Thomas Schirrmacher

Is it appropriate that Arab Christians call God Allah?

Feindbild Islam

Thomas Schirrmacher

Am Beispiel der
Partei «Christliche Mitte»

VTR

Theological Accents

Theologische Akzente
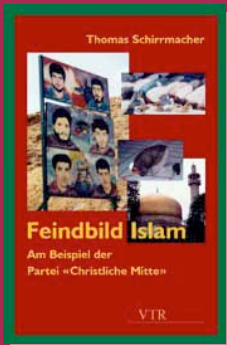
Addendum

Addendum: November 3, 2014 on "3rd Argument" Section, pp. 4–6

The existing 1993 article was not actually a scholarly article for which I would have conducted my own research. Rather, it was a summary of quite various arguments against the call for Arab Christians to no longer refer to God in Arabic as 'Allah.'

I would like to somewhat correct the two sub-arguments in the "3rd Argument" section (pp. 4-6), even if this barely weakens my overall argumentation and perhaps even strengthens it. The state of research has changed over the course of the 20 years since 1993. I will hopefully find time to essentially rework the topic in 2015 and present a revised edition of the essay at hand.

On the one hand, I would like to mention that there is indeed no manuscript of an Arabic Bible translation from the time prior to Mohammed. However, many experts assume that the original production of a translation is older (afresh and ardently in recent times by Hikmat Kashout. *The Arabic Versions of the Gospel.* De Gruyter: Berlin, 2012). I did not read the literature mentioned on pp. 4-5 precisely enough and render them precisely enough, and in the revised edition I will unceremoni-ously exchange the older literature for better, newer literature. Even if I did not commit myself to that view, this question has to remain even more open than it did and tend in the direction of a virtually simultaneous Arabic translation of the Bible (according to *Sidney H. Griffith. The Bible in Arabic, Princeton University Press: Princeton/Oxford, 2013, presently the best depiction of the discussion about the time of the development of the Arabic Bible*). The reason for this stance is that from the time prior to the Koran there are practically no written sources in Arabic. However, that changes nothing regarding the fact that the oldest manuscripts of the Arabic Bible, which come from the early days of Islam, already used the word 'Allah.'

On the other hand, I say in my original article that for a long time before Mohammed, Christians and Jews used the word 'Allah' to express the name of the Christian God. That is not the case for Arabic, or, more specifically, I need to state this more precisely. No manuscripts and only a few inscriptions, names, etc. are available to us in Arabic prior to Mohammed, since Arabic only concretely became a written language at the time of the production of the Koran. Yet, we find Allah as part of the name of Arabic Christians prior to Mohammed (see

examples in Griffith's work), but we do not have any texts. Indeed, there is sufficient evidence for the fact that there were Arabic-speaking Christians prior to the time of Mohammed. However, they apparently used the *lingua franca* and the language of the church in the region, Syriac or Aramaic, as the written language. My references to bishops in the 4th century utilizing the word 'Allah' should not have referred to Arabic but rather to Syriac or Aramaic.

There is no disagreement that God was called 'Alah' in church Syriac. As a result, a completely new line of argumentation has emerged which more than offsets the weakness of my arguments. That is, namely, that 'Allah' does not stem from pre-Islamic, 'heathen' Arabic but rather from Syriac or Aramaic church language and, with that said, from the lingua franca of the region. According to this, 'Allah' would be a Christian word which

Mohammed or his contemporaries borrowed (above all according to *Rick Brown. "Who Was 'Allah' before Islam? Evidence that the Term 'Allah' Originated with Jewish and Christian Arabs," pp. 147-178 in: Evelyne A. Reisacher [ed.]. Toward Respectful Understanding and Witness Among Muslims: Essays in Honor of J. Dudley Woodberry. William Carey Library: Pasadena [CA, USA], 2012).* As early as during the time of Theodor Nöldeke, Western Islamic studies accepted the borrowing of the word 'Koran' from the Syriac, where it designates a Biblical lectionary. (Within the framework of the so-called Lichtenberg Debate, it has been a topic of discussion as to whether the Koran is not traceable back to a Syriac-Arabic mixed dialect that conducted additional borrowings from Syriac church language. However, I am not presupposing this thesis.)

