Allah, Al-Ilah, and Allahumma: The Arabic Language Usage before the 9th century AD in the Christian-Muslim Middle Eastern

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Abstract: This research investigates the usage of the terms Allah, Al-Ilah, and Allahumma in the Christian-Muslim Middle Eastern context before the 9th century AD. The aim of this study is to trace the historical development and theological implications of these terms within Arabic-speaking Christian and Muslim communities. The research method employed is a literature review, focusing on historical documents and inscriptions. The findings reveal that these terms were used in both religious traditions, indicating a shared linguistic and cultural heritage. Generalising these unique terms across both religions has been a major source of misunderstanding. This discussion remains relevant, not only in the context of Christian and Islamic religious language but also in the general use of Arabic within churches that use the Arabic language today, such as the Syrian and Coptic Churches in the Middle East. This article elucidates that Arab Christian communities are considered a missing link between the Christian and Islamic worlds. The research shows that the same ritual words—Allah, Al-Ilah, and Allahumma—were used before the advent of Islam. Through these Arab Christian communities, various points of contact and examples of tolerance and understanding can be clearly developed. This study contributes to a foundational theological understanding shared between Christianity and Islam, fostering interfaith dialogue and mutual respect.

Keywords: Allah; Al-Ilah; Allahumma; Arabic; Christian; Muslim.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menyelidiki penggunaan istilah Allah, Al-Ilah, dan Allahumma dalam konteks Timur Tengah Kristen-Muslim sebelum abad ke-9 Masehi. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menelusuri perkembangan historis dan implikasi teologis dari istilah-istilah tersebut dalam komunitas Kristen dan Islam berbahasa Arab. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah tinjauan pustaka, dengan fokus pada dokumen dan prasasti sejarah. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa istilah-istilah ini digunakan dalam kedua tradisi agama, menunjukkan warisan linguistik dan budaya yang sama. Menggeneralisasi istilah-istilah yang unik untuk kedua agama tersebut merupakan sumber kesalahpahaman yang besar. Diskusi ini masih relevan, tidak hanya dalam konteks bahasa agama Kristen dan Islam, tetapi juga dalam penggunaan bahasa Arab secara umum di kalangan gereja-gereja yang menggunakan bahasa Arab saat ini, seperti Gereja Siria dan Gereja Koptik di Timur Tengah. Artikel ini menjelaskan bahwa masyarakat Kristen Arab dianggap sebagai mata rantai yang hilang antara dunia Kristen dan dunia Islam. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa kata-kata ritual yang sama seperti Allah, Al-Ilah, dan Allahumma telah digunakan sebelum Islam datang. Melalui masyarakat Kristen Arab ini, berbagai titik kontak dan contoh toleransi serta pengertian dapat dikembangkan dengan jelas. Studi ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman dasar teologis yang sama antara Kristen dan Islam, mendorong dialog antaragama dan saling menghormati.

Kata Kunci: Allah; Al-Ilah; Allahumma; Arabic; Kristen; Muslim.

1.   Introduction

In his book The Elephant in the Dark, Idries Shah (1986, p. 771) emphasises the importance of using Arabic in the Christian-Muslim environment to create a mutual understanding. One obstacle of a Christian-Muslim theological dialogue that reminds the English readers is concerning the meaning of the Lordship of Jesus (Parrinder, 1995, pp. 33–34). It drives the case of the Malaysian High Court in 2014 banning the use of the word "Allah" by Christians (Neo, 2014). Meanwhile, Qureshi (2016) states that Allah is different from the God of Christians. In another part, Reynolds (2020) relies on Q 29:46 to show that the God of Muslims and Christians is the same. Jesus was named as Lord. As honour name tribute. If placed in El-Badawi's thinking, Reynold's opinion is a hermeneutical effort out of the Islamic tradition (El-Badawi, 2021).

In Arabic, it is a parallel with As Sayid (Prince, Lord), a degree that is also applied to Prophet Muhammad (Sayidina Muhammad). So, without any problem, M. Kamel Husayn, in the book 'City of Wrong' (original title was written in Arabic language, *Qaryah Dhalimah*), tried to swallow up Jerusalem on Good Friday on the crucifixion event from the perspective of Muslim, the degree Sayid Al Masih (The Lord Christ) was used regularly (Nwokoro & Buys, 2019, p. 2).

