

= Allah =

Allah (/ ʔælʔ , ʔʔʔʔʔ , ʔʔʔʔʔ / ; Arabic : ʔʔʔʔ , translit . Allʔh , pronounced [ʔʔ ʔʔh]) is the Arabic word referring to God in Abrahamic religions . The word is thought to be derived by contraction from al ilʔh , which means " the God " , and has cognates in other Semitic languages , including Elah in Aramaic , ʔʔʔ in Canaanite and Elohim in Hebrew .

The word Allah has been used by Arabs of different religions since pre @-@ Islamic times . More specifically , it has been used as a term to refer to God by Muslims (both Arab and non @-@ Arab) and Arab Christians . It is now mainly used by Muslims and Arab Christians to refer to God . It is also often , albeit not exclusively , used in this way by Bábists , Bahá 'ís , Indonesian and Maltese Christians , and Mizrahi Jews . Similar usage by Christians and Sikhs in West Malaysia has recently led to political and legal controversies .

= = Etymology = =

The etymology of the word Allʔh has been discussed extensively by classical Arab philologists . Grammarians of the Basra school regarded it as either formed " spontaneously " (murtajal) or as the definite form of Iʔh (from the verbal root lyh with the meaning of " lofty " or " hidden ") . Others held that it was borrowed from Syriac or Hebrew , but most considered it to be derived from a contraction of the Arabic definite article al- " the " and ilʔh " deity , god " to al @-@ Iʔh meaning " the deity " , or " the God " . The majority of modern scholars subscribe to the latter theory , and view the loanword hypothesis with skepticism .

Cognates of the name " Allʔh " exist in other Semitic languages , including Hebrew and Aramaic . The corresponding Aramaic form is Elah (ʔʔʔ) , but its emphatic state is Elaha (ʔʔʔʔ) . It is written as ʔʔʔʔ (ʔʔʔʔhʔ) in Biblical Aramaic and ʔʔʔʔʔʔʔ (ʔʔʔʔʔ) in Syriac as used by the Assyrian Church , both meaning simply " God " . Biblical Hebrew mostly uses the plural (but functional singular) form Elohim (ʔʔʔʔʔ) , but more rarely it also uses the singular form Eloah (ʔʔʔʔʔ) . In the Sikh scripture of Guru Granth Sahib , the term Allah (Punjabi : ʔʔʔʔ , translit . ʔʔʔʔ) is used 37 times .

= = Usage = =

= = = Pre @-@ Islamic Arabians = = =

Regional variants of the word Allah occur in both pagan and Christian pre @-@ Islamic inscriptions . Different theories have been proposed regarding the role of Allah in pre @-@ Islamic polytheistic cults . Some authors have suggested that polytheistic Arabs used the name as a reference to a creator god or a supreme deity of their pantheon . The term may have been vague in the Meccan religion . According to one hypothesis , which goes back to Julius Wellhausen , Allah (the supreme deity of the tribal federation around Quraysh) was a designation that consecrated the superiority of Hubal (the supreme deity of Quraysh) over the other gods . However , there is also evidence that Allah and Hubal were two distinct deities . According to that hypothesis , the Kaaba was first consecrated to a supreme deity named Allah and then hosted the pantheon of Quraysh after their conquest of Mecca , about a century before the time of Muhammad . Some inscriptions seem to indicate the use of Allah as a name of a polytheist deity centuries earlier , but we know nothing precise about this use . Some scholars have suggested that Allah may have represented a remote creator god who was gradually eclipsed by more particularized local deities . There is disagreement on whether Allah played a major role in the Meccan religious cult . No iconic representation of Allah is known to have existed . Muhammad 's father 's name was ʔʔʔ @-@ Allʔh meaning " the slave of Allʔh " .

= = = Christianity = = =

The Aramaic word for " God " in the language of Assyrian Christians is ܐܠܗܐ , or Alaha . Arabic @-@ speakers of all Abrahamic faiths , including Christians and Jews , use the word " Allah " to mean " God " . The Christian Arabs of today have no other word for " God " than " Allah " . (Even the Arabic @-@ descended Maltese language of Malta , whose population is almost entirely Roman Catholic , uses Alla for " God " .) Arab Christians , for example , use the terms All?h al @-@ ab (ܐܠܗܐ ܐܒ) for God the Father , All?h al @-@ ibn (ܐܠܗܐ ܒܢ) for God the Son , and All?h al @-@ r?? al @-@ quds (ܐܠܗܐ ܩܕܫ) for God the Holy Spirit . (See God in Christianity for the Christian concept of God .)

Arab Christians have used two forms of invocations that were affixed to the beginning of their written works . They adopted the Muslim bismill?h , and also created their own Trinitized bismill?h as early as the 8th century . The Muslim bismill?h reads : " In the name of God , the Compassionate , the Merciful . " The Trinitized bismill?h reads : " In the name of Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit , One God . " The Syriac , Latin and Greek invocations do not have the words " One God " at the end . This addition was made to emphasize the monotheistic aspect of Trinitarian belief and also to make it more palatable to Muslims .