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Introduction: Arguments for Arab Christians to call God *Allah*

In the following I want to examine the demand [issued by some Christian groups in Germany] that Arab Christians should not address God as *Allah* in prayer, and that we should never render the Arabic term "Allah" as "Gott" in German[1] (resp. "God" in English). This demand that was specifically directed towards Peter Beyerhaus and Christine Schirrmacher.[2]

I want to present the following arguments against this opinion and in support of the view that *Allah* is the best and most natural designation for the Biblical God:

Allah is *El*

1. Argument: *Allah* corresponds to the Old Testament designations for God *El* und *Elohim*.[3] *Ilah* is surely identical to *Elohim* and depicts an expansion of the -l- (il, el) element of the semitic languages …"[4] That is the unanimous opinion of Islamic studies and Old Testament Biblical scholars.

"What is important is that the common Semitic generic term for God was also represented in Arabic and apparently generally known. It was called *ilah*, which exactly corresponds to the Hebrew *Eloah*, endued with the definite article al-ilah, 'the God.'"[5]

Even one of the opponents of the use of the word 'God' for the Islamic God writes: "The Arabic name for God has its linguistic roots in the semitic *El*, similar to *Elohim*."[6]

Pagan Designations for God are used in the Bible

2. Argument: The designations *Elohim*, *El*, and *theos* used by Jews and Christians in the Old and New Testaments were common to their pagan environment. Jews and Christians used these terms for the true God as well as for false Gods. The Bible exclusively uses designations for God that were also used for other deities. This is what is found in a dictionary about *El* and *Elohim*:[7] "They mean less a distinctive individual person than a divine type of certain generic person. As a designation of the category 'God,' they have their roots in polytheistic religion."[8] *El* was, after all, the head of the Canaanite pantheon of Gods![9] And regarding *theos,* we read the following: "The Greek

term for God is significantly polytheistic…."[10] Nowhere are we called upon to only use designations for God that are exclusively used by Christians.

Using the same logic that applies if Arabic Christians dispense with the word *Allah*, Arabic Christians and missionaries would also no longer be allowed to use the Arabic name for Jesus, *Isa* (which is used in addition to the more common term *Josua*),[11] and we would have to dispense with the use of the name Jesus, since Jesus is lexically filled differently in other religions. For instance, in Buddhism-Hinduism the word is used to indicate the incarnation of teachers of wisdom from the past.

The central problem in the whole debate is, in my opinion, the conclusion that whoever is using the same designations for God is also placing the respective deities on the same level. This means that whoever translates *Allah* with God or God with *Allah* is at the same time saying that the God of the Bible and the God of the Koran are identical.[12] This, however, would also mean that the Bible equates the Canaanite *El* of the Babylonian Gods with *Yahweh* and the Greek and Roman Gods (*theos*) with the Father of Jesus Christ.

If the fact is referred to that the Koran nowhere expresses *Yahweh* as the name of God,[13] then at the same time one should point to the fact that the same applies to the New Testament. That is to say, that in the place of *Yahweh* the Hebrew word *adonai* is expressed by the Greek word *kyrios,* which both mean 'lord.' Jews always used the word *Ado-nai* out of reverence when actually the word *Yahweh* appeared. This was done so as not to speak the name of God unnecessarily. However, that does not change anything about the fact that the using the name of *Yahweh* unchanged or using it correctly translated does not decide between belief and unbelief. At this point one can become more pious than the New Testament. In Athens, Paul even dispensed with the name 'Jesus' and rather only spoke of the fact that God would judge the world "by the man he has appointed" (Acts 17:31).

