC what the IC never abandoned but lacked the research spirit, passion, order and discipline of the WC to propel and adapt in new times (Derrida, 2016; Foucault, 2012; Kuhn, 1970). The two were rivals since 16th century or even earlier. A great reflection of that may be the 15th century Bosnia where and when the two civilizations met (Malcolm, 2011). Interesting to note is how the IC utilized waqfs (endowments) for socio-economic-political consolidation, expansion and general development (Cizakca, 2000). This helps us in the discourse on Bosnia before arrival of the Osmanli Caliphate. Likewise, it is interesting that the WC adopted this institution and reshaped it for own context and creatively diversified its structure and use what enabled it to expand globally.

METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in nature and aims to delve into a pile of interpretable text (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The texts for this qualitative research are manuscripts, textbooks, articles, websites etc., all of which make the texts more appreciable and noticeable to everyone, shapes thoughts and the worldview. Through this research, the texts become a string of evidence of circumstances, observations, discussions, photos, footages, soundtracks and other documentations. This sets qualitative research as a revelatory and challenging mechanism towards new findings from analysis and synthesis of elements in their natural settings. Qualitative research delves into phenomena in natural environments what reflects its genuineness in the world of research.

Qualitative methods enable the researcher to initiate a scholarly, distinguished but fashionable, trendy, rounded and extensive understanding of the research objectives of the study via gradual and onerous exploration, analysis and synthesis. Ritchie and Lewis (2005) perceived that the result is consistent and authenticated through amalgamation of inputs within an expounded setting that cannot be universal. Hence, it is unique and genuine in narrative as is the case of Bosnian charity and waqf institution roles in history. Similarly, Berg and Lune

(2012) elucidated that such studies always result into a set of recommendations that clarify the subject matter.

The methodology of this paper resorts to accessible literature to evaluate latest writings, advances, inputs or alternative interpretations that are relevant for attaining the objectives of this research. This adds credibility to this study as an inclusive and exhaustive due to taking into consideration different perspectives from differing contexts where such literature has been written. Looking into this literature discloses a acuter understanding of the existing issues on the subject matter. Library and e-library databases are primary sources of literature.

An undertaking of such grandeur reveals a complex and energy-demanding effort to literary analysis and academic integrative and systematic yet simple account about the concerned subject matter. But time is always a limited factor and abundance of literature on the topic of waqf historically and presently deprives obtaining insight into all. Even literature written in other languages concerning the waqf in Bosnia today and historically represents limitations to get an ever-larger clear picture. This may be a great future concern of researchers. Hence, due to the availability of massive lots of information, content analysis is a paramount method to present new insights with consciousness to prevent any bias, subjective or emotional interpretations.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BOSNIA BEFORE THE OSMANLI CALIPHATE: THE ROLE OF WAQF-LIKE PRACTICES

The Balkan is a peninsula where battles have been fought for centuries. The Old Greek and Roman philosophy influenced the people's worldview for long until the IC arrival through the Osmanli Caliphate. Most inhabitants were Christians belonging to puritan sect with distinct teachings in comparison to orthodox Christianity. Not only did the religious aspect differ but the political, economic and social as well. This reflected a varying worldview of Bosnian inhabitants. Many followed own beliefs based on perennial nature and traditions, known as *hanifs*¹, as inherited from ancestors. Such were the adherents of Bogomilism, who predominantly belonged to the Bosniak² Church (Crkva Bosanska) aside from the Catholic and Orthodox churches (Imamovic, 1997; Malcolm, 2011; Bijedić, 2009).

Characterized by people of different religious denominations, the Balkan was subjugated to continuous political, economic, and demographic change. The Catholic and Orthodox churches competed to forcefully convert all those who did not follow their teachings. The socio-economic life was unstable and of course a waqf institution was not present at this time. However, some charitable waqf-like practices were present. It is recorded that the Bosniak Church, whose adherents were mainly Bogomils, served the society at large what differentiated it from other churches which prioritized their adherents (Imamovic, 1997; Murvar, 1989; Bijedic, 2009).

Ancient Bosnian Socio-Economic-Political Realities: Contextualization of Discourse

¹ Hanifs are righteous people who due to complexed social confusion in religious beliefs decided to adhere to purity of thought and belief in God based on humans' inborn nature – *fitrah*.