Despite the use of the degree As Sayid, it should be noted that both Jesus and Muhammad were commonly compared but not completely comparable. It means the theological reason behind the use of the same degree. Idris Shah (1986, pp. 118–121) also stressed the requirement of the grouping of meanings in the Arabic language for Christian Arabic people and Arabic Muslims, for those who speak Arabic are parts of their shared inheritance (Kamusella, 2017, pp. 118–121). Christian faith distinguishes between the meaning of the divine/Godhead of Jesus and the Lordship of Jesus. The divine of Jesus pointed at Al Masih in His divine nature as attached *Kalimatullah* (Qaimah) and one inside with Allah (John 1:1-3), comparable to the appreciation of Islam about the Qur'an as *Nafsy* words (eternal words). Nevertheless, as *Kalimatullah*, His divinity in the Christian faith still be distinguished and not mixed with *His Nuzul* form as human. Inside His humanity, precisely because of His total surrender *(Aslam)* into the will of God, he was named as Lord, God for the glory of the Lord (Philippians 2: 5-11).

Based on the above problems, the method used in this research is traditional literature. Traditional review is a method used to create a literature review. The results of the traditional review method commonly used to make this literature review are often found in survey papers and focus on one topic only. In addition, the selected written work is known to the author in advance. Through the traditional review method, the paper used as a reference is still in the same topic of discussion as the research being conducted (Misra & Agarwal, 2018, p. e92). The purpose of this study is to explain the history of the use of the words *Allah*, *Al-Ilah*, and *Allahumma* in the century before 9, and show as a meeting point the universality of the words used and believed together as a dialogue of Muslim and Christian life today.

2.   Christian Contribution to the Development of Arabic and Script before and after the Birth of Islam

The emergence of Arabic replaced the Aramaic language in the Middle East because of similarity and resemblance, actually more of an emergence of a dialect from one Semitic language family rather than a new language. This phenomenon can be equated with the emergence of the Aramaic language as daily language in Al Masih times to shift the usage of the classical Hebrew language, not to remove it, because classical Hebrew language is still a language in the Old Testament law recitation and the Prophets book. Thus, the Arabic language in the Christian Arabic environment eventually became a liturgical language of the Syrian Church, besides Aramaic language as the native language[1] that proves

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[1]The original language here, means the language used by Al Masih in conversation with His disciples (lughat Saydina Al Masih), is not the original language in which the New Testament was written. The Syriac (Aramaic) Pshitta text, which is a translation of the Greek text, remains important because it translates back to the original language, where Al Masih conveyed His teachings. This Syriac text helps us find the original words of the teaching of Al Masih. See: "Editors' Note" in *Qyama Hdata: The New Convenant Aramaic Pshitta Text with Hebrew Translation*, (Jerusalem: The Bible Society in Israel, 1986), ii. About the attitude

its continuity with Al Masih and His preaching. This typical phenomenon was encountered in churches with Aramaic language only, especially the Syria Orthodox church centered in Damascus recently (Kamusella, 2017, p. 123).

Further, we discuss inscriptions pre-Islam Arab, most of which were found in Syria. Experts admit there was a lot of Arabic script before Islamic times. But it is also agreed that Arabic script, which attained an important position in world history through Islamic literature, is a subsidiary of Syriac script/Christian Syriac (Chatonnet & Desreumaux, 2020, pp. 27–86; Pedersen, 1996, p. 17). To track the development of the Arabic alphabet, we submitted some important inscriptions found around Syria. The Oldest Arabic language inscriptions we know so far are found in Namara, southeast of Damascus city, dating from 328 AD. This inscription is still written in Aramaic script, which proves that there is a branch of Arabic in Hellenistic times that has managed to break through the cultural boundaries of the dominant cultural sphere by using the original inhabitant script. Therefore, they initially wrote with Aramaic script, but the distinctive characteristics of the Arabic recording are clear, especially in the use of several names.

For further details, we can follow the sound of the Namara's inscription, based on the reading Jawwad' Ali in *Tarikh al 'Arab qabla al Islam* (Abulhad, 2011, pp. 87–156; Al-Baba, 1992, p. 11; Dussaud & Macler, 2019, p. 93), as follows:
1. Hadza qubr Mar'al-Qais bnu 'Amru, malik al 'Arab, kulluhum alladzi nal at-takh
2. Wa Malik al Assadina wa nazaran wa mulukhumhum, wa nazam Mudzhaj bi-quwatihi, wa qada
3. Al-Thafar'ila aswara Najran madinat syamr, wa malik Ma-adan wa asta'mal
4. Qassam abna'hu'ala al-qaba'al. kuluhum qar-sanan li ar-Rumi, falam yabalakh Malik mibalghahu
5. Fi al-qadm. Halak Saniyat 223, yaum min Kasul (kanun-al-Awwal) li yas'adu alladzi waliduhu.

