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The abstract of the PhD thesis:

**THE RELATION BETWEEN THE BIBLICAL
MORALITY AND THE QURANIC MORALITY
HISTORY. CONVERGENCE. AGGLUTINATIONS**

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The key words of the thesis

Keywords: *morality, religion, Bible, Quran, Christianity, Orthodoxy, Jesus Christ – a moral model, Muhammad, (proto) Islam, Gospel, Sharia, commandments, laws, hermeneutics, Europe exegesis, Near and Middle East, universal ethics, dialogue*

A general introduction in the theme of the thesis

In the religious and moral context of the beginning of the third millennium, faith is passing through a crisis marked by the claims of the secular humanism and the theses of the atheist philosophy. The process of globalisation and the mass migration trigger mutations in the religious identity; therefore, the roots of the tradition are forgotten, while a universal religious cosmopolitanism is generated. The clash of civilisations (Samuel Huntington) is a fully developing process, attempted to be solved through an ideologized inter-religious dialogue. The history of the humanity and the experience of life have proved the fact that the humanity cannot be emptied by the religious factor, which offers an existential reason and proposes a set of values integrated in a moral system with a revealed nature. Most of the times, the human actions have effects that are evaluated depending on their moral value. The human behaviour and the relations between people become defining aspects for the structure of a society that is based on ethical principles and values. Religion is exploited lately based on its contribution to the social ethics and to the establishment of peace, justice and welfare in the world.

The religious dimension of globalisation involves also a moral dimension. The initiation and the implementation of a global ethical concept (Hans Küng) raise important questions in the relation between religions. The extraction of general principles from the

morality of the world religions gives birth to a moral relativism; the accentuation of a religious dimension specific to a certain ethical system attracts inter-religious conflicts; ignoring the religious morality and the promotion of a secular ethics categorically relativizes the axiology; the cultivation of a civil religion becomes a political ideology of the correct ethics. Therefore, the avatars of the social morality do not have the capacity to maintain a new world order in a moral order. From the point of view of the Orthodox theology, the morality is not exhausted in the social ethic formalism; it is instead fulfilled only in the perfection of the person and through the work of the virtues as act of needing (Ierótheos Vlachos).

Taking into consideration the demographic situation of the aged Christian Europe and the migrating huge wave of the Eastern Islamic people, we consider that discussing a subject related to the Christian moral system and the Islamic moral system is useful and topical. Our approach is also supported by the fact that these two important monotheist religions register the largest number of believers: the Christians represent approximately 32% from the world population, while the Muslims represent approximately 25% from the world population. The Christianity and the Christian morality built a new culture and civilisation, based on the virtue of love, specific to the European and American continents. The Islam, on the other hand, conquered an important part from the Near and Middle East and the northern part of the African continent, becoming a religion of power and obedience.

The general evaluation of the two moral systems implies an ample approach and numerous methodological investigations on all the aspects composing the structure of a religion. Our attention was drawn especially by the sacred and revealed text at the core of the religious morality and that continuously represents a hermeneutic source to which the contemporary man constantly relates. The Book establishes the revealed Word, while the man must search for the

meaning of the revealed word in the book (Andrei Scrima), thus establishing an interaction between the book and the person. Moreover, the book unites, from a specific point of view, the three monotheist religions, also called, in the Islamic theology, the “religions of the Book”. As object of a fundamental reference, the book unites the people, but “its openness” and the search of the meanings provoke multiple divisions and give birth to interpretations. In order to offer unity and dogmatic meaning, the sacred Book is strongly connected to the act of logophany and to the person who received the revelation and became the founder of the religion.

Considering the two religions and the holy books of each one, the Bible and the Quran, in order to present the moral theology since its origins until the present time, we discussed in our work, theoretically and also with concrete examples, the concepts of “biblical morality” and “Quranic morality”. The two phrases appear in the bibliography of the last 50 years, since we may speak of a highlighting of the moral dimension of the religion and of the necessity of a certitude justifying any moral action of the man. Therefore, the man, through the holy book, feels the direction, *hic et nunc*, of God in his moral actions and beyond them.