² Bosniak refers here to the church as it is called such in Bosnian language 'Bosanska crkva'. Later, starting officially in 1878 with the advent of Austrian-Hungarian rule over Bosnia, Bosniak refers specifically to the ethnic group such as Serbs, and Croats. All three as inhabitants of Bosnia are Bosnians. Such is the difference between Bosniak and Bosnian. Not all Bosnians are Bosniak but all Bosniaks are Bosnian. Mainly Bosniaks were known to be adherents of Bogomilism and later converts to Islam.

In the Balkans, different rulers used to come and go, leaving behind certain negative but also positive consequences. For example, in the 9th century the Charlemagne Franks ruled the Balkans and left traces of western charity and other practices rooted in the Greek and Roman empires. Bosnia was first mentioned as an independent separate territory in a politico-geographical handbook by Constantine Porphyrogenitus in 958 AC, a century and a half after the Franks. Some tribes (today known as Serbs and Croats) continuously ravaged it since the 7th century (Malcolm, 2011). All such threats did not lead to loss of genuine Bogomil cultural values. They preserved it for centuries before and even after contact with Islam in the 7th century. Imamovic (1997) claimed that the goodness of inhabitants of Bosnia is commonly agreed on but it was hard to agree on matters that only some claim as facts while others believe differently.

Only, in 1180AC, during the kingship of Ban Kulin (1180 AC to 1204 AC), did Bosnia become more independent, without Croats, Serbs or even Hungarians disturbance and at peace. It was Ban Kulin that founded and developed the Kingdom of Bosnia. His eminence is characterized by the document *Povelja Kulina Bana* in 1189 AC (Treaty of Ban Kulin 1189 AC) which declared Bosnia independent with its language, freedom of religious belief and official economic relations, i.e. with Dubrovnik (Spaits, 1907; Danstopicals, n.y.1; Danstopicals, n.y.2; Murvar, 1989; Donia & Fine, 1994). Other renowned kings were Ban Stephen Kotromanić (1322-1353) and King Stephen Tvrtko (1353-1391). Manuel Comnenus described Bosnia as a unitary territory. During the Kingdom epoch, Bosnia had relative socio-economic stability. This lasted for more than 260 years by repelling threats from Zeta (contemporary Montenegro), Serbia, Hungary, and Croatia which did not stop until the advent of the Osmanli Caliphate (Bosnia Facts, n.y.1; Nationsencyclopedia, n.y. Murvar, 1989; Malcolm, 2011). The brief historical account of ancient Bosnia suffices to continue the towards results of the early contact of inhabitants of Bosnia with Islam.

Bogomils and Early Contacts with Islam in the Socio-Economic-Political Context Before Osmanlis: Prolegomena to the Waqf Institution in Bosnia

Bogomils are the earliest inhabitants of Bosnian territory and the predecessors of the Bosnian Muslims. They were *hanifs* and their socio-economic charity (waqf-like) organization is embodied in the Bosnian Church (Fine, 1975.1991; Norman, 1998). This proved similar to waqfs. Other religious denominations persevered in disturbing these practices (Spaits, 1907). According to Abid (1991), Deliso (2007), Bijedic (2009) and Malcolm (2011), Bogomils were known to have preserved most authentically the traditions of the past of which many were characterized as compatible with Islam (Murvar, 1989; Ibrahim, 2009; Bijedic, 2009). This allows comparison of those practices with Islam and exposes it as a factor influencing conversion to Islam of most Bogomils among others.

Thus, this section discusses the earliest Bogomil contacts with Islam and attempts to project the wider socio-economic-political context in Bosnia during those times. Both are complex parts of Bosnia's history. Bogomils contact with Islam is discussed first because of evidence that the contact happened before Bosnia was officially mentioned in a 10th century document of Constantine Porphyrogenite from where historians usually narrate the history of Bosnia. In fact, Haveric (2008) proved how Bogomils or Bosnian inhabitants of those times had contact with Islam since the 7th century during the times of the Rightly Guided Caliph Omar (634-644 AC) via trade caravans and visits of delegates what enables conclusions that familiarizing with ICs waqf practices during those times was inevitable. It is necessary to note