Translation:
1. This is the grave of Mar'Al-Qais (Pedersen, 1996: 6),[2] son of 'Amru, Arab King; each of them received a crown;
2. And king of lions and Nazar and their kings, and the destruction of Mudzhaj with its power, and leads.
3. Victory reaches the walls of the Najran, Syamr City, and Ma'ad King and uses it.
4. Dividing their children into their respective tribes, they are horsemen of the Romans. Not yet the king of his ideals
5. In glorious. They were destroyed in year 223, day 7 of December (kanun al-Awwal) to triumph over children being born.
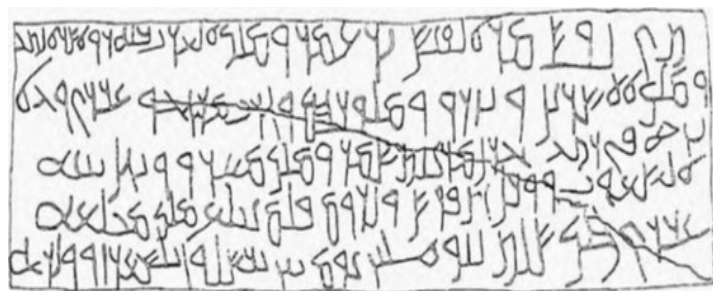

Figure 1 The Namarah Inscription. Source: Bellamy (1985)

of the leaders of the Syrian Orthodox Church, who were "very conservative" in maintaining the Aramaic language as "holy language".

[2] J. Pedersen proposing Mar'al-Qais (not Imru'al-Qais) readings, would have been more acceptable, since the title Mardalam in Aramaic means Lord, honorary title to King and God. At that time the Arab kingdoms spoke Aramaic, besides Arabic language for their environment is limited. The word is often compared to the call of Marana-tha (Our Lord, please come). The same title, in the sense of the Lord also applies to the Patriarchs / Syrians of Pope and the saints in the Syrian-speaking churches. In line with the words *Kyrios* (Greek) and *Adonay* (Hebrew), the word Mar Aramaic means double, commonly translated "God" or Lord".

It can be concluded that Arabic script was not yet developed at that time. Prominent experts suspect that the Arabic alphabet was developing an Aramaic script, gaining evidence of a transitional period in the final form of the alphabet, which then developed into the Arabic language. This inscription was found in Umm al-Jimal in the year 250, written on the tomb which completely read: '*Denah nafsu Fihr bar Shullai, rabbu Jadzimat, melek Danukh*' (This is a grave Fihr son of Shullai, Jadzimat teacher, tribal king Tanukh).[3] This inscription is more Aramaic than Arabic from the language itself. The word denah (this is it) can be compared to the use of this word in Ezra 4:11,[4] lust, which means 'a grave' rather than being used in the Arabic 'soul', so is the word Rabbu interpreted as 'guru', and not 'master, God' in the Arabic language. Even so, even these inscriptions prove that Arabic alphabets were divided from the Aramaic script; also, if in subsequent development, the Arabic language absorbed much of the Aramaic element, this was indeed supported by its long-standing in the development of its history.

Besides the Ummul al-Jimal inscriptions, there are two more inscriptions found in Syria, whose form is more Arabic than Aramaic scripts, the Zabad (512) and Harran (568) inscriptions. The form of that inscription is similar to the early Arabic alphabets; the letter Kufi, which was originally developed in Iraq, previously is known as one of the Aramaic cultural centers (Knauf, 2010). According to J. Pedersen in *The Arabic Book* (1996: 6. 9), the Zabad inscriptions show that in the 6th century AD, the Arabic alphabet had spread northward to the end of the Arabian territory. Then it spread to the South until at least reached Mecca. After being matured under the strong influence of Christianity, the Arabic language and script got a historical advantage with the birth of the religion of Islam.

Due to the point of development of Arabic scripts, inscriptions found in Zabad, west of the city of Halab (Allepo) Syria, can be considered the oldest Arabic literary inscriptions. Interestingly, this inscription begins with the reading *Bism al-Allah* (short form of '*Bismillah*, in the name of Allah') (Shihab, 1997; Trimingham, 1979, p. 126). Then, it contains the names of the self that can no doubt be Christian Syria.

Figure 2 The Inscription Zabad (In the name of Allah: Sergius son of Ahmad, Manaf and Hani, son of Mar al-Qais, Sergius son of Sa'ad, and Sitr and Shauraih). Source: Sachau (1883)

From pre-Islamic inscriptions data originally found in the Syria region, we know that Christians had an important role in introducing writings to the Arabs. Even according to Islamic literature sources themselves, al-Ishafani in *Kitab al-Aghani II*, it was reported that Khusu, King of Persia, once asked a Christian poet named Adi Ibn Zayd to design a letter in the Arabic language. It seems that the Arabic language was used in administrative correspondence in the 6th century AD in Iraq. According to historian Mikha'il from Syria (Trimingham, 1979, p. 225), which has been justified by experts (Scrivener, 2020, p. 148; Ya'qub III, 1980, p. 13), all four gospels had been translated into Arabic and Aramaic by

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[3] The translation of this Zabad inscription, based on Bert de Vries's book, *Umm el-Jimal: Gem of the Black Desert*, (Amman, Jordan: Al Kutba Publishers, 1990), 33.