A thematic framing of the thesis

The present thesis was elaborated in the Doctoral School of Theology, University “1 Decembrie 1918” of Alba Iulia, under of coordination of Father Archbishop PhD Habil Professor Irineu Pop, specialised in Orthodox moral theology, Social Ethics and Christian Bioethics. In general, our thesis belongs to the field of moral theology, but it has a multi-disciplinary character, integrating and using notions belonging to the History and the Philosophy of

religions, Biblical studies, the Universal history of the Church, and, even Patristics.

The thesis highlights the moral content of its bibliography. We used numerous bibliographical resources belonging to Western moralistic theologians: Philippe Bordeyne, Allain Thomasset, William Spohn, Geneviève Medevielle, Denis Müller and others. All these theologians are connected by their filiation to the Association of the Theologians for the Study of the Morality (ATEM) and their collaboration in the Catholic Institute of Paris, where we had the privilege to do a traineeship for bibliographical research and also met two of the above mentioned professors. In the same time, their fondness to the Eastern and Western orthodox tradition, as well as the exploration of the patristic bibliography, determined us to adopt the theological terminology and not to manifest a critical attitude toward it.

The concept of biblical morality, often used in the Orthodox bibliography, is not an unusual product in the Orthodox theological landscape. Strongly grounded in the tradition of the Church and on the central place of the person of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, The eternal Word of the Father, and the divine Logos, the biblical morality could cancel the effects of the “metamorphosis of the biblical spirit” (John Breck) from the Orthodox theology, by avoiding the hermeneutical and exegetic methods and aims coming from the West. If, related to the content of the moral theology, a discipline no older than 200 years (it was seen as a practice of the theology of dogmas until then), numerous philosophical and psychological aspects were assumed in the Orthodox morality, even more so we have now the arguments to approach, methodologically, the patristic and liturgical orientation of the Western Christian morality we mentioned above. The same thing is valid for the biblical studies, which should renounce to the methods belonging to

the Protestant reasoning and re-orient toward the patristic hermeneutics.

Even if the syntagma “biblical morality” does not sound familiar in the Orthodox academic morality, there are such classifications and similar ones to be found to well-known theologians of the Orthodox world. Example given, Christos Yannaras frequently operates with concepts as: the morality of freedom, the liturgical morality, the royal morality, the priestly morality, the prophetic morality, and the morality of the liturgical arts. Therefore, the biblical morality is nothing else than the Christian morality in an approach exclusively based on the Gospel texts, the contexts and the pretexts. No matter the manner in which we would operate with theological concepts in the sphere of the Orthodox morality, this is completely represented in the divine-human-divine person of the Saviour Jesus Christ, the perfect moral model. Still, due to the specificity of our work, the relation between the Bible and the Quran from the point of view of the moral theology, a similar terminological order is required, because in Islam, Muhammed cannot represent the moral model, as perceived by us, and the Islamic theology; therefore, the Quran becomes a sort of Christological substitute in its relation with the Christianity. Moreover, the present thesis approaches the history and the genesis of the Quran, the meeting and the connections of the proto-Islam with the Christianity, and, in the same time, the agglutinations and mutations related to the Quranic text, produced in time or due to the specific contexts.

The aim and the general objectives of the thesis

In the contemporary European context, characterised by an inevitable meeting between the Christian ethic values and the Islamic values, the present thesis has as aim the objective presentation of the

relation between the biblical morality and the Quranic morality, by underlining the historical aspect of the genesis and evolution of Islam and its interaction with the Christianity of the 7th century, in all its Orthodox and heterodox forms. In the same time, the aim of the work is to depict the universal character of the biblical morality, as synthesis of the previous scriptural revelation, as source for other following religious forms (the Quran), and as life philosophy for the future.