Arab Chrstians called God *Allah* long before Mohammed

3. Argument: Arabic churches[14] and Christians have always called God *Allah* in confessions, in prayer, and in literature.[15] Arab Christians and Jews called the Biblical God *Allah*[16] *long before Mohammed appeared. What else could they have done? At the Council of Nicea six Arab bishops participated (see below), and at the Council of Chalcedon there were twenty. They, of course, called God by the Arabic and common Semitic identifier Allah.* It can be assured that prior to Mohammed there were Arabic translations of Biblical books.

Let us take a look at the history of Christianity in Arabia.[17] As early as Pentecost people heard the Gospel in Arabic (Acts 2:11). According to tradition the Apostle Bartholomew was the first person to proclaim the Gospel in Arabia. According to Eusebius there

were discussions between Origen and an Arabian sheik in 216 A. D. Baith Katraye was the seat of a bishopric as early as 225 A. D., and it has been verified that sometime between 244 and 247 there was an ordered church hierarchy in Arabia with numerous bishops. In Southern Arabia Christianity from Ethiopia was already widespread prior to Mohammed.[18] In Northern Arabia there were Arabic tribes with Christian princes,[19] even if not in the numbers one encountered in Southern Arabia. Al-Mundhar, the Arabian king in Hirtha, was baptized in 512 A. D. by the local metropolitan bishop. The "most well known conversion story"[20] is that of the Arabian king Aspebet, who converted in 420 A. D. and was ordained as the Bishop 'Peter' in 427 A. D. In 431 A. D. he participated in the Council of Ephesus. In Arabia there were early Arabian colonies (Negran, Medina, and Chaibar), where Christianity was strongly propagated by Nestorians as well from Ethiopia.

We are in possession of pre-Islamic poetry and texts by Christians.[21] For this reason there are Arabic texts from the Council of Nicea[22] at which, as mentioned earler, six Arab bishops participated,[23] including the traditional confession of faith with God rendered as *Allah.* The translator was Bishop Maruta von Maipherkat,[24] who died in 420 A. D. Furthermore, pre-Islamic poetry, in which *Allah* often appears, was strongly influenced by Jews and Christians.[25] There are admittedly no pre-Islamic Arabic Bible texts that have

survived, but in the same way there are no Arabic texts of any length that have survived from this time. However, it is certain that there were Bible texts in Arabic.[26] It may be under debate whether the oldest Arabic Bible manuscripts that we possess go back to a time prior to Mohammed. But the much later Arabic Bible manuscripts and printed Bibles[27] definitly all use *Allah* as the designation for God. When in 1616 an Arabic Bible was first printed in Leyden, translations from 1342 and 1272 were used.[28] Just as few people objected to this as did representatives of Protestant mission societies, who later printed the New Testament for dissemination.[29]

Should all Arabic Bibles and Christian Texts now be destroyed, after 1800 years of Arabic Christianity and after thousands of years of use of the Semitic name of God El and its derivatives in various languages, because suddenly German Evangelicals and Catholic-fundamentalist authors have noticed that Islam uses the same word for God? By the way, the same thing would apply to Turkish, Indonesian, and many other languages[30] that applies to Arabic, in which Allah has long been used by Christians for God. For this reason, an Arabic, Evangelical Christian therefore correctly wrote the following:

> *"For me, as one of 20 million Arab Christians of all confessions, it is not understandable why some of our European brothers and sisters in the faith want to forbid us from uttering the sole Arabic name of God, Allah …"*[31]

Mertensacker und Hempelmann conclude from the fact that *Allah* was already used by Arabs before Mohammed – inscriptions date back to the 2nd century A.D. – that the name may not be used:

"The Allah of Islam is the Allah of ancient Arabs."[32] Now then, however, Allah was not a name for certain idols – as, for instance, the German word 'Gott' – but rather the designation of the – not so often directly venerated[33] – Creator God. Furthermore Jews and Christians named their God this way. The God of the ancient Arabs is the Semitic God El and among ancient Arabs there were Arabic Jews and Christians. Rudi Paret writes about the time prior to Mohammed in the following manner: "The belief in Allah as a universal God or as a God above all others had long been widely established."[34]