[4] Some parts of the original Old Testament are written in Aramaic such as: Ezra 4: 8-6: 18: 7: 12-26; Jeremiah 10:11; Daniel 2: 4-7: 28. The text of Ezra 4:11, may be compared to read the inscriptions of Umm-al Jimmal, says: Denah Faeshegan igarta in shelahu 'elahi, al Artheshashta malka ... (This is a copy of the letter that they sent to him, "In front of King Arthassta ...") So, there is no doubt that the Umm al-Jimal inscriptions are Aramaic inscriptions of Nabati-Aramaic letters that have shown the development to Arabic letters, but not in Arabic.

the patriarch of the Syria orthodox church, Mar Yuhanna Abu Sedra II (631-640), to meet the demand of Emir al-Jazirat at that time, Umair bin Saad Waqqas al-Ash'ariy.

For that translation, the Patriarch was assisted by Arab scholars who are Christians who came from the Banu Thay, Thanukh, and 'Aqula (Khaufa), who understand and master both Aramaic and Arabic languages. Even so, as stated by Barthold (Abdul Haqq, 1980, p. 13), from the number of inscriptions quoted from the 6th century, it is clear that the Arabic language is commonly used among oriental churches, although a translation of the gospel in Arabic only recently existed. But parts of the gospels, presumably in the form of liturgical readings, were copied in Arabic before the Islamic era. A Baumstrark (Trimingham, 1979, p. 226) refers to a liturgy from Mar Ya'qub asy Sydiq (Saint James the Just), an apostle and brother of Al Masih and the first bishop of the Church in Jerusalem, who wrote that the liturgy was celebrated at the Bedouin campsites in the 6th century AD, therefore logically he concluded there must have been a copy in Arabic language. Further, Mar Jurjis (Saint George), a bishop for the Arab people in Mesopotamia, who lived for some time even a friend of Mar Ya'qub from Eddesa, has written a Scholia (a commentary) on parts of the gospel from Arabic in the same century (Brock, 2021).[5] Thus, the spread of Christian religious text in Arabic is still very limited in the Syrian churches' environment until the arrival of the Islamic era, not long after that.

In the Arabian region where Islam arose, the gospel quotes seem not yet in Arabic translations but in most Syria (Aramaic) and Ethiopia sources. That a translation of the Torah and the gospel in Arabic is not yet known around the birthplace of Islam, supported by the testimony of Surah Al An'am/6:156, which records why an Arabic of the Qur'an must be revealed so that the Arabs don't make excuses, 'The book was only revealed to two groups before us, namely Jews and Christians; therefore we don't pay attention to what they read' (*an yaqulu innama unzilal Kitabu 'ala thaaifataini min qablina wa in kunna'an dirasatihim laghafilin*). That is, because the Torah and the Gospels are in the hands of Jews and Christians, they cannot be read because it is written in a foreign language they do not understand (Ali, 1992, p. 341).

Experts have also proven that it differs from the surrounding regions of Syria and Mesopotamia in the use of Arabic in a Jewish and Christian environment around the Arabian Peninsula, even if it has begun, most likely through a kind of oral tradition in the explanation of the sermon that explains the readings of the Hebrew scriptures, or Aramaic. The translator who explained the readings from this original text in the Jewish environment is usually called Marthurgemanin. While in a Christian environment, there is a kind of Christian Arabic targum that is verbally sourced from Ethiopia and Syria. It contains the story of saints, which most likely refers to apocryphal resources. Most of the sources are found parallel with the Qur'an, both in the variety of the characters' stories and especially in the vocabulary closer to the 'Syriac style'. It should also be noted that Christianity had a pervasive influence on Arabic around the Arabian Peninsula through pre-Islamic poetry. On the contrary, after Islam's arrival, all the Middle Eastern churches began to replace their liturgical language with Arabic (El-Badawi, 2014).

Along with translating philosophical and scientific texts in later centuries, the Arabic language was enriched, among others, by starting to enter philosophical terms previously only known in Greek and Aramaic. History has also shown the interdependence of the Islamic *dawla* (dynasty) of the early days and scientists consisting of Christians who worked as caliphs of Islam, especially translators of philosophical and scientific works. Translation of these philosophical and scientific works had already begun during the reign of Harun al-Rasyid, who ascended the throne of the caliphate in 786. Syria Christians have had a significant role since the early period of translation of scientific works into Arabic, including Jibra'il Bukht 'ishu and Jurjis Bukht'ishu Isa bin Thakerbokht.