The first objective of our thesis is the diachronic exposition of the relation between the Bible and the Quran as sources of moral actions, including relevant observations on the two important religions, in their historical interactions and convergences and related to the theological elements of the sacred text. This objective requires a synthesis of the arguments favouring the religious morality and of the relation between morality and text. The moral action should contain the seeds of a pragmatic development in the scriptural text as reflection of the divine word or as divine message to the humanity.

Another objective is to make a brief comparison between the “founders” of the two religions, the Christianity and the Islam, and the highlighting of their religious-moral profile. As “guarantors” or “agents” of the revelation, they are the one that can offer the fundamental hermeneutical principles for the understanding of the sacred text. Jesus Christ is Himself the embodiment of the Word of God in history and the Bible is fulfilled in His person and in the spirit of the tradition of the Church preserving it, offering it the present form and proclaiming it for centuries as life measure and norm. On the other hand, in the life of Muhammad, there are several events and moral actions that cannot be supported by the Quranic text or cannot be justified from an ethical point of view.

Another general objective of our thesis is to clearly prove the manner in which, the biblical text, in various forms belonging to the canonical or less canonical Christian traditions, categorically

influenced the Quranic text. Also, we will observe the influence manifested by the Judaism and of the ethical-judicial message of the Old Testament. The New Testament apocrypha represent another inspiration source for the prophet Muhammad, who used them through various persons in his entourage.

Another objective of the present thesis is the theological Integralism or the integrating theology. The scholastic theology produced several fractures in the theological study, advancing on separate corridors, offering a fragmented perspective on the theology. Not only for the authentic understanding of the Christian teachings in general, but also for the theological teaching, is our approach welcomed and extremely useful. It can be included on the line of the renewal of the theology in the patristic spirit, considering the fact that the works of the Holy Fathers and of the church writers had an integral theological dimension.

The aim and the objectives of the thesis are not exhausted by reaching simple concepts, more and more present in the academic world, the interdisciplinarity and the transversality; they also propose “building bridges” between the academic theological disciplines or between the fragmentary manners of understanding the theology. We believe that the introduction of the theological disciplines should not find a series of argument formally offering the support to win the title of “queen of theological sciences” or other similar phrases. An integrative approach is more welcomed, by enriching the general vision on theology as a whole. The patristic expositive method uses fully, naturally and spontaneously, this thematic and homogenous equilibrium of theological formation.

The research progress

The presentation of the relation between the moral values of the Christianity and those of Islam started in the patristic age, the 8th

and the 9th century, when the Islam was seen rather as a heresy of a Judeo-Christian cult than as a new religion. Considering the centrality of the Quran in the Islam, apologetic treatises were elaborated against this book that was diminishing the messianic and soteriological role of the Saviour Jesus Christ. Saints Isaac the Syrian and John Damascene lived and developed in the space where the Islam developed. The first, as far as we know, was not aware of the Islam because it was in its incipient stage; therefore, he does not develop anti-Islamic texts, but he put his mark on the Islamic mystique. The second one pertinently attacked the Islamic doctrine in various writings, due to the fact that the Islam became wider spread in the Oriental space at the end of the 7th century and the beginning of the 8th century.

Several researchers from the western space give attention to the Islamic morality. Part of them also stopped to the issue of the moral value of the Quran, comparing it with the text of the Gospel. The best incursions in the text of the Quran belong to Richard Bell (his work being continued by his apprentice William Montgomery Watt) and Régis Blachère. Also on this critical line, but without stating purely Christian thesis, we can mention the names of Denise Masson, Jacqueline Chabbi, Alfred Louis le Premare, Roger Arnaldez, François Jourdain, Jean-Luc Monneret, Henri Michaud, Mohammad Abdallah Draz, Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezi and others. One of the most important theologians researching the theme is Father Jacques Jomier, and, during the last ten years, we mention the contributions belonging to Joachim Gnilka, Edouard-Marie Gallez, and Maurice Borrmans et al.