Allah simply means 'God'

4. Argument: *Allah* is not a name but rather a generic term. Since the Arabic Koran is taken by Muslims to principally be untranslatable and since non-Arab Muslims have to say their prayers in Arabic, Muslims also automatically tend to use the Arab word *Allah* for God in languages other than Arabic. In Germany Muslims also use the German word *Gott* in addition to the familiar foreign word *Allah*. "*Allah* was known to those from Mecca prior to Islam. Seen grammatically the word is a contraction of al-ilah, *the* God."[35]

"Given the Arabic feeling for language, *Allah* is not a name of God, as it appears to be when transliterated into European languages, but rather it is understood in its original meaning to be 'the God' (al-ilah, contracted to *Allah*)."[36]

Schumann refers to the fact that one can build a *status constructus* out of *Allah*, that is to say, bend the word grammatically, to show that it is not a proper name but a generic term.[37]

In Hebrew *El* and *Elohim* are generic terms, in a sense of the occupation or the office of 'God,' while *Yahweh* is the name of God. Jesus Christ as well has a personal name, Jesus, and a designation of his office and 'occupation,' the 'Christ.'

There is no Alternative to *Allah* in Arabic

5. Alternative: In Arabic there is no alternative to *Allah* as the name of God, because *Allah*, long before Mohammed, was quite simply the Arabic designation for the Creator God.[38] All recommended alternatives either effectively denote limited deities or, alternatively, translate other Biblical concepts such as *El* or *Elohim*, so that, for instance, the Arabic word for 'lord' can naturally be used. However, it is just not a word for 'God.' When in the New Testament there is talk of 'the God' (*ho theos*), which Arabic speaking Christians from the beginning correctly translated with *Allah*,[39] one cannot just simply translate this differently with, for instance, 'lord'

or 'father.' There are other words for these expressions in the New Testament.

Joseph Henninger writes the following about Arab history long before Mohammed:

> "All the inhabitants of Arabia, residents as well as Nomads, believed and believe in a single, personal, invisible, omnipresent Allah. With the nomad, in particular with camel breeders, this monotheistic belief and its practices are reminiscent of the religion of the Old Testament patriarchs."[40]

Emmanuel Kellerhals adds the following:

> "Allah, which is contracted from al-ilah, or 'God,' was already considered to be the supreme being before Mohammed. His name appears in pre-Islamic times in inscriptions and in proper names (Abd-Allah, the servant of Allah; Bait-Allah, the house of Allah, i.e., the Caaba). He was regarded as the creator of heaven and earth, and he was called upon in times of extreme danger, in particular in times of distress at sea, and he was said to have given mankind particular commands and rules relating to what was tabu. He was called upon when oaths were taken, and he kept watch over the right to hospitality. Sacrifices from the first fruits were made to him, his name and his nature were known to the pagan Arabs, and by implication Mohammed was able to connect at the point of existing knowledge about Allah with his sermons calling for repentance and

> awakening, especially since he was considered the 'lord of the Caaba,' which is to say that he had his actual dwelling place there. Meanwhile, the notions of Allah and the nature of relationship to him do not go beyond what we know about the higher beings of primitive peoples. He was forgotten again, as soon as the danger passed, and other deities were venerated in addition to him… . At any rate, no moral effects exuded from Allah or from other deities. Among primitive people groups the relationships to deities consisted of a mutual give and take, which left people appearing to be quasi coequal business partners with them."[41]

The German word *Gott* and the English word *God* is much more strongly tainted than *Allah*

6. Argument: The German word *Gott* and the same English word *God* was less suitable and from pre-Christian times more tainted than *Allah*. That is to say, that while *Allah* corresponds to the Old Testament's *El* and does not refer to a specific idol, the Germanic peoples did not have a designation for an all-embracing Creator God. *Gott* is namely derived from *ghu,* which has the meaning 'to appeal to' or 'call upon.' As an 'appealed to being,'[42] then, the word actually means "a being called upon through magic words."

