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THE HERESY OF BOGOMILS AND ITS CONFRONTATION BY THE SERBIAN KING STEFAN NEMANJA

Introduction

During the reign of byzantine emperor Heraclius (610-641) after the fearsome Persians another powerful enemy terrorized the Byzantines. These were certainly the Khanate of Avars. But after the failed siege of Constantinople (626) the Kahanate was seriously weakened inside. For other people under the Avars subjugation was a signal of shock especially the Slavic tribes. “The first state of the West Slavs was established under the conditions of the fight against the Avars domination, struggle led by the Frankish merchant Samo². He ruled from 623 until his death in 658. This political entity has included almost all the western Slavic tribes. In 631, in the Battle of Wogastisburg, Samo successfully defended his realm against the Kingdom of the Franks. In 658 Samo dies and his kingdom disappeared”³. Samo was baptized in Constantinople and received the title Patrician⁴.

The Serbs and Croats in struggle with the declining power of the Avars abandoned their ancestral lands around the Carpathian mountains⁵. The Croats and Serbs of Byzantine Dalmatia initiated diplomatic relations and dependencies with Heraclius⁶, and came as allies when the emperor invited them to defend the

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² Constantine Porfyrogenitus, *De administrado imperio* 29, G. Moravcsik- R. J. H. Jenkins, *Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantine, vol. I, Washington DC 1985, 123.

³ D. Fault, *Introduction in Medieval History: Chapter 4, The Slavs from the 6th to the 11th centuries*, p. 3, http://www.uuooi.org/english/files/lesson_4_daniel_flaut.pdf.

⁴ Constantine Porfyrogenitus, *De administrado imperio* 29, 123, 125.

⁵ Ibid, 31, 141, 143.

⁶ W. E. Kaegi, *Heraclius: emperor of Byzantium*, Cambridge University Press,

Empire⁷. Heraclius accepted the Serbs and Croats and gave them the permission for their installment in the region called Serblia – Srbica, near Thessalonica. They didn't stay there for a long time and wanted to return. Then the emperor decided to settle them down into an area which was deserted between the Sava River and Dinaric Alps⁸. Pope John IV (640–642) sent Abbot Martin, Christian teachers and missionaries to Duke Porga and his Croats, who practiced Slavic paganism⁹. The Pope was a native of Dalmatian. He also created the office of sakellarios, a comptroller of the treasury¹⁰. He addressed the needs of the Church in his native land, especially regarding the freeing of Dalmatian slaves taken through conquest¹¹. That period very few became Christians and the majority of them remained without baptism. The most of Serbians were baptized in the period of emperor Basil I the Macedonian (867-886)¹².

The rise of Manuel I Komnenos¹³ to the throne of Constantinople in 1143 took place in a critical time in the history of the Byzantine Empire, who campaigned aggressively against his neighbours both in the west and in the east. The reign of Manuel coincided with intensification in the struggle of the Serbs towards independence. Despite the fact that during his reign these attempts proved fruitless, the appearance of Stefan Nemanja at the forefront of Serbian history was about to trigger the emergence of an independent Serbia, ruled by a dynasty which was founded by him and was destined within the span of two

Cambridge 2003, 80, C. Paparigopoulos, *History of the Greek Nation*, III, publ. Eleutheroudakis, Athens 1930, 182-189.

⁷ J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene*, vol. II, book 2, ch. 7, 275.

⁸ S. M. Ćirković, *The Serbs*, trans. by Vuk Tošić, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2004, 11.

⁹ Ibid, 12-20.

¹⁰ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrado imperio* 29, 131, 133.

¹¹ "The 72nd Pope Pope John IV (640-642)", *The issue of the Ecthesis Spirituality for Today* 17.1 (2012), http://www.spirituality.org/is/205/pope_72.asp.