In the next period, when the acquisition of scientific grew in size under the Caliph al Ma'mun, with the construction of the temple Bait al-Hikmah (Science institute) in the year 830, it is noted that an important translator into the Arabic language also came from Christian circle, such as Hunain bin Ishaq, founder of the first translating school in Baghdad, and continued by his son Ishaq Hunain bin Ishaq,

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[5] Although some of the known New Testament manuscripts date back to the 9th century AD, but "that passages from the Gospels were put into Arabic at a mush earlier date cannot be doubted".

and his niece Hubaysh, Qusta bin Luqa, Abu Bisyr matta bin Yunus, Yahya bin Adi, and Abu Ali 'Isa bin Zarah. The list of translators' names is recorded in detail and accurately by Mehdi Nakosten, in History of Islamic Origins of Western Education AD 800-1350, with an introduction to Medieval Muslim Education (Nakosteen, 1996, pp. 293–297). At the same time, Christian theologians also began to be challenged to explain their faith in Arabic, which began to shift from Greek to Aramaic. In that context, the theological terms in Greek, such as Ousia ('substance'), hypostasis (Aramaic: Qnoma, existence), and Physis ('nature'), have for a long time formulated the Church's struggle regarding the almighty nature of the one and only God and the person of Al Masih *(Mahiyat Al Masih)*, began to be translated into Arabic as Dzat/Jawar, Aqanim/Shifat, and Thabi'ah/Mahiyah. Terms like that, which the Qur'an is not yet known (or if it already exists but has not been interpreted philosophically, for example, the word *Shifat*), finally staged back in Islamic Word of God knowledge when Muslims try to formulate the *nisnah* between Allah the nature of His nature, which is different but also not identical with His Dzat (Malik, 1996, p. 184) (Sahas, 1972: 83).

An example in the above context is Islam Orthodoxy argument, Ahl As-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah (Sunni) on the Qur'an's eternity as the Word of Allah is in line with the Church's argument about the eternity of God's Word applied to Christ. Ash'ariy points out, "Ash Shifat laisa al-Dzat wa Laa hiya passionate" (Allah's attributes are not the same as Dzat Allah's, but they are also not different from His Dzat). This proposition is also comparable (although the details of the argument are not the same) as the Gospel of John 1: 1, which emphasises that the Word of God is with God (different), but not other than God himself (not different). Also, when the proposition of the Church is a celebration of the heresy of Arius, who denies the immortality of Al Masih as the Word of God, Ash'ariy formulates his argument against the Mu'tazilah group that teaches the Qur'an's supremacy as the kalam Allah. Sheikh Muhammad Abu Zahrah, in his book *The Date of al-Madzhib al-Islamiyyah*, stated that the motive behind the Mu'tazilah's idea of denying the Qur'an's immortality was the concern that Christians would use this argument to justify the existence of 'Isa Al Masih, as seen in the works of the great theologian of the Greek Orthodox Church of Al Qiddis Yuhanna Mansyur Al Dimasyqi (John of Damascus) who served the Abbasid government until the reign of Hisyam bin Abdul. Furthermore, John of Damascus's theology seems that God is not entities in itself but is the nature of God and constitutes His Essence (Sahas, 2022, pp. 291–305).

3.   *Allah* and *Al-Ilah* in Pre-Islamic

Many experts agree that the Northern Arabic letters are closely related to the Aramaic script. Nabati people, according to biblical genealogies, are descended from Nebayot Ismael's son, including a half-wandered Arabian tribe who inhabit the area that stretches between Mount Sinai, North Arabia to South Syria, which established their kingdom of Hijr, Petra, and Busra from 150 BC, until it was destroyed by the Romans, in about 105 AD.

In the early days of AD, the influence of Christianity had permeated this Arab tribe. This idea is proved by inscriptions and the remnants of Christian monastery buildings dating from about the end of the third century AD. Evidence that the Arabic alphabet developed from the Aramaic-script letters can be traced from the inscription of Umm al-Jimmal (250 AD) and Nammarah (328 AD), representing an intermediate stage that progressed to Arabic letters. Also, Zabad inscriptions (512 AD), Harran (568 AD), and the second inscription from Umm al-Jimmal from the Middle of the 6th century BC (Safadi, 7-8). Furthermore, the number of other inscriptions also proves that the influence of Syrian Christians and Aramaic languages had spread long before Islam in the Southern Arab region.