In the Romanian space, the research on the Quranic morality and its relation with the biblical morality are not very developed. We cannot discuss a research tradition of the Islam, and, less than this, of the Quran and its moral precepts. Still, due to the historical context of the Romanians during the 14th – 17th centuries, under the

imminence of the Ottoman danger, we can mention a critical analysis of “the law of Mahomet”. The Moldavian historians (Macarie, Eftimie, Azarie, Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, Ion Neculce, and Radu Greceanu) criticised in their writings various negative aspects of the Islamists oppressing the Romanian people. Saint Antim Ivireanul, metropolitan of Wallachia at the beginning of the 18th century, an important intellectual and preacher, edited numerous religious books, describing the Muslims as follows: “The clouds blackening the sky, the lightening blinding the eyes, the thunders bringing fear in the brave hearts are events of many kinds, the fear of enemies, the bad things coming from the strangers, the robbery, the enslaving, the high taxes left by God and surrounding us, are all here to show our faith and patience”.

The first Romanian work dedicated to the Islam is considered to be the work of the encyclopaedist Dimitrie Cantemir, *De muhammedana religione, deque politico musulmanae gentis regimine* (*The system and the foundation of the Islam religion*). Even if he was not a theologian, Cantemir presents surprising elements for his time: Muhammad is considered a false prophet, while a series of teachings and Quranic stories are presented as “stolen from our Gospel”. Ienăchiță Văcărescu wrote the first critical work on the Islam in the Romanian language. It is titled *Istorie a preaputernicilor împărați othomani* (*A history of the Ottoman emperors*), affirming that the Quran is “a compilation of all the holy text known by Muhammad from Jewish and Christian sources, during his travel in Palestine or other destinations”. The research widens once the Arabic discipline department is opened to the University of Bucharest, where part of the teachers approached the Quran and the moral system of the Islamic religion. We mention in our thesis several names contributing with brief research on the problem of the morality in the Quran.

The research methodology

Considering the interdisciplinary character of the present paper, we used several scientific methods in the research methodology in order to reach the objectives of the thesis. The research methodology required numerous parallel readings of the biblical and Quranic texts and the assumption of a theological synthesis related to the notions of moral nature. Also, we used a historical-critical approach in order to understand the meaning of Islam at its beginning and nowadays. Without a diachronic methodological approach, it is difficult to convince the man of the 21th century that Islam is a heresy that later developed in a religion and massively took Judaic and Christian elements and metamorphosed them in a personal manner, depending on the historical context it met.

For this purpose, we used the *comparative analysis*, building a parallelism between the Quranic morality and the biblical morality, and, in the same time, between the landmarks of the Quranic bibliography and the biblical one. We also made comparisons, in the Christian bibliography, between the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions. *The historical-critical method* helped us to draw the historical map of the two religions, as well as the evolution of their interactions and their impact on the Eastern and Western societies. In order to enunciate points of view on the subject we discuss, we used the *analytical-synthetic method*, a result of using different bibliographical resources, belonging to various authors and various environments, showing the source of the ideas.

The limits of the research

One of the limits of our resource is our lack of knowledge of the classic Greek language and of the Arabic language. The old Greek language offers a direct access to the works of the Holy

Fathers of the Church and the possibility of a detailed theological-linguistic study on the specific terms used in our thesis. Still, the theological coherence of the thesis is not endangered due to the French translation of the patristic sources (the collection *Sources chrétiennes*) and their bilingual exposition. In this matter, our basic knowledge of Greek helped us to identify theological terms and notions that helped us to justify the thesis and its arguments. Still, the vast patristic bibliography related to the researched theme and the bibliography from the first centuries of the Church contributed to the fact that the references to the thinking and relation of the Holy Fathers to the enounced theme to be fragmentary and unequal from a diachronic point of view.