that there is a difference between contact with Islam and conversion to Islam. The contact with Islam introduced Islam to many what led to faster conversion to Islam centuries later, what actually happened in the case of most Bogomils, especially when knowing that some early century long inhabitants of Bosnian territory probably already converted to Islam in the 7th or later centuries as a result of trade or some inhabitants of Bosnia being taken as slaves (servants) or some delegates' experiences (Haveric, 2008). Then those learned about Islam over time in one way or another, converted and perhaps spread the message of Islam to some degree when returning back to their territories. Interestingly, Fatih Sultan Mehmet (1431-1481 AD)³ is believed and said to have spoken Slavic language (Bosnian) when Bosnia was conquered (Haveric, 2008; Murvar, 1989; Donia & Fine, 1994). This indicates that during the times of Osmanli Caliphate, Bosnian was taught and Arabic and Osmanli Turkish were learned as well for educational purposes, on Islam and other subjects. Based on the evidence presented, this was apparently practiced during the Kingdom of Bosnia times whose fall the Osmanli Caliphate replaced on Bosnian lands.

Moreover, some of the rulers of the Balkans such as the Serbian king Mikhail III during the 8th century traded with Muslims and as the norms of trade permitted, all traders learned about the good will, charities, and perhaps even waqf practices whose developmental role was significant. For example, he sent delegations to the Abbasid ruler, Mutawakkil bin Rashid (847–861 AD)⁴, for religious dialogue. There could have been exchange of waqf practices or knowledge even at this time, which churches later replicated all over Europe. Another ruler was the Croat prince Tomislav who traded and exchanged gifts with the Andalusian caliph, Abdurrahman III (912-961 AD).⁵ Even Harun Al-Rasheed (786-809 AD)⁶, the renowned Abbasid Caliph, had relations with many European rulers (Ibrahimi, 2009; Haveric, 2008). The practices learnt from delegations' and traders' visits probably stayed recorded with the Bogomil elders at least and some of the public in Bosnia and the whole region as well. They must have heard of charitable endowment (waqf) practices and realized the potential of such an institution for socio-economic-political development (Haveric, 2008; Murvar, 1989; Donia & Fine, 1994). Lastly, the Bogomils emulated those learnt practices via the Bosniak church's charity missions or at least enhanced old practices and shaped the Bosnian socio-economic-political environment. That prepared the ground for Osmanli consolidation unintentionally.

The earlier said refutes the claim that Bosnia encountered Islam for the first time with the advent of Osmanli Caliphate in 1463 AH (Haveric, 2008; Fine, 1975, 1991). Yes, the waqf institution officially came with the Osmanli Caliphate rule in Bosnia but the early 'contacts' with Islam largely contributed to faster peaceful consolidation of Islam centuries later (Imamovic, 1997). It is very normal that suburbs were not familiar with mainstream events in Bosnia and elsewhere. This made spread of Islam time-consuming but eventually consolidated and accepted among Bogomils and some others (Malcolm, 2011). What was largely neglected in writings and analysis in literature on Bosnia is that the contact had a socio-economic impact that renders impossible Bogomils' non-familiarization with greater details on Islam in general and the institution of waqf in particular. Hence, after all, there is evidence suggesting that waqf shaped waqf-like practices in Bosnia since the 7th or later centuries while trading strategy of exploring new territories was a shared strategy of political and economic sustainable

³ Years in the brackets show the year of the ascendance to leadership as caliph and the year of death.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

development between inhabitants of Bosnia and Muslims and so with other people as well (Haveric, 2008; Imamovic, 1997).

Such events and analytical accounts reveal traces of the relationship of Islam and the Balkans in general long before 1463 AC as far as Bosnia is concerned. Even though these relations did not crystalize at that time, influences induced the Bogomils to emulate Muslim practices as surely they emulated practices of other people with whom they had contact. The charitable practices of the Bosniak Church directed to improve social affairs and help the poor and needy were not contrary to teachings of Islam (Murvar, 1989; Imamovic, 1997; Malcolm 2011). Even waqfs have no different objective. Besides the Bosniak Church, Rome and Byzantine, the Catholic and Orthodox Churches respectively, had charitable practices but restricted to personal benefits due to the rivalry between them as clarified earlier. During those times, even Rome and Byzantine had antagonistic feelings, struggled for power and sought to gain others' support and lastly resorted to forcibly convert them (Spaits, 1907; Murvar, 1989; Donia & Fine, 1994). Nowadays, we see endowments mushroomed in the Christian world, which in fact emulate models of Osmanli waqfs (Asharaf & Mustafa, 2013; Cizacka, 2000).