It appears from the Murayghan inscription, Yemen (552M), another important inscription still here, that is the Raqush inscription in Mada'in Salih, Saudi Arabia (267 AD). Noteworthy, the reference to the creator in Raqusy's tombstone inscription still uses the words Aramaic Mari alama (God of the universe),[6] which appear in a series of sentences: *We la'ana mari 'alama man yashana alqubru dza* (and the

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[6]The Aramaic expressions of Mar, Marî (Lord, my Lord), Marya (Lord, The Lord), Marana (our Lord) are also preserved in the exclamation of the ancient Christian liturgy, Maranatha (our Lord, come!). Comp. 1 Cor. 16:22.

curse of the Lord of hosts on the one who defiles this grave), in addition to some other Aramaic words mixed with Arabic, prove that the development of Arabic script is indeed closely related to Aramaic language and script (Heanly & Smith, 1989, pp. 46, 105).[7]

The later development of the Aramaic-script letters was greatly influenced by the estrangela variety of Syriac (Christian Aramaic), also used to write Peshitta texts from the New Testament. The origins of this Syrian estrangelo feature were specifically developed in Kufa, which came to be known as the famous kufi khat. Early manuscripts of the Qur'an and the Gospels in Arabic are also written in this kufi khat. Interestingly, among Muslim scholars, the Kufa group emphasises that the term Allah comes from Al-Ilah, as mentioned above.

Now we return to the discussion of the Gods *lafadz*. As pointed out earlier, most of the northern Arabic inscriptions come from the Christian environment, two of which contain the words Allah and Al-Ilah. Therefore, to say that God is a "pagan god", as some have alleged lately, is a very reckless generalisation. The use of the word in the pagan meaning may only occur in the southern Arab region, especially in the city of Mecca and its surroundings.

Meanwhile, the pagan interpretation of God in the South also can not be said to be equitable. In the period leading up to the birth of Islam, Christian influence was very pervasive in Mecca and the surrounding areas, especially through Arabic literary channels (Samir, 2008, pp. 141–162). So, although the designation of God here and there still connotes paganism, in the Judeo-Christian environment, the *lafadz* has been monetarily recognised as God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. For example, Zubair bin Abi Salma sings:

Falâ taktunnu al-Laha mâ fî nufûsikum, Liyakhfu wa mahmâ yuktami al-Lāhu ya'lam (Amin, 1992, pp. 121–122; bin Ahmad, 1967).[8] It means: "You cannot hide from God what is in you. You know, even though everything is hidden, Allah will know".

Also, in a poem written at the time of the birth of Islam by Lubaid bin Rabi'ah, the term Allah is still found parallel with al-Ilah. This also reinforces the linguistic theory that, indeed, Allah is a short form of al-Ilah, as in the verse below:

Alâ kullu syai'in mâ khalâ al-Lâhu bâthil, wa kullu na'imin lâ muhâlata zâ'il,Wa kullu unâsin saufa tadkhulu bainahum, duwaihiyatun tashfarru minha al-anâmilu, Wa kullu amri'in yauman saya'lamu ghabahu, idza kutsifat 'inda al-Ilah al-hashâ'il (al-Iskandari, 1972, pp. 88–89).

Meaning: Surely everything besides Allah will surely disappear, and every pleasure will disappear. Every human being will sometimes be visited by death, who will be present to whiten the fingers. Everyone will know when the deed records are displayed on the side of al-Ilah.

Consequently, based on the background and facts that determine the development of Arabic letters and language, as explained above, especially it is an extreme dependence on Aramaic scripts and languages, as well as the results of archaeological research by experts who prove that the word ilah, al-Ilah, and Allah indeed cognate with the Aramaic word Elah and Alaha[9] then the following form

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[7]The complete sound of this inscription is as follows: "Dza qubru Shana'a Ka'bu bar Harithah li Raqusy barta 'Abdamantu umuhu wa hiya halakat fi al-hijr mi'at wa sitina wa sitina bairukh Tsamuz, wa la'ana Mari' alama man yasyana al-qubr dza, wa man yaftahuhu hasya (wa) waladuhu wa la'ana yaqburu wa (yes') la minhu ". Meaning: "This is the grave founded by Ka'bu bin Harithah for Raqusy bint 'Abdamantu his mother, and Raqusy died in al-Hijr in 162 (the year of Bostra, about 267 CE, pen.) May the Lord of the universe curse those who despise this grave and open it except for his descendants. May God also condemn those who denounce him in his grave and remove him from there ". The phrase in this inscription is still mixed with Aramaic, forexample: Mari 'alama (God exclaims all of nature), not in the Arabic form Rabb al-'alamin. The words bar (son) and barta (daughter), and not the Arabic words bin and bint. Unlike the inscription Umm al-Jimmal (250) which is dominated by Aramaic words, in this inscription Arabic words are more dominant, although here and there it still shows a strong dependence on the influence of Nabati / Aramaic languages.

[8]In this poem of Zubair, it is also depicted about the trial on the Day of Judgment which is clearly an influence of Christian eschatology.