¹² Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrado imperio* 29, 123, 125: "the majority of these Slavs [Serbs, Croats] were not even baptized, and remained unbaptized for long enough. But in the time of Basil, the Christ-loving emperor, they sent diplomatic agents, begging and praying him that those of them who were unbaptized might receive baptism and that they might be, as they had originally been, subject to the empire of the Romans; and that glorious emperor, of blessed memory, gave ear to them and sent out an imperial agent and priests with him and baptized all of them that were unbaptized of the aforesaid nations...". On the baptism of the Serbs and Croats, see: A. Christophilopoulou, *Byzantine History*, B2 (867-1081), publ. Vantias, Thessaloniki 1997, 22. G. S. Radojičić, "La date de la conversion des Serbes", *Byzantion* 22 (1952), 253-256. I. Dujčev, "Une ambassade byzantine auprès des Serbes au IXe siècle", *ЗРВИ* Књ. VII. 7 (1961), 53-60. F. Curta, "Emperor Heraclius and the Conversion of the Croats and the Serbs", *Medieval Christianitas* 3 (2010), 121-138. D. Dzino, "Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat: Identity Transformations" in *Post-Roman and Early Medieval Dalmatia*, Leiden; Boston, 2010, 201-208. T. Živković, *De conversione Croatorum et Serborum — A Lost Source*, Belgrade 2012. T. Živković, "On the baptism of the Serbs and Croats in the time of Basil I (867-886)", *Январь—Июнь* № 1 (2013), 33-53.

¹³ P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, 490.

centuries to transform Serbia from Byzantium's vassal state to an empire¹⁴. Stefan Nemanja was the founder of the State of Serbia. He was born in the land of the Montenegrin Serbs in 1113BC and named grand župan of Raska. He was the father of Stefan Nemanjić, the first King of Serbia, and of Saint Sava, the first archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In 1170, after a struggle for the throne with his brothers, Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty, rose to power and started renewing the Serbian state in the Raška region. Sometimes with the sponsorship of Byzantium, and sometimes opposing it, the veliki župan -a title equivalent to the rank of prince- Stefan Nemanja expanded his state seizing territories east and south, and newly annexed the littoral and the Zeta region. Along with his governmental efforts, the veliki župan dedicated much care to the construction of monasteries. His endowments include the Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery and the Studenica Monastery in the Raška region, and the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos¹⁵. Also, his son Stefan Nemanja, Stefan the First-Crowned, confronted the heresy of Bogolism.

The heresy of Bogolism

Basil who had the nickname Bogomil¹⁶ was a member, of a dualist religious sect that flourished in the Balkans between the 10th and 15th centuries. It was a Gnostic religiopolitical sect founded in the First Bulgarian Empire by the priest Bogomil during the reign of Tsar Petar I in the 10th century¹⁷. Bogomilism was named after its founder, Bogomil, whose name means "friend of God" or "beloved of God"¹⁸ in the 10th century, spent fifteen years to learn all the secret lore of the sect and then he taught it for forty or forty two years¹⁹. There was another opinion that the name came from the slavic prayer "Bong miloui", which means "Lord, let give us your mercy", (Kyrie eleison)²⁰.

Bogomil, who was presented as a priest or monk, was not some uneducated holy man. Anna Comnena may have described him as a monk and he certainly affected a monastic habit, but he was by profession a doctor²¹. He mixed parts

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ J. Sheppard, "The Byzantine Commonwealth 1000-1550", in M. Angold, *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, Vol. 5, Eastern Christianity, 3-49, especially 15-18.

¹⁶ D. Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, Cambridge 1948, p. 168-229. S. Runciman, *The medieval Manichee: A study of the Christian dualist heresy*, The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, New York 1963, p. 63-93. M. Loos, *Dualist Heresy in the Middle Ages*, Prague 1974, p. 84-95. Anna Comnena XV, VIII, 3; III, 219²⁰ (ed. Leib); Zonaras XVIII 23¹⁹⁻²²; III, 743⁵⁻¹³ (ed. Bonn).

¹⁷ P. Edward, *Heresy and authority in medieval Europe: documents in translation*, Middle Ages University of Pennsylvania Press Middle Ages Series. Pennsylvania 1980, 108.

¹⁸ D. Obolensky, *The Bogomils: A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1948, 120.

¹⁹ Euthymius Zygademos, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, 27, PG 130, 1332C.

²⁰ Ibid, PG 130, 1289AB. VI. Feidas, *Church History*, I, Athens 1994, 306.

²¹ Anna Comnena XV, VIII, 3; III, 219²⁰⁻²¹ (ed. Leib); Zonaras XVIII 23, 20; III, 743⁹ (ed. Bonn).

of the teachings of the heresy of Paulicianism²² -the new Manichaeans as it was called but there was closer with the teaching and the followers of Marcion-²³ and the Euchites or Messalians or Enthusiasts²⁴. The Bogomils sought to restore the earliest and purest form of Christianity and they had adopted mainly the docetic – dualistic form of Paulicianism²⁵. Since their beliefs were considered a threat to the Church they experienced intense persecution²⁶ and sometimes the death sentence is pronounced in accordance with secular laws²⁷.