Trust for the Bogomils was crucial for social cohesion (Norman, 1998; Dragojlovic, 1974; Fine, 1975; Haveric, 2008). Over time trust strengthened among the Bogomils and that was later revealed to the Osmanlis by Bogomils' elders who usually were the official representatives. Development of the Bogomil charity practices (later to become waqfs) had an impact on their treatment of Osmanlis what facilitated better and faster understanding of terms of trade with Muslim merchants and immigrants, outside and inside Bosnia, and on the Balkans during those times. History recorded spread of Islam through trade as that was the hallmark of the Arabian Peninsula before Islam but even after under much more engaging setting (Al-Attas, 1969; Ryan, 1971; Riddel, 2001). The Andalusian, Abbasid, Umayyad Caliphates and even later Muslim dynasties habitually took some people from new territories of trade as slaves⁷ on voluntary basis, who learned about Islam, and so about waqf as well. After some time, they willingly accepted Islam (Haveric, 2008; Donia & Fine, 1994). In fact, when the Osmanlis came to Bosnia, many Bogomils besides other inhabitants initially resisted their rule but eventually circumstances, and factors, like those mentioned above, motivated most of them to become Muslims.

But as much as trust was important for the Bogomils, it was very important when Muslims consolidated on new territories like the Meccan immigrants after *hijrah* in Madinah. Even after that, the Prophet *salla-Allahu alayhi wa sallam* (s.a.w.s.) had to work on strengthening ties and trust among Muslims despite being in his presence (Ramadan, 2008). Similarly, as adherents of the Bosniak Church, Bogomils' dedicated efforts to improve social welfare to strengthen ties and trust compared to other churches in Bosnia (Bijedic, 2009) and Muslims' dedication of properties for waqf reveals certain links and similarities between Bogomils and Muslims that have not been explored until today. Bogomils acted according to their created nature what resembled events of early Islam but they did not know details of the Prophet's s.a.w.s. biography (Ramadan, 2008, 2009). Since contact with Islam and since the rise of Osmanli Caliphate especially, waqfs played a major role in strengthening those links since the waqf institutions' superior and developmental role far outpaced Bogomils' waqf-like practices and role of the Bosniak Church. Bogomils were clearly not just politically or

⁷ Slaves of this time meant being a servant or helper to chiefs or generals. It was considered a positive term. A slave used to join Muslims at this time to learn more and become a sort of follower for their own benefit of oneself.

economically but community-welfare oriented (Haveric, 2008; Murvar 1989; Bosnia Facts, n.y.2).

The Bosnian socio-economic-political context, as described above, can be easier understood by reference to Qur'anic stories about Isa a.s. (Christ in Christianity). What he preached is lost and was mixed with other written texts. We know today that there are many sects of Christianity and the Bible, each claiming own epistemological foundation and authenticity. However, this does not make all Christians anti-human or evil straightaway. But the leadership of dominant churches in Bosnia, and not all Christians, considered the Bogomils as heretics due to the Rome or Byzantium verdicts (Malcolm, 2011). In contrast, Bogomils may be considered as *hanifs* who preserved some original practices of Isa a.s. but surely not the complete teachings. No particular evidence indicated direct contact of the Bogomils with original Christian teachings and most were already distorted. However, no doubt they heard of some authentic teachings and learned about charities (ie. waqf or waqf-like) which they like many dedicated Christians attempted to purify to the utmost level. It was these practices that proved similar to Islamic practices prior to the arrival of the Osmanlis and some of them exist even today. Bogomils were said to have been kind of Manichean as well (Haveric, 2008; Murvar, 1989; Malcolm, 2011; and Donia and Fine, 1994). Schuon and Nasr (2005) and Guenon and Herlihy (2009) wrote that the perennial nature of man actually leads towards goodness and 'loving thy neighbor'⁸, so men engage in charity by nature of creation.