Among Germanic peoples the word was neuter, since it could refer to male and female idols at the same time. It was

not until Christian missionaries that the ingenious device of shifting the word to the singular and to the masculine form was employed. Regarding this development, Friso Melzer justifiably writes:

> *"For the Christian missionaries it is often a difficult, and often almost impossible task to find a word for God, the Creator and Lord, the Father of Jesus Christ, in a pagan language."*[43]

Additionally, we also use the word *Gott* for non-Christian 'gods.' The word 'religion' as well was used by the Reformers and is used up until today for true *and* false religions.[44]

By the way, for a long time there was also only the word 'God' for non-Christian gods. The German word *Götze* (false god or idol) did not arise until a long time after Christianization. The word *Götze* appeared for the first time in 1376 in Frankfurt (*gotzendreger*, meaning a street vendor of icons).[45]

> *"Luther chose the word Götze in order to roughly render a Hebrew play on words: in Psalm 96:5 it is said that the Elohim of the people are elilim, which is literally: the gods of the people are nothing (Hebrew El 'God', elil 'inadequate' from al 'nothing', -im is the plural ending). This manner of expression was used by the prophets in the struggle against the pagan gods (e.g., Isaiah 2: 8, 18 and 20; Isaiah 10:10–11; Isaiah 31:7). Since elilim sounds similar to Elohim, the new word had to sound similar to Götter, and at the same time have a pejorative meaning. Götze by all means fulfilled this condition."*[46]

Many Arguments against the prior History of the word *Allah* have to do with *El*

7. Argument: The viewpoint that *Allah* was an Arab desert idol or spirit of the desert, and not the Creator God, is inseparable from the historical-critical view taken by Julius Wellhausen in the last century, which was that the Old Testament God century *Elohim* developed from tribal idols and a desert god and was only later graduated to the universal God *Yahweh*.[47] Whoever uses this historically long superseded argument against the use of the Islamic term *Allah* likewise encounters the Judeo-Christian God. Hans-Joachim Kraus aptly outlines Wellhausen's point of view:

"One cannot really speak about 'monotheism.' 'As a universal God Yahweh never could have become a 'particularistic' God. He was rather innately the God of Israel and much later became the universal God .... This is due to the fact that the Israelite religion had gradually worked itself up out of paganism – that is the content of its history. This 'religion of Israel,' equipped with independent potency for labor and development is viewed as the 'driving force in history,' and in its progressus Yahweh is shown to be a 'living God.'"[48]

Wilhelm Möller wrote the following about Wellhausen, "… that he construed the development of Israelite religion as the remains of Arabic paganism prior to Mohammed: since every religion had to be equal in its most primi-

tive beginnings, the ancient Arabs were in the position of providing illustrative material."[49] For Wellhausen, it was not until the 6th and 7th centuries that in the Arab realm[50] *Allah* outgrew the other gods.[51] After that, *Allah* allegedly initially denoted the respective tribal god as a generic term, but 'the God' only gradually took on the notion of being a common God for all tribes.[52] (even then *Allah* was already a Creator God at the time Mohammed appeared).

An Individual can believe in the 'same' God, and not be a believer, or/and possess a false View of God

8. Argument: By the way, the question of whether one believes in the same God is not so simple as it might initially sound. This is due to the fact that individuals can believe in the same God but can have completely different views of him. Who would want to deny that Jews believe in the same God as Christians, and yet they have a wrong picture of God that obstructs their way to salvation in Jesus Christ? Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons believe in the same God as Christians and yet retain a completely wrong view of God. And in cases where various tribal religions believed in the existence of a Creator God, who in most cases was not worshiped, missionaries, following Paul's speech at the Areopagus, were correct not to argue that this God did not exist.

Rather, they called upon people to turn from their idols to the Creator God who had revealed himself.

Was the 'unknown God' of the Greeks, to whom Paul pointed in Acts 17, the same God as the God of Abraham? Yes and no. Yes, because Paul was teaching that this unknown God had now revealed himself, and no, because the nonexistent salvation and with it the absence of a relationship to this God attested to the fact that the Greeks indeed believed in other Gods.