Bogomilism was a dualist heresy. This dualist heresy believed that there are two opposing creations, which are mixed together in our universe. One was angelic, spiritual and good, and was worth striving for. The other was natural, material and evil, and must be shunned²⁸. Two types of dualist heresy were flourishing in the Byzantine Empire at this time, the old-established Paulician heresy, originally from Armenia, with a strong community at this time in Thrace, and the more recent Bogomil heresy, a successful Bulgarian popular movement, which had probably been influenced by the Paulicians²⁹. Bogomil missionaries

²² The Paulicians spread their Manichaean doctrines, which espoused a dualistic struggle between the forces of good and evil in the cosmos.

²³ M. C. Thomset, *Heresy in the Roman Catholic Church: A History*, North Carolina 2011, 53.

²⁴ “The condemnation of the sect by St John Damascene and Timothy, priest of Constantinople, expressed the view that the sect espoused a sort of mystical materialism. The sect’s teaching asserted that: The essence (ousia) of the Trinity could be perceived by the carnal senses. The Threefold God transformed himself into a single hypostasis (substance) in order to unite with the souls of the perfect. God has taken different forms in order to reveal himself to the senses. Only such sensible revelations of God confer perfection upon the Christian. The state of perfection, freedom from the world and passion, is therefore attained solely by prayer, not through the church, baptism and or any of the sacraments, which have no effect on the passions or the influence of evil on the soul, hence their name, which means “Those who pray”. Messalians taught that once a person experienced the essence of God they were freed from moral obligations or ecclesiastical discipline” in *World Heritage Encyclopedia*, <http://hawaiiilibrary.com/articles/euchites> [access: 1st May 2017].

²⁵ N. G. Garsoian, *The Paulician heresy: a study of the origin and development of Paulicianism in Armenia and the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire*, Publications in near and middle past Studies. Series A, De Gruyter, the Hague – Paris 1967, p. 233. D. Sh. Barry, *The Paulician Attitude Toward Images: A Study of the Influence of Iconoclasm Upon the Paulician Heresy in Armenia and Byzantium from the Seventh Through the Tenth Centuries*, University of Wisconsin--Madison 1972.

²⁶ P. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Medieval Christianity, vol. IV, Eerdmans, Grand Rapid 1910, 556-558.

²⁷ G. Minczew, «Remarks on the Letter of the Patriarch Theophylact to Tsar Peter in the Context of Certain Byzantine and Slavic Anti-heretic Texts», in *Studia Ceranea* Vol. 3 (2013), 116.

²⁸ J. Cottrell, *What the Bible Says About God the Creator*, vol. I, Wipf and Stock Publishers, Eugene Oregon 1983, 65-67.

²⁹ G. Minczew, “Remarks on the Letter of the Patriarch...” 114-115.

after the subjugation of Bulgaria by the Emperor Basil II the Macedonian, the Bulgar Slayer in 1018, moved into the Byzantine capital itself, Constantinople³⁰ and obtained a stable organization³¹.

Specially, the first known written information about this heresy appeared in the epistle of Patriarch Theophylact of Constantinople (933-956) to Tsar Peter (927-969)³². The Patriarch explained to Tsar Peter that this heresy is the "Paulician heresy mixed with Manicheism"³³. Later much information there is in the writings of Presbyter Cosmas "Sermon against the Heretics" created around 972³⁴. Cosmas blamed a priest called Bogomil for spreading this new teaching across Bulgaria - a teaching that opposed the teaching of the orthodox Christian church- that there is only one god³⁵. Finally, many things for this heresy were revealed in Euthymius' Zygademus writings in the twelfth century³⁶. Also, a great importance for the knowledge that we can have for the teaching of Bogomilism has a bogomil apocryphon called *The Gospel of John, or The Secret Book*.

Their cosmogony was interesting because it was close to what one would deduce the Essenes believed from the Dead Sea Scrolls³⁷. They taught God had two sons, Satanael and Michael. The suffix "-el" showed they were sons of God. The older son rebelled and became the evil spirit. He then made the lower heavens and the earth and tried to make humanity. He could not give him life,

³⁰ S. Runciman, *The medieval Manichee: A study of the Christian dualist heresy*, The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, New York 1960³, 73-79.

³¹ F. Kempf, «The renewal of Monastic and Canonical Life», West Germany 1969, (320-350), especially 340-341.