Hence, the contact with Islam prompted the Bogomils to improve the services of the Bosniak Church and subsequently the people's lifestyle in wider socio-economic-political context, especially during the later Kingdom of Bosnia until the coming of the Osmanli Caliphate. For example, international affairs after the contact with Islam affirmed Bogomils' neutrality towards the differing teachings of Christianity, due to awareness that a power exists somewhere in the known world that can and would save them from discomfort and constant threats. The Bogomils' early contact with Islam probably ignited that hope and belief as a motive to endure all socio-economic hardships (Bosnia Facts, n.y.2; Haveric, 2008). Similarly, when Revelation started to Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.s., many in the far areas of the Arabian Peninsula heard of it while some expected it. This ignited hope in the oppressed and even curiosity and fear in the oppressor due to perceiving it as a challenged to the status quo while Islam never pursued power per se (Ramadan, 2008). It was known that the Balkan Peninsula was always a crossroad of cultures, civilizations, and religions. So the Islamic influences brought to the Balkans through trade long before 1463 AC indicated greater resemblance and similarity between the Bogomil practices and that of Islam (since early times) before its official advent on the territory of Bosnia (Ibrahimi, 2009; Imamovic, 1997; Bijedic, 2009).

Again, detailed discussions between the Bogomils and the Osmanli Caliphate in 15th century does not appear in the annals of history but inferences can be made from authors testifying peaceful conversion of most Bogomils to Islam (Haveric, 2008; Malcolm, 2011). This was not only the scenario with the Bogomils but a number of non-Bogomils as well. Surely the Bogomil elders spotted the united spirit among the Osmanlis based on what they heard and learned about Islam through all early contacts with Islam but also based on the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) reported by Nu'man b. Bashir reflecting: "The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection, fellow-feeling is that of one body;

⁸ 'Thy' means your. For greater detail and context, please refer to Psalms, Mark, 12:31.

when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever” (Muslim, Book 32, Hadith 6258).

A synthesis of all writings on this aspect polishes the picture that during Bogomils’ contact with Islam, waqf had a role in bringing the two closer and eventually accelerated Bogomils’ conversions to Islam. Imamovic (1997) clarified this gradual but increasing conversion to Islam with emphasis that strong resistance to the Osmanlis lasted for decades and as such accounts about Bogomils’ abrupt conversion to Islam are not accurate and were mere emotionally driven narrations. It took time for Islam to spread in Bosnian lands but waqfs were Osmanlis’ tool of consolidation in new territories and did shape future socio-economic-political development. But considering Bogomils’ bad relations and constant attacks from Catholics and Orthodox Christians, Islam undoubtedly came as a savior.

The purpose of waqf and the waqf-like practices of Bogomils, as adherents of the Bosniak Church, to benefit the public caused Bogomils to attempt replicating waqf practices as an advancement of theirs to some degrees at least. It is worth exploring such influences and explaining the socio-economic role of waqf from early times until today. Even a simple application of logical syllogism on the contact and communication of Bogomils and Muslims enables to draw inferences that such outcomes were very probable. Islam spread via trade to all regions from the Arabian Peninsula. The Islamic message had resonance. Hence, the above analytically discussed carries great weight of truth based on books like Haveric (2011), Imamovic (1997), Malcolm (2011). etc. With Islam as a way of life, rising number of Bogomils indulged in practices of and service for the new religion. This hastened new socio-economic-political development of waqf as a great tool for socio-economic development of Bosnian Muslims, a new tool of distribution and redistribution of resources that replaced the role of the Bogomils’ Bosniak Church. It was a new tool at least for those Bogomils who became Muslims. These were the initial indicators of the future ‘land of waqfs’ – Bosnia from the Osmanli Caliphate till day.

Similarities of Bogomil Practices with Islam: Lessons for Contemporary Socio-Economic Political Development

The previous section indicated the Bogomils or Bosnian inhabitants early contact with Islam and revealed some common or similar Bogomil practices with that of Islam. Those practices or traditions brought Bogomils and Osmanlis closer. Some of those are listed below based on earlier analysis as lessons to be learned for today (Bringa, 1995; Imamovic, 1997; Malcolm, 2011):

1. Rituals on top of the mountains which symbolized isolation to a natural habitat to be closer to God whilst leaving material belongings behind. It often happens among Bosnian Muslims today. Those gatherings around a mosque, built on hills draws back to times of the Bogomils conversion to Islam. At traditional manifestations of ‘Mawlid Rasul’ (Mevlud) such practices are emulated to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
2. Worship in certain places, commonly perceives as blessed, such as areas where legends or stories of ancestors witness to bring blessings, prosperity, success. One particular example might be annual trips to ‘Ajvatovica’ where the Ajvaz-dedo (Ajvaz-granddad) used to often visit and contemplate or experienced some unusual spiritual event. There

are many comments about this particular event. The positive comments motivate one towards spirituality while negative comments spread superstitious beliefs and prejudice.