Annotation

[1] For example, in Evangelical circles: (Klaus Mosche Pülz/Immanuel Lück). "Die Islam-Kontroverse der 'Friesland-Erklärung' These 8". Zelem: Bote neues Israel No. 120 (1996) Oct–Dec: 45–51; "Der Islam im Lichte der Bibel" (flyer). Confessional Movement 'No other Gospel' (Bekenntnisbewegung 'Kein anderes Evangelium'), Filderstadt, no date given (around 1997), in particular p. 5; Confessional Movement (Bekenntnisbewegung) information letter June 1998: 30; Heinzpeter Hempelmann. "Verkündigung des Kreuzes im Islam." Worldwide Mission (Bad Liebenzell): Special supplement 3/1999: 1–8, here p. 7, as well as the Evangelische Carmel Mission (Karmelmission) and recently the Confessional Movment 'No other Gospel' (Bekenntnisbewegung 'Kein anderes Evangelium') at a federal level and its Westphalian branch; from Catholic circles Adelgunde Mertensacker. Der Prophet Allahs. Christliche Mitte: Lippstadt, 1996. In particular pp. 42–44; Adelgunde Mertensacker. "Allah ist ein Götze." Kurier der christlichen Mitte 5/1999: 2; Adelgunde Mertensacker. Muslime erobern Europa. Christliche Mitte: Lippstadt, 1998. pp. 58–61; Adelgunde Mertensacker. Geführt von Dämonen: Mohammed im Urteil seiner Zeitgenossen. Christliche Mitte: Lippstadt, 1993.[2] By the way, representatives of this view are themselves not consistent, and that is difficult enough, for example, according to Walter Wassermann. "Die größten Probleme in der Mission unter Muslimen". pp. 21–35 in: Die Herausforderung des Islam. Idea-Dokumentation 5/94. Idea: Wetzlar, 1994, der p. 24 and often still speak about the Islamic "God" or Abd al-Masih. The main problems in missions among Muslims … Licht des Lebens: Villach (A), 1994. p. 22. Peter Beyerhaus. "Offene Antwort an Herrn Pfr. Reinhard Möller." Diakrisis 19 (1999) 1: 51–67, here p. 58, pointed out in addition that also missionaries of the Carmel Mission (Karmel-Mission) use the thought of creation as a point of contact for their missionary work, and that they actually should not do that if *Allah* has nothing to do with the Creator.

[2] Compare to the controversy in the information letter of the confessional movement (Informationsbrief der Bekenntnisbewegung) June 1998: 30 and Idea-Spektrum 43/1997: 13 and the complete edition of Zelem: Bote neues Israel No. 120 (1996) Oct–Dec, and from the point of view of those concerned "Offene Antwort an Herrn Pfr. Reinhard Möller." Diakrisis 19 (1999) 1: 51–67, here p. 57–58.

[3] Practically all standard Hebrew dictionaries list the Arabic word among the Semitic parallels to *El*.

[4] D. B. Macdonald. "Ilah." pp. 1993–1994 in: *The Encyclopedia of Islam*. vol. 1. E. J. Brill: Leiden, 1986. vol. 3. p. 1993.

[5] Rudi Paret. Mohammed und der Koran. W. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, 1980[5] p. 17; this view is the unanimous opinion of the relevant literature, e.g., Louis Gardet. "Allah." p. 406–417 in: *The Encyclopedia of Islam*. vol. 1. E. J. Brill: Leiden, 1986. vol. 1. p. 406; W. Montgomery Watt. Muhammad at Mecca. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1953. pp. 26–27; W. Montgomery Watt, Alford T. Welch. Der Islam I. Die Religionen der Menschheit 25,1. W. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, 1980. pp. 43–45; Manfred Götz. "Allah." pp. 24–25 in: Klaus Kreiser, Rotraud Wielandt (ed.) Lexikon der Islamischen Welt. W. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, 1992.[2]

[6] Abd al-Masih. Das Gebet der Verirrten. Licht des Lebens: Villach (A), no year given (approx. 1994). p. 15.