³² «The Letter of patriarch Theophylact to tsar Peter is the oldest, but seemingly not the most informative Greek source for the history of Bogomilism. It is in essence a standard document, a typical product of the patriarch's chancery; it is not conceived as an in-depth investigation into the theological minutiae pertaining to the cosmogony, dogmas and social doctrines of the heretics and the orthodox Church, but rather as a practical tutorial on how to thwart any given neo-Manichaean dualist heresy. It brings to light the fact that Bogomilism, the 'new' heresy was treated as an 'old' one – as a 'reactivation' of earlier gnostic-dualist and neo-Manichaean movements. The letter also features a peculiar innovative feature, though not one directly related to the Bogomil heresy itself: the degree of commitment to preaching the dogmas of the heresy is used for differentiating the situation of the followers. The analysis of the Letter of patriarch Theophylact to tsar Peter raises the more general issue concerning the detailed study of Byzantine and Slavic liturgical texts as a source of information on neo-Manichaean doctrines», G. Minczew, "Remarks on the Letter of the Patriarch", 113-130.

³³ Ibid. 117.

³⁴ Cosmas the Priest's only known work, *Sermon Against the Heretics*, bears the full title Homily of the Unworthy Presbyter Cosmas Against the Newly-Appeared Bogomil Heresy or, in other manuscripts, Sermon of Saint Cosmas Presbyter Against the Heretics, A Discussion and an Instruction from the Books of God. The Bulgarian Presbyter Cosmas's «Sermon» on Bogomilism (ca. 970 AD) is a priceless document for the history of medieval dualism, not only with respect to Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire, but for Western Europe as well.

³⁵ Presbyter Cosmas, *Sermon against the Heretics*, <http://www.bogomilism.eu/Other%20authors/Cosma.html>

³⁶ Euthymius Zygademus, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, 27, PG 130, 1289C-1332D.

³⁷ J. E. Taylor, *The Essenes, the Scrolls, and the Dead Sea*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012.

though, and had to get God to do it, perhaps by a trick. Adam thus received the breath or spirit of life, which invested him with a potentially good soul, but was coerced into a covenant in which he was allowed to till the soil in the wicked world as a slave to Satanael³⁸.

Then God sent his younger son, Michael, into the form of a man called Jesus «elected» by God to be the Saviour, after baptism in the Jordan. Michael appeared as a dove and Jesus became Christ, with the power to break Adam's covenant, in the form of a clay tablet (hierographon), with Satanael. Thus the evil spirit was vanquished and lost his “-el”, and his equal power, becoming Satan, no longer a son of God but a fallen angel³⁹. Even so, with the power that remained, he plotted to have Jesus Christ crucified to begin the whole evil religion of Christianity with its gaudy and meretricious grand objects and churches, vestments and raiments, icons and images, sacraments and ceremonies, and monks and priests to impress simple humans as if God was an earthly king⁴⁰. This world being the work of Satan, the perfect must eschew any and every excess of its pleasure. They held the “Lord's Prayer” in high respect⁴¹, as the most potent weapon against Satan, and had a number of conjurations against “evil spirits”⁴².

The Bogomils denied the divine birth of Christ, the Trinity⁴³, and the validity of sacraments and ceremonies. They denounced the use of sacraments and vestments. Marriage and Baptism were not sacrament for them. Mainly the marriage was thought a license to fornicate. Baptism was permitted only to adults and it was only spiritual⁴⁴. The latter should be baptised, and neither water nor oil mattered but asceticism and prayer did. The miracles of Jesus were not real but spiritual events⁴⁵. Christ was the Son of God only through grace like other prophets, and the bread and wine of the Eucharist were not transformed into flesh and blood⁴⁶. The last judgment would be executed by God and not by Jesus⁴⁷. The images and the cross were idols and the worship of saints and relics idolatry⁴⁸. They supported the rejection of the Old Testament, together with the prophets, and also the writings of the Church fathers⁴⁹. They rejected the cult of the Holy Virgin Mary and generally Christ was not really born by Mary but he

³⁸ Euthymius Zygademos, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, 27, PG 130, 1293D.

³⁹ Ibid, PG 130, 1293D- 1297D.

⁴⁰ Ibid, PG 130, 1325D- 1328B.

⁴¹ Ibid, PG 130, 1313-1316.

⁴² Ibid, PG 130, 1329AB.

⁴³ Ibid, PG 130, 1292D-1293D.