3. Manners, habits and customs present among Bosnian Muslims today, but very hard to differentiate from Islam. On the speech of Faisal Award, the first president of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) Alija Izetbegovic (d.2003) said that he comes from a country whose people's sense of forgiveness stems back to the Bogomil times despite belonging with heart to the East (Islam) and with mind to the West. Therefore, the temper of the Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims today) to forgive is common regardless of the crime or pain committed or inflicted upon them. But it is never to be forgotten.
4. The Bosniaks' love and generosity for the other is embedded in Bogomil habits and customs. The love for children is particularly widespread and recognized by foreigners. Many Bosnians would testify that but even many children would admit that their parents are showing great care and focus even while adults. Generosity makes more sense when associating with the charity practices of the Bosniak Church. Charity was common among the Bosniaks since that time until today. These practices led to making waqf the foundation of later Bosnia – the land of waqfs.

Today these practices are to some degree evident among Bosnian non-Muslims, which proves that in the past all lived together in harmony but even today while political propaganda succeeds to spark ethnic hatred at times. Those, however, are few individuals who are figureheads of their ideological masters. Hence, it was never a whole ethnic group that infringed the rights of the other (Bringa, 1995). The following are the lessons that can be learnt from the above discussion:

1. The Bogomils initially opposed Islam as a way of life. But once a Bogomil elder converted, other Bogomils followed instantly but all had the freedom to convert individually. It was known that elders held particular status in Bogomilism. However, the conversion process lasted up to the end of 16th century and longer. They comprehended the superiority of Islamic practices to theirs. Their contact with the Islamic civilization since the 7th century also played a major role in this gradual conversion. The similarity of waqf with the charity works of the Bosnian church motivated the Bogomils to know more about Islam until convinced that Islam offers them much more than Bogomilism. Carmichael (2015) and many others wrote that conversion enabled maintained landownership status what probably stirred conversion of many landowners. However, the new religion provided great prosperity to converts and non-converts or *dhimmi*s (Cizakca, 2000; Malcolm, 2011).
2. The elders have understood that their future existence depended on accepting Islam because further resistance from the Orthodox and Catholic pressure was impossible. These were the circumstances surrounding the Bogomils even in 15th century. However, it does not imply that conversion happened due to these circumstances. It is rather because the similarities of their practices with that of Islam and socio-economic conditions under Islamic rule being far superior to their previous conditions (Malcolm, 2011; Karcic, 1999).
3. Besides Bogomils trials and tribulations even some Orthodox and Catholic Christians who disagreed with the dominant doctrines of the two main churches in the west and east, experienced nothing much different. Sometimes for safety reasons or real intentions, some of those neutral Christians doubtlessly converted to Islam. Some converted for the sake of gaining greater benefits that far outstripped the benefits if not converting. This, however,

did not lead to perceiving them any less Muslim than other Muslims (Ramadan, 2008). What is sure is that socio-economic conditions were much better under Islamic rule even for non-Bogomils (Carmichael, 2015).

4. All recognized the principles of justice, fairness, comprehensiveness, impartiality, transparency, and centralization with varying degrees of decentralized delegation of authority from Istanbul, the Caliphate center. Converts to Islam in Bosnia obtained an almost full autonomous status to govern local affairs based on circumstances' dictate. This was after all the practice of Osmanli Caliphate under its system of Caliphal rule (Omercic, 2016).
5. Bogomil contact with Islam since 7th century strengthened their resistance to forcible competition of the Orthodox and Catholic Christians for converting Bogomils to their conceptualization of Christianity. But Bogomils voluntarily converted to Islam instead due to reasons and circumstances in earlier explained lessons.
6. Trust between the converted Bogomils (then Muslims) and the Osmanlis played a crucial role in socio-economic development. Islam as a religion of trust (*amanah*) assured the ex-Bogomils to be the vicegerents of the Bosnian land as predetermined by Allah SWT. This among others, also stirred their conversion to Islam. Trust and strength of belief were hallmarks of early Muslims as well and as such are permanent requirements for successful socio-economic-political development (Ramadan, 2008, 2009).