[9]Based on research from a number of pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions, the change from Alah-a to al-Ilah ("a" behind the word Alah, Elah in Aramaic means "fixed article", which in Arabic Al-), as the word Masih -a in the Murayghan inscription (552 AD) becomes Al-Masîh. It should be noted, the Muray-ghan inscription begins with the phrase: "Be khayil Rahmana we Mashiha" (With the power of the Compassionate and the Messiah).

of al-Ilah is changed to Allah's *lafadz*. The theory that the word Allah is *Mushtaq* (has its origin) or can be traced to its origin makes the most sense.

4.   The Word of *Allah, Al-Ilah, and Allahumma* in the Christian Environment

It is interesting to note, however, that Nahwu scholars in the early days, such as al-Kisa'i and al-Fara 'even wrote that the reading of Bismi l-Lâh (In the Name of Allah) also came from Bism al-Ilah (In the name of al-Ilah). As we have discussed, the word Allah appears in the Umm al-Jimmal inscription from the Middle of the VI century AD. In contrast, the word al-Ilah appears in the expression Bism al-Ilah (In the name of al-Ilah) and is found in the inscription with the cross at Zabad in 512 AD.

The "Bismi l-Lah" formula, with various variants of the sentence behind it, is still known in Arabic churches and is easily distinguished from the *basmalah* formula in Islam. For example, Bismi l-Lāhi l-Hayyi l-Sarmadî (In the Name of Allah, the All-Living and Everlasting God) (al-Qardahi, 1993, pp. 10–11), *Bismi l-Lāhi l-Qawwî* (In the Name of Allah, the Most Powerful) (Sulaiman, 1973)[10] *Bismi l-Lāhi l-Abi Dhabithi l-kulli wa Ibnihi Yasu' al-Masih wa r-Ruhi l-Qudsi bi l-Baraqlith (In the Name of Allah*, the Father who has power over all things, and His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter) (Dawud, 1979, p. 15).

But it should also be noted that among Christian Arabs, the usage of Arabic was also growing, and its style is also not a little different. That is because Arabic in a Christian environment has a lot of substitutions from Hebrew, Aramaic, Coptic, and Greek, which are not found in Arabic in an Islamic environment. Examples of these expressions of Christian Arabic, which is growing outside of the development of Islamic theological Arabic (Watt, 1990, pp. 71–74), and are still developing in the Middle East until now.

I will focus on examples of the use of the words Allah, al-Ilah, and Allahumma in the form of Christian prayers, as well as a brief overview of the Arabic language used in the Islamic community in general. It should be noted, however, that in the Qur'an, the word Allah does not appear in conjunction with al-Ilah, but is often associated with the divine word ilah, as it appears in the expression: *Lâ ilaha illa l-Lâh* (There is no ilah except Allah), or *Allahu, Lâ ilaha illa Huwa* (Allah, there is no ilah besides Him) (Al-Baramus, 1993, pp. 88–89; Barshaum, 1992, p. 78; Ibrahim, 1996, pp. 11–13). Whereas in some Arabic Bible translations, Allah often appeared with al-Ilah and in pre-Islamic poems.

It is because the Qur'an recognises only the form of the word Allah, which is the short form of al-Ilah, whereas, in the Christian Arabs, the word is used both al-ilah and Allah. Contrary to the notion of some Muslims, in the Arabic Bible, Allah is not the "name of the Creator" (the proper name of God). That is why, even today, in Christian-Arabic liturgical books, the expression Ya Allah and Allahumma often alternates with *Ayyuha al-Ilah*. The first two expressions are found in Islam, but *Ayyuha al-Ilah*, is not found in the Qur'an and Hadith and is not common in Islamic theological terms (Ya'qub III, 1980, p. 15).

The small differences above also contradicted most Christian scholars' assumption that *lafadz* Allah is a form of the word al-Ilah. The use of these expressions of *Ya Allah, Ayyuha al-Ilah,* and *Allahumma*, in Christian-Arabic prayers, for example, can be followed from three versions of the opening trisagion prayer: (1) *Quddusu Anta Allah*, (2) *Quddusu Anta Ayyuha al Ilah*, and (3) *Quddusu Anta Allahumma*. That means, more or less, is the same: "Glory to you, O Allah!" (Francis, 1992, pp. 45, 32–33).[11]

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[10] This formula of Bismi l-Lāhi l-Qawwî (in the name of Allah Almighty) in the Coptic Orthodox Church usually begins official Patrriarchal documents, such as the erection of holy places, or the ratification of miracles occurring in these places after going through testing in long time. For example, various miracles that occurred in the Church of "Al-Qidis Sam'an al-Kharaj", relating to the movement of the Muqattam mountain in Cairo during the Caliph Al-Mu'iz li Dini llah, one of the rulers of the Shiite dynasty Syi'ah Fathimiyyah (11th century AD). This incident is very well known, both among Muslims and Christians themselves in Egypt.