⁴⁴ Presbyter Cosmas, *Sermon against the Heretics*, <http://www.bogomilism.eu/Other%20authors/Cosma.html>

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Euthymius Zygademos, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, 27, PG 130, 1313B.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid, PG 130, 1292AB.

⁴⁹ Ibid, PG 130, 1321-1332.

entered the world through her ear⁵⁰ and took upon himself only the appearance of human⁵¹. Cosmas found their teachings on Mary so despicable that he can't bring himself to recite them⁵².

Bogomil supported that the resurrection of the body didn't exist. It was only a fiction, because the body came from the Satan⁵³. They should not eat animal products. They were forbade the consumption of meat, milk and cheese⁵⁴. They should not swear oaths, including feudal and judicial oaths⁵⁵. They chose their teachers from their own number to guide them, and had no paid priests or built churches, but met in private homes like the first Christians. Prayers were to be said in private houses⁵⁶. The Church was a human church of the interior spirituality of its members⁵⁷. Each member could obtain the perfection of Christ and become a Christ. Ordination was by the «elect» of the congregation, who had reached the perfection of Christ, and these people were called literally Christs and Perfects⁵⁸.

Each community had its own twelve “apostles”, and women could be raised to the rank of “elect”. The Bogomils wore garments like mendicant friars and were renowned as missionaries, travelling far and wide to propagate their doctrines⁵⁹. Healing the sick and conjuring the evil spirit, they travelled the world and spread their apocryphal literature along with some of the books of the Old Testament⁶⁰, deeply influencing the religious spirit of the nations, and preparing them for the Reformation⁶¹.

Generally, the Bogomils had many elements in their beliefs and their teaching with the different heresies of gnosticism⁶².

Stefan Nemanja, the first crowned King of Serbia, and the contraction of the Bogomils

Stefan Nemanja the first founded the Nemanjić dynasty. Under Nemanja (1109-1196) and his heirs established control over the territories of neighboring Serb tribes except those in Bosnia and unified them into an independent state⁶³.

⁵⁰ Ibid, PG 130, 1301C.

⁵¹ Ibid, PG 130, 1301D- 1304D.

⁵² Presbyter Cosmas, *Sermon against the Heretics*.

⁵³ Euthymius Zygademus, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, 27, PG 130, 1305B-D.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 27, PG 130, 1324A-C.

⁵⁵ Presbyter Cosmas *Sermon against the Heretics*,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid. D. M. Lang, *The Bulgarians. From pagan times to the Ottoman conquest*, Thames and Hudson. London 1976, 98.

⁵⁹ Presbyter Cosmas, *Sermon against the Heretics*.

⁶⁰ Euthymius Zygademus, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, 27, PG 130, 1292BC.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² D. Brakke, *The Gnostics*, (reprint ed.), Harvard University Press 2011. K. L King. *What is Gnosticism?*, Harvard University Press 2003. C. Markschie, *Gnosis: An Introduction*, trans. John Bowden. T & T Clark 2000.

⁶³ D. Obolensky, *The Bogomils: A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge

He maintained good relations with the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Comnenus and his heirs. This early kingdom was influenced politically and culturally by its stronger neighbour, the Byzantine Empire⁶⁴. Finally, until the death of Manuel, Nemanja and his sons should contract not only the political enemies of the population near Serbia who wanted to capture the area of Serbia but he had to face up some heretics of Christians. This terrible heresy was Bogolism.

During the 11th and 12th centuries Bogomilism spread over many European and Asian provinces of the Byzantine Empire. Its growth in Constantinople resulted, about 1100, in the trial and imprisonment of prominent Bogomils in the city and in the public burning of their leader, Basil, as we have already referred. In the second half of the 12th century, it spread westward⁶⁵. The Serbian ruler Stefan Nemanja was obliged to summon a general assembly of his land to check it. The Bogomils spread westwards and settled in Serbia, where they were to be known as *Babuni*⁶⁶. The members are referred to as Babuni in Church Slavonic documents, which originally meant «superstition; superstitious person».

Serbian prince Stephan Nemanja (1168-1196) and the Serbian council were quick to declare the Babuni as heretics, and expelled them from Serbia in the 12th century. Large numbers took refuge in Bosnia and Dalmatia where they were known under the name of Patarenes or Patareni⁶⁷. However, in 1172, the anti-Byzantine coalition that Nemanja had joined with the Kingdom of Hungary, the Venetian Republic and the Holy Roman Empire collapsed.