Due to the lack of knowing the Arabic language, essential for the study of the Quran, cannot completely offer an objective perspective on the theme. Although we used many bibliographical sources coming from specialists in Islam, the Eastern space, and renowned Western theologians, we do not claim to have been treated the relation between the biblical morality and the Quranic morality in an exhaustive and objective manner. Moreover, the hypotheses identified in the foreign language bibliography (mostly French, but also English, Italian and German) are placed on both sides of initiating and developing a dialogue between Christian and Muslims. Our argument in the discussion of the theme, with the assumed limits, resides in the fact that the moral message of the Quran, in general, does not necessarily require a philological analysis and the dedicated literature of the Islamist theologians from the Western space or from the Near East can offer us a correct vision of the Islamic theology on aspects as morality and ethical aspects in the Quran.

A brief presentation of the chapters of the thesis

The first chapter of the work, titled *The Bible and the Quran – sources of moral action*, presents some features specific to Christianity and Islamism as religions, which are called in some theological acceptations as “religions of the books”, and underlines the importance of the holy book as source of reflection and moral action. We founded our approach on the concepts of “biblical morality” and “Quranic morality”, as announced in the title of the thesis. The chapter took in consideration massively the history of the genesis of the Quran in the Eastern multi-religious context during the 7th century, and presented the hermeneutical perspectives with the moral accents of the two holy books.

The first part of the chapter arguments from a theological point of view the relation between religion and morality, and also the categorical necessity of the affirmation of the religious morality. The presentation of the historical context of the genesis of the proto-Islam opened the understanding of one of the objective of the thesis: proving the influence of the Christianity on the Islam and on Muhammad, and, implicitly, on the content of the Quranic text. An unedited aspect of the chapter is the presentation of the Judeo-nazarenism, seen as Islam *avant-la-lettre*.

Considering the structure of the biblical language and the capacity of the humans to receive a divine message, many tomes presented in a written articulated form, and also considering the anthropological differences between the Orthodox theology and the Islamic one, we discussed some elements of theology of the sacred text from a patristic perspective. In this direction, we showed the Christological dimension of the Holy Gospel and the universality of the embodied Word of God and we rejected with arguments the Muslim dogma related to the origins of the language, in general, and of the Arabic language, especially. The different perspectives on the

human language lead to a moral divergence related to the human interaction and their moral action based on the divine commandments.

The last part of the chapters details the concepts of biblical morality and Quranic morality. Understanding the relation between Gospel and morality in Christianity and in Islamism, we presented the hermeneutical perspective of the text from a moral point of view. We remarked important differences between the two traditions related to the interaction of the believer with the revealed text. Living the Bible in the spirit of the Church and the possibilities of reading it with moral accents is placed in total opposition to the recitative obedience of the Quran and the normative appliance of Sharia. We could say that the Bible opens a dialogue between the man and God for sanctifying moral actions, while the Quran proposes to the man a set of juridical norms, on which the man cannot morally reflect, and the hermeneutical exercise is opened only for the interpretations of Sharia.

The second chapter, “*The inaugural logophany*” and the *religious-moral model of the “founder*,” presents the religious-oral profile of Our Saviour Jesus Christ and the religious-moral profile of Muhammad, the prophet of the Islam, we observed that Jesus Christ is the God-Man embodied in history for the salvation of the world and is identified with the eternal Word of the Father, the divine Logos, in all the things. In other words, the Logos has a universal value and overtakes the theological systems as conceptual forms for the articulation of the theology.

On one hand, Jesus Christ is, essentially, the Word of God and the Holy Gospel is fulfilled in Him. Thus, the believer can truly live the Bible from a moral point of view, in the sacramental life of the Church and as living and active member of His sacramental Body. On the other hand, Jesus Christ is the model of moral perfection, He is the model after we coordinate our lives and actions

and the model we follow for the work of the virtues. His Word is the same with His person and He is identified through His Words, calling us, as He called all meeting him, to follow the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Regarding the biographical profile of the prophet Muhammad, we insisted more on the historical data, due to the fact that we cannot compare Muhammad with the Saviour Jesus Christ and no relation of similitude exists between them. Even in the Quran, Jesus is considered a prophet as well as Muhammad, but He appears more times than Muhammad. The role of Muhammad in the Islamic soteriology is reduced to the minimum, but the Muslims relate to him with special devotion; because he was the one that received the last revelation of the books and is considered the ultimate interpret of the sacred words. We tried to highlight the connections of the prophet with the Christian world and the historical characters who influenced him.