According to Marshall Hodgson , it seems that in the pre @-@ Islamic times , some Arab Christians made pilgrimage to the Kaaba , a pagan temple at that time , honoring Allah there as God the Creator .

Some archaeological excavation quests have led to the discovery of ancient pre @-@ Islamic inscriptions and tombs made by Arab Christians in the ruins of a church at Umm el @-@ Jimal in Northern Jordan , which contained references to Allah as the proper name of God , and some of the graves contained names such as " Abd Allah " which means " the servant / slave of Allah " .

The name Allah can be found countless times in the reports and the lists of names of Christian martyrs in South Arabia , as reported by antique Syriac documents of the names of those martyrs from the era of the Himyarite and Aksumite kingdoms .

A Christian leader named Abd Allah ibn Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad was martyred in Najran in 523 , as he had worn a ring that said " Allah is my lord " .

In an inscription of Christian martyrion dated back to 512 , references to Allah can be found in both Arabic and Aramaic , which called him " Allah " and " Alaha " , and the inscription starts with the statement " By the Help of Allah " .

In pre @-@ Islamic Gospels , the name used for God was " Allah " , as evidenced by some discovered Arabic versions of the New Testament written by Arab Christians during the pre @-@ Islamic era in Northern and Southern Arabia .

Pre @-@ Islamic Arab Christians have been reported to have raised the battle cry " Ya La Ibad Allah " (O slaves of Allah) to invoke each other into battle .

" Allah " was also mentioned in pre @-@ Islamic Christian poems by some Ghassanid and Tanukhid poets in Syria and Northern Arabia .

= = = Islam = = =

In Islam , Allah is the unique , omnipotent and only deity and creator of the universe and is equivalent to God in other Abrahamic religions .

According to Islamic belief , Allah is the most common word to represent God , and humble submission to his will , divine ordinances and commandments is the pivot of the Muslim faith . " He is the only God , creator of the universe , and the judge of humankind . " " He is unique (w??id) and inherently one (a?ad) , all @-@ merciful and omnipotent . " The Qur 'an declares " the reality of Allah , His inaccessible mystery , His various names , and His actions on behalf of His creatures . "

In Islamic tradition , there are 99 Names of God (al @-@ asm? ? al @-@ ?usná lit. meaning : ' the best names ' or ' the most beautiful names ') , each of which evoke a distinct characteristic of Allah . All these names refer to Allah , the supreme and all @-@ comprehensive divine name . Among the 99 names of God , the most famous and most frequent of these names are " the Merciful " (al @-@ Ra?m?n) and " the Compassionate " (al @-@ Ra??m) .

Most Muslims use the untranslated Arabic phrase in sh? ? All?h (meaning ' if God wills ') after references to future events . Muslim discursive piety encourages beginning things with the invocation of bismill?h (meaning ' in the name of God ') .

There are certain phrases in praise of God that are favored by Muslims , including " Sub??n All?h " (Holiness be to God) , " al @-@ ?amdu lill?h " (Praise be to God) , " I? il?ha ill? All?h " (There is no deity but God) and " All?hu akbar " (God is greater) as a devotional exercise of remembering God (dhikr) . In a Sufi practice known as dhikr Allah (lit. remembrance of God) , the Sufi repeats and contemplates on the name Allah or other divine names while controlling his or her breath .

Some scholars have suggested that Mu?ammad used the term Allah in addressing both pagan Arabs and Jews or Christians in order to establish a common ground for the understanding of the name for God , a claim Gerhard Böwering says is doubtful . According to Böwering , in contrast with pre @-@ Islamic Arabian polytheism , God in Islam does not have associates and companions , nor is there any kinship between God and jinn . Pre @-@ Islamic pagan Arabs believed in a blind , powerful , inexorable and insensible fate over which man had no control . This was replaced with the Islamic notion of a powerful but provident and merciful God .

According to Francis Edwards Peters , " The Qur ? ?n insists , Muslims believe , and historians affirm that Muhammad and his followers worship the same God as the Jews (29 : 46) . The Qur ? an 's Allah is the same Creator God who covenanted with Abraham " . Peters states that the Qur 'an portrays Allah as both more powerful and more remote than Yahweh , and as a universal deity , unlike Yahweh who closely follows Israelites .

= = As a loanword = =

= = = English and other European languages = = =

The history of the name All?h in English was probably influenced by the study of comparative religion in the 19th century ; for example , Thomas Carlyle (1840) sometimes used the term Allah but without any implication that Allah was anything different from God . However , in his biography of Mu?ammad (1934) , Tor Andræ always used the term Allah , though he allows that this " conception of God " seems to imply that it is different from that of the Jewish and Christian theologies .