Prince Nemanja also used the following decade to deal with the Bogomil heresy that had spread to his realm, as well as to neighboring Bosnia, from neighboring Bulgaria, and strengthening Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Grand Župans burned their books and confiscated their lands, as well as burned some at the stake, and exiled others⁶⁸. Also he gave the order the leader of Bogolism to have his tongue cut out and some of his followers were not only exiled, but banished or executed as great danger for Serbia. Most of the exiled Bogomils from his realm found refuge in Bosnia, under protection of its ruler Kulin Ban. By the end of his reign, Stefan Nemanja had completely rooted out the Bogomils⁶⁹.

Stefan wanted to protect the Orthodox christianity, because he knew how dangerous was a heresy for the unity not only of the Church but also for people of Serbia. Also a heresy created problems with the Byzantine Empire. The latter would protect more easily an orthodox Christian area than a heretic.

1948, 284.

⁶⁴ T. Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth & the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Yale University Press, New York 1997, 76-99.

⁶⁵ Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, 283 - 284.

⁶⁶ D. M. Lang, *The Bulgarians. From pagan times to the Ottoman conquest*, Thames and Hudson. London 1976, 93.

⁶⁷ M. Gaster, «Bogomils» in H. Chisholm, *Encyclopædia Britannica, vol 4, (11th ed.)*, Cambridge University Press. Oxford, 1898, 119.

⁶⁸ St. Runciman, *The medieval Manichee: A study of the Christian dualist heresy*, The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, New York 1960³, 94-116.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Conclusions

The Bogomils themselves were generally described as a Gnostic movement which arose as a reaction against the state-clerical repression of the Byzantine Church. Slavonic sources however claim Bogomil doctrines as Manichean. The Bogomils derived fragments of their teaching mainly from Manichaean sources. The basic teaching of Bogomilism was that there were two gods - one the god of good, and the other the god of evil. The god of evil created whole material world, including human beings. By his will exist all the visible things: the earth itself, animals, churches, cross. Some of the Bogomils thought that the evil god, Satan, was God's younger son, next to Christ, the older brother. Others thought that he was not God's son but an angel that seceded from the ranks.

They were confronted as a great danger in the place of Byzantine Empire and its neighbours, Bulgarians and Serbs. They were badly persecuted in Serbia, by the Nemanja's dynasty and especially by Stefan Nemanja the first founded the Nemanjić dynasty and later by his son Stefan Nemanja, the first crowned Prince of Serbia. Today, the majority of the population of Serbia remains faithful in Orthodox Christianity, that mainly saint Sava established and protected from the heresy of bogolism.

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БОГУМИЛСКА ЈЕРЕС И ЊИХОВ СУКОБ СА СРПСКИМ КРАЉЕМ СТЕФАНОМ НЕМАЊОМ

Богумили је добила име по свом оснивачу, Богомил, чије име значи «пријатељ Бога» или «вољени од Бога», превод грчког назива Тхеопхилос. То је јерес, који се појавио у 10. веку у Бугарској, након хришћанизације кнезу Борису Булгариан гувернера. То се углавном проширила за време владавине цара Петра I у 10. веку. Богумили је имао много сличности са учењем јереси Гностицизма и посебно са манихејство и маркионство, у раним центрурис хришћанства. Основна доктрина Боголисм је дуалистичка у природи - то јест, његови следбеници су веровали да су обе добре и зле силе створио универзум. Богумили верује да је материјални свет створио ђавола, и они су због тога осудили све активности које су довеле човечанство у блиском контакту са материјом, укључујући једе месо, пили вино, и брак. Богумили су приметили, па чак и хвале својим непријатељима за њихово штедње, али њихово одбацивање целокупне организације православне цркве их је јеретицима, и због тога су тражили за конверзију и, у неким случајевима, прогон. Богумили скрасио у Србији, као и лидери јереси су именовани као апостоле. Стефан Немања је схватио да је експанзија јерес боголисм је опасно за православне цркве и хришћана у Србији. Зато је одлучио да се бави Богомил јереси које су шире у свом домену, као и суседне Босне, из суседне Бугарске, и јачање хришћанство. Гранд Жупанс Стефан наредио да се спали своје књиге и одузели њихове земље, као и спалили неке на ломачи и прогнаних другима. Већина протераних богумилима из своје области нашли уточиште у Босни, под заштитом свог владара Кулина Бана. До краја своје владавине, Стефан Немања је био потпуно искорењена у богумили.