The third chapter, *The moral paradigm in the biblical text and the Quranic text*, identifies elements of moral theology specific to the Bible in comparison with the same elements in the text of the Quran. As argued in the first chapter, the text of the Quran also overtook numerous Judaic sources, a reason for which the moral law of the Old Testament, which can be resumed to the ten commandments, can be easily identified in the text of the Quran. Moreover, the expositional style of the Quran is as close as possible to the style of the Old Testament.

We also discussed comparatively the relation between the Mosaic morality and Christianity and the relation between the Mosaic morality and the Islam. Although all the ten commandments can be identified in the Quranic text, their moral value is diminished or reoriented to a new form of human action, losing more in its authenticity. The Islamic theology makes sometimes huge efforts of Quranic interpretation or, as often happens, uses hermeneutical

forced interpretations, in order to support and found in the Quran the principles of the officialised and politicised theology. Reading the Quran provokes important confusions for the one not knowing the landmarks of the Islamic theology.

Regarding the connection between the Quran and the New Testament or the moral law of the New Testament, we mention the fact that Jesus Christ is many times presented in the Quran as a moral model, together with Mary, His mother. The Quranic events from the life of Jesus are marked by Christian (heterodox) apocrypha circulating during the life of Muhammad in the Eastern space. The Quranic images related to the portrait of Jesus Christ present Him in His dignity of Messiah, of Prophet, of divine Sign and Word of God.

The Quranic exegeses propose variants diminishing the image of Jesus in Quran, reducing Him to a simple prophet, in spite of the obvious Quranic texts affirming the opposite. The Quran does nothing else than transform the Christian morality in an apocrypha and to change its meanings in meanings evaluated by Muhammad and the Islam Caliphs as appropriate for the social life of the Muslim communities.

The fourth chapter, *Convergences and divergences between the biblical morality and the Quranic morality*, proposes a synthesis of the most important biblical and Quranic moral aspects in relation with God and in relation with the world and the fellow man. After presenting comparatively the notions of moral good, grace, faith and good deeds, we insisted on the “pillars of Islam”, the evangelical teachings and the institution of family from the point of view of the biblical morality and of the Quranic morality. These represent the issues that most often generate discussions and polemics, because they put on the first place the man and his social interactions. The pillars of Islam represent the rigorous and legalist forms that are mandatory for each Muslim and which, in our opinion, do not have the capacity to transform the man into a better person.

The Quranic vision on the pillars of the Islam is not exactly as presented in the theological variants. Thus, we can affirm that there is a rupture between the precepts of the Quran and the morality of the Islamic world, whose spiritual rhythm is rather regulated by *sharia* than by the holy book revealed to the Muslims.

Even if in the Quran or even in the early Muslim practice we can meet attitudes similar to the Christianity related to the willing poverty, virginity or celibate, they are not representative for the moral theology or practice in the classic Islam. Mercy gained other valences in the Islam, purely formal belonging to the ritualist culture or strictly juridical, favouring the politicised Islam and that can finance army actions against the humanity. We presented several arguments for the celibate or of a possible “Islamic monasticism”, but they are ignored, in spite of their evidence, or even reinterpreted in acceptations that become hostile to any type of asceticism or altruism in the Christian spirit.

Beyond the understanding of the Eastern culture in all its aspects, the family life of the Muslims is more different from the life of the authentic Christian life. The Quran also inherits a vision marked by the love specific to the Christians related to the connection between a man and a woman, but remaining in a predominant personal attitude of the prophet toward sexuality and polygamy, who was previously specific to the Arabic world. In spite of the influence of the Bible on the Quran, from a moral point of view, the Quranic morality is detached from the biblical values and builds its own ethic system, based on the interpretations of Muhammad and of the important Islamic theologians who founded the Islamic moral law. Thus, as observed in the presented aspects, in Islam, the woman has a much inferior statute than the man, while the man has an ethic alibi, based on the Islamic law, to abuse his wife or wives.