Important to note is that the advantages in Islam and at that time especially the Osmanli institution of 'waqf' obviously played a fundamental role in stimulating Bogomils to improve the charitable practices of the Bosniak Church and use it for socio-economic-political development. At the same time, it played a major role in encouraging conversion to Islam since waqf was in the eyes of Bogomils a far more advanced institution than the Bosniak Church or any other charitable practices during those times. Without undermining the significance of any charitable act, all charitable practices are very important and beneficial to society at last. However, the whole composition of Osmanli Caliphate's projection and practice of Islam with the facilitation of waqfs as well, simply reflected a safe heaven and potential for prosperity to many new converts (Omercic, 2016; Malcolm, 2011; Carmichael, 2015).

Lastly, the beliefs embedded in the definition of waqf as ultimate property of Allah SWT indicated to the Bogomils how similar Islam is to what they believed and practiced through the Bosniak Church. As Carmichael (2015) said, probably since the Bogomils were said to be of Manichean origin or roots, then the conversion to Islam was easier in comparison to devoted good Christians or others who were attached to either the Catholic or Orthodox Church. Foremost, it was conviction that motivated conversion of inhabitants of Bosnia and after all they converted voluntarily (Malcolm, 2011; Imamovic, 1997). The Bogomils, most of whom later became Muslims, had a major role in making waqf the source of socio-economic development upon commencement of the Osmanli Caliphate rule over Bosnia (Haveric, 2008; Murvar, 1989; Bringa, 1995).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it was hard to preserve the positive influences that contact with Islam had on inhabitants of medieval Bosnia because socio-economic circumstances were turbulent and ever changing (Imamovic, 1997; Carmichael, 2015). Bogomil's century long resistance to

Catholic and Orthodox teachings, reflected the confidence Bogomils had about their beliefs as far more righteous and truthful. The results of this paper disclosed that the early contact with Islam made them even more confident with hope that soon they would gain greater freedom from a more righteous and far more developed power – the Osmanli Caliphate at this time. This means that Bogomils knew that any inclination to any one of the two main prevalent sects of Christianity would cause war. These were times of the Bogomil struggle to survive. The Bogomils viewed that a choice for any one would show disrespect to the forefathers who resisted becoming Orthodox or Catholic even earlier (Bosnia Facts, n.y.2; Haveric, 2008; Murvar, 1989; Malcolm, 2011). They held to their principles until the advent of Islam. By 1463, the Osmanli Caliphate ruled most of the Balkans, including parts of Bosnia (Lord, 2002; Karcic, 1999). By the end of the century, most of the land of BIH and parts of Slovenia were under Osmanli rule. This paper indicated how the role of the charitable practices of the Bosniak Church before Osmanli Caliphate rule in Bosnia facilitated acceptance of waqf and conversion of most Bogomils, to Islam – today’s Bosnian Muslims. Even similarities of Bogomil practices as factors among other circumstances stirred conversion to Islam were discussed. Despite many existing theorizations about the Bosniak Church, most writings on the history of Bosnia agreed that peaceful conversion to Islam is doubtless a fact. Again, intentions for conversion are matters not known to anyone abruptly.

The following are recommendations for contemporary revitalization of the socio-economic-political development in BIH:⁹

- Intellectual engagement of BIH waqf authorities with international waqf or waqf-like bodies via seminars, conferences, publications, inter-institutional staff and student mobility, joint ventures, investments etc.
- Universalization of waqf utilization through mechanisms of waqf-financed education, cash waqf for scholarships, liquidity management, donations, project financing, microfinancing etc, Reference to Turkish waqf-financed universities can help.
- Interconnecting and network building with BIH diaspora employed in esteemed corporations, universities or own private businesses for cooperation and growth.
- Develop an integrated IT waqf system through use of Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI) and automated systems to enhance waqf management and financial prudence.
- Have a link with the industrial world to integrate theory and practice and bring about more sustainable and mutual socio-economic-political development.
- Pursue greater research in earlier recommended aspects and areas.
- Develop greater regulatory and quality control frameworks to assure check and balance in theory and practice of greater socio-economic-political development.

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⁹ For a greater insight into the historical development of waqf in Bosnia during the Osmanli Caliphate please refer to Omercic (2016).

For a greater insight into the 20th, 21st centuries and contemporary state of waqf institution in BIH, please refer to either Omercic (2016) or Omercic (2017).

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