Languages which may not commonly use the term Allah to denote God may still contain popular expressions which use the word . For example , because of the centuries long Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula , the word ojalá in the Spanish language and oxalá in the Portuguese language exist today , borrowed from Arabic (Arabic : ?? ??? ????) . This phrase literally means ' if God wills ' (in the sense of " I hope so ") . The German poet Mahlmann used the form " Allah " as the title of a poem about the ultimate deity , though it is unclear how much Islamic thought he intended to convey .

Some Muslims leave the name " All?h " untranslated in English . The word has also been applied to certain living human beings as personifications of the term and concept .

= = = Malaysian and Indonesian language = = =

Christians in Malaysia and Indonesia use Allah to refer to God in the Malaysian and Indonesian languages (both of which are standardized forms of the Malay language .) Mainstream Bible translations in the language use Allah as the translation of Hebrew Elohim (translated in English Bibles as " God ") . This goes back to early translation work by Francis Xavier in the 16th century . The first dictionary of Dutch @-@ Malay by Albert Cornelius Ruyl , Justus Heurnius , and Caspar Wiltens in 1650 (revised edition from 1623 edition and 1631 Latin @-@ edition) recorded " Allah " as the translation of the Dutch word " Godt " . Ruyl also translated Matthew in 1612 to Malay language (first Bible translation to non @-@ European language , only a year after King James Version was published) , which was printed in the Netherlands in 1629 . Then he translated Mark

which was published in 1638 .

The government of Malaysia in 2007 outlawed usage of the term Allah in any other but Muslim contexts , but the Malayan High Court in 2009 revoked the law , ruling that it was unconstitutional . While Allah had been used for the Christian God in Malay for more than four centuries , the contemporary controversy was triggered by usage of Allah by the Roman Catholic newspaper The Herald . The government appealed the court ruling , and the High Court suspended implementation of its verdict until the appeal was heard . In October 2013 , the court ruled in favor of the government 's ban . In early 2014 , the Malaysian government confiscated more than 300 bibles for using the word to refer to the Christian God in Peninsular Malaysia . However , the use of Allah is not prohibited in the two Malaysian state of Sabah and Sarawak . The main reason it is not prohibited in these two states is that usage has been long @-@ established and local Alkitab (Bibles) have been widely distributed freely in East Malaysia without restrictions for years . Both states also do not have similar Islamic state laws as those in West Malaysia .

As a reaction to some media criticism , the Malaysian government has introduced a " 10 @-@ point solution " to avoid confusion and misleading information . The 10 @-@ point solution is in line with the spirit of the 18- and 20 @-@ point agreements of Sarawak and Sabah .

= = = In other scripts and languages = = =

All?h in other languages that use Arabic script is spelled in the same way . This includes Urdu , Persian / Dari , Uyghur among others .

Assamese , Bengali : ?? ? ??? Allah

Bosnian : Allah

Chinese (Mandarin) : ?? ?l? , ?? ?nl? ; ?? Zh?nzh? (semantic translation as " the true master ") , ?? Huda (Khoda , from Persian language)

Czech , Slovak : Alláh

Greek : ?????? Alláχ

Filipino : Al? or Allah

Hebrew : ????? Allah

Hindi : ?? ? ??? All?h

Malayalam : ?? ? ??? ? A????h

Japanese : ??? Ar? , ??? Arr? , ????? Arr?fu

Latvian : All?hs

Maltese : Alla

Korean : ?? Alla

Polish : Allah , also archaic Allach or A??ach

Russian , Ukrainian , Bulgarian : ????? ? ? Allakh

Serbian , Belarusian , Macedonian : ????? Alah

Spanish , Portuguese : Alá

Thai : ??????? ? Anláv

Punjabi (Gurmukhi) : ?????? All?h , archaic ????? Alahu (in Sikh scriptures)

Turkish : Allah

= = Typography = =

The word All?h is always written without an alif to spell the ? vowel . This is because the spelling was settled before Arabic spelling started habitually using alif to spell ? . However , in vocalized spelling , a small diacritic alif is added on top of the shaddah to indicate the pronunciation .

One exception may be in the pre @-@ Islamic Zabad inscription , where it ends with an ambiguous sign that may be a lone @-@ standing h with a lengthened start , or may be a non @-@ standard conjoined l @-@ h : -

???? : This reading would be All?h spelled phonetically with alif for the ? .

????? : This reading would be al @-@ Il?h = ' the god ' (an older form , without contraction) , by

older spelling practice without alif for ؟ .

Many Arabic type fonts feature special ligatures for Allah .

=== Unicode ===

Unicode has a codepoint reserved for Allāh , ؟ = U + FDF2 , in the Arabic Presentation Forms @-@ A block , which exists solely for " compatibility with some older , legacy character sets that encoded presentation forms directly " ; this is discouraged for new text . Instead , the word Allāh should be represented by its individual Arabic letters , while modern font technologies will render the desired ligature .

The calligraphic variant of the word used as the Coat of arms of Iran is encoded in Unicode , in the Miscellaneous Symbols range , at codepoint U + 262B (؟) .