The Islamic morality was vehemently attacked by many Fathers of the Christian Church and other Christian authors, as result of their meeting with the oppressive Muslim authorities and due to the warlike proselytism of the Islam on the conquered populations. We observed the fact that Saint John of Damascus was very tough with everything related to the “heresy of the Islamists” and categorically accused Muhammad of immorality and quackery. We also chose two other characters discussing the Islamic morality, Teodor Abū Qurrah and Manuel II Palaiologos. The first represents the Orthodox theology of Syriac and Arabic language, while the second represents a Byzantine royal dynasty that led a defensive fight against the Islamic attack.

Teodor Abū Qurrah lived among the Muslim and was contemporary to many delicate events in the history of the Christianity (the iconoclast period). The Syrian theologian observes the moral behaviour of the Muslims and manages to put together a theological work that is, in the same time, objective and well documented, helping nowadays for understanding the context of those times. Abū Qurrah insists on the character of true religion attributed to the Christianity, highlighting the natural and divine morality of the Christians. Manuel II clearly affirms the fact that all that can be good and moral in the pages of the Quran represents in fact the influences of the Christianity and of the Judaism, and all that was added by Muhammad and others represents immoral and deficient aspects of the Islamic theological system.

The last part of the chapter presents some actual aspects for the theme of the relation between the biblical morality and the Quranic morality. In the contemporary European context, as presented, the Christian-Islamic dialogue is in full development and searches perspectives for establishing a social equilibrium and for offering principles for a good cohabitation. We chose to draw the attention on the mission of Father Andrei Scrima in the Islamic

space, by approaching a method of getting closer and altruist understanding of the Muslims and their religious tradition. In order to exploit religion for the assumed social ethics and in the context of the contemporary globalisation, we discuss the project of world ethics, which tries to offer a global ethical model that could be received by any religious tradition. We manifested our scepticism toward this endeavour initiated by the theologian Hans Küng; still we chose to present the intentions of the project due to the idea that Islam claims to be a universal religion that will conquer the world, while Christianity is, in fact, a religion of love, peace and moral perfection.

We consider that based on our research on the relation between the biblical morality and the Quranic morality, it is easily observable the superior character of the Christian morality compared to the Quranic morality. This is not necessarily connected to the effects of the sacred text in the spiritual life of a certain believer or in the public life of the society, but is rather observable in the manner in which the Christian morality complete the being in its existence, in the human ontology. The holy book, containing rules, examples and metaphorical narrations, which give birth, in an assumed hermeneutics, to feelings, emotions and predispositions for the moral action, is not completed and cannot be perfect without the living and dynamic connection with its source. The Quran is the book left by Allah to his believers and it remains the guide for a spiritual and moral behaviour during the life. The Bible is the book coming from tradition and from the living Church and it remains a moral authority only in relation with the person of the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who is the Word of life.

Therefore, the biblical morality is not morally characterised by a socio-historical context or by specific stylistic tendencies of the Antiquity; in exchange, it proves to be the actual word of God to His world. The Orthodox theologian and the simple believer do not need

to create a theological-cultural defensive of the Bible in front of contemporary and future destructive ideologies; they must interact with its living word by living a sacramental and liturgical life and in communion with the Saviour Jesus Christ, the divine Logos. The Bible is not an ancient document, containing only moral prescriptions for the believers from all times; it presents the structure of the human existence and the articulation of the thinking of God for the intellectual and spiritual capacity of the universal man. Instead, the Quran, in all the Muslim theological acceptations, represents the word of Allah dictated to Muhammad directly in Arabic, remaining closed in itself, without the power to spiritually transform the people and to offer them the occasion of a direct and open dialogue with God. Thus, for the Muslim believer, Sharia is the guide of the moral life from a legal-judicial perspective. In exchange, the Bible always remains open in the Church where it was developed and where the head is Christ, the divine Logos and the Word of life.

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