[11] The form of the Aramaic exclamation *Ya Aloh, Ya Alah* (with one letter "l"), while in Arabic: *Ya Allah* (with 2 letters "l"), because the first "l" comes from the article Al- (which in Aramaic the article –a is placed behind the noun: Alah-a. The divine name Aloh, Aloho in this Western Aramaic dialect (which is now used in the Syrian Orthodox Church, Syrian Catholic Church,

These three Christian-Arabic expressions are translations of the Aramaic/Syrian language: *Qadesyata Alaha* (Western Syrian dialect: *Qadishato Aloho*). Besides Alaha following Arabic words al-Ilah and Allah, this word can also be a meaningful form of exclamation; "Allah", "Allahumma". Like Arabic, the Aramaic language also has the form of an exclamation: *Yâ* (O), although this form is not commonly used in the Aramaic-Christian (Syriac) liturgical texts. For example, *Yo Aloh*, means "O God". It should be noted, however, that this exclamation form of Yâ was not found in Hebrew.

In addition, the Aramaic language also recognises the form of oaths beginning with *wa* and *ba* before the word *Aloh* (Western Syrian dialect), in line with the Arabic form of Wallah, billah. Some of these formulas include *Wahayil Aloh*, literally when translated into Arabic *Wa Hayatullah* (By the life of Allah), but it means *Wallahi* (By Allah). Another longer form of Aramaic, *B'Aloh ti khalq lismo*, literally means *Billahi ladzi khalaqa as-samawat*, "By Allah who created the sky". It can still be called another form: *Wti Khalqil smo*, in line with Arabic: *Walladzi khalaqa as-samawat*. "By Him who created the sky" (Francis, 1992, p. 45). This form of swearing without mentioning the name of Allah directly has also been found in Arabic among Muslims: *Walladzi nafsi biyadihi*. It means: "To Him who has my soul in his hand."

5. The Connection between Christianity and Islam through the Arabic Language of Ritual

Christianity and Arabian are like "strands of identity." "The first difficulty for a Christian Arab," posts citing T.E. Lawrence, is defining who Arabic is. On the other hand, experts also do not easily define who Christians are in Arab society. Therefore, it is very interesting if the two identities are combined, bearing in mind that there are aspects in the public view that require that being Arab must become Islam. This assumption has been difficult for Christian Arabs since the 7th century AD. When in fact, Christianity has a long stretch of history in the six centuries before the rise of Islam, which ethnically and culturally eventually dominated the Arab world, even though Islam did not succeed in annexing its entire territory. The example is explained in this research through the use of the terms Allah, al-Ilah, and Allahumma by both religions which can be traced back to its original usage before Islam.

The fact is that there are various features of Arab Christianity before and after Islam, as noted by El Hassan bin Talal (Talal, 1995, pp. 129–134), a Muslim writer from Jordan, in his book entitled *Al-Masihiyyat fi alam al Arab*. Therefore, suppose the process of Arabisation effectively takes place in oriental churches after the Islamic era. In that case, it is nothing but a form of cultural reincarnation of one of its "Semitic clothes." This matter has been lacking in place because of the process of cultural imperialism carried out by the "current" Church main", which was politically controlled first by Byzantium and then by Rome. At one aspect, the emergence of Islam has provided political support from fellow Semitic culture bearers, to avenge the "historical vengeance" of the oriental churches to the forces of Western Christians, who had always directly oppressed their culture.

6. Conclusion

Reflection of the above discussion shows that the words Allah, Al-Ilah, and Allahuma have been used before Islam. It shows that these words have been used in general and together, namely, human belief in God in the Middle East. So, in other words, it can be contextualised today that the use of the words Allah, Al-Illah, and Allahumma remains a universal word and contains the meaning of belief in God who created the universe. The basic meaning of belief in God becomes the togetherness of Muslims and Christians in establishing a harmonious social life, such as using Allah, Al-Ilah, and Allahumma together, especially harmonious life in Indonesia.

Because of this common cultural background, some parallels in rite and cult are easily drawn between oriental Christianity and Islam. After that, borrowing the term from Komarudin Hidayat, from the point of religious language, which has the same broadest meaning as "the language is the house of being" (Hidayat, 1996, p. 73). Then the style of Arab Christianity becomes an alternative that can be

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Maronit Church and the Syrian Catholic Church) in the classical Aramaic form had read: Elah, Elaha. Please note that the form Elah is found in the chapters of the Book of Daniel written in Aramaic.

scheduled as one of the approaches to Christian-Islamic dialogue, especially the relationship between the two groups of people namely Christian and Muslim.

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