[7] Regarding the Semitic pervasiveness compare W. H. Schmidt. "'el' Gott." pp. 142–149 in Ernst Jenni, Claus Westermann (ed.). Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament. vol. 1. Chr. Kaiser: München & Theologischer Verlag: Zürich, 1978; comp. p. 142: "There are some sure indications for the absence of a derivation."

[8] Gottfried Quell. "El und Elohim im AT". pp. 79–90 in: Gerhard Kittel (ed.) *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*. 10 vols. W. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart 1990 (reprint of 1933–1979). vol. III. p. 81.

[9] Comp. William J. Fulco. "El". pp. 73–74 in: Mircea Eliade (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. vol. 5. Macmillan: New York, 1987.

[10] Hermann Kleinknecht. "Der griechische Gottesbegriff". pp. 65–79 in: Gerhard Kittel (ed.) *Theologisches* Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. 10 vols. W. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart 1990 (reprint of 1933–1979). vol. III. p. 67; comp. p. 65: "The question of the etymology of *theos* has not been resolved up to this day …"

[11] This claim has actually been made; comp. "Der Islam im Lichte der Bibel." (flyer). Confessional movement 'No other Gospel' (Bekenntnisbewegung 'Kein anderes Evangelium'): Filderstadt, no year given (approx. 1997). pp. 3, 5.

[12] Particularly clearly in Heinzpeter Hempelmann. "Verkündigung des Kreuzes im Islam." op. cit., p.7. He criticizes equating this on page 7, note 30 in what is termed the "Evangelical, outstandingly professional declaration 'Christian faith and Islam'" by the Lausanne Congress, German branch, and the German Evangelical Alliance. Hempelmann can only appeal to the disputed and lay chairperson of the 'Christian Middle' ('Christliche Mitte') Adelgunde Mertensacker (ibid. p.7, notes 31–36), not, however, to literature from Islamic studies, missiology, or theology.

[13] E. g., "Der Islam im Lichte der Bibel". (flyer). Confessional movement 'No other Gospel' (Bekenntnisbewegung 'Kein anderes Evangelium'): Filderstadt, no year given (approx. 1997), especially p. 5.

[14] According to, in particular, Andreas Feldtkellner. Die 'Mutter der Kirchen' im 'Haus des Islam'. Missionswissenschaftliche Forschungen NF 6. Erlanger Verlag für Mission und Ökumene: Erlangen, 1998. pp. 22–23, 407 and Olaf Schumann. Der Christus der Muslime. Christologische Aspekte in der arabisch-islamischen Literatur. Missionswissenschaftliche Forschungen. vol. 10. Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn: Gütersloh, 1975[1] (Köln, 1988[2]). pp. 17–18 repeatedly.

[15] According to, in particular, A. Ziad Turkamani. "'Allah' gleich 'Gott'?". EMO Nachrichten 1/1997 (February/March): 4–5.

[16] Comp. W. Montgomery Watt. Muhammad at Mecca. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1953. pp. 158–161 and Julius Wellhausen. "Medina vor dem Islam". pp. 1–64 in: Julius Wellhausen. Skizzen und Vorarbeiten – Heft 4. De Gruyter: Berlin, 1985 (reprint by Georg Reimer Berlin, 1889). pp. 13–17. Also Adelgunde Mertensacker. Der Prophet Allahs. Christliche Mitte: Lippstadt, 1996. pp. 10–11 it is known that pagan Arabs were aware of Jesus and Christianity, and she names no reason why Allah cannot be the Creator God of Arabs and Arab Jews and Christians of antiquity.

[17] Comp., for the history of Christianity in Arabia, D. S. Attema. Het oudste Christendoim in Zuid-Arabie. Amsterdam, 1949; John Stewart. Nestorian Missionary Enterprise. Vorwort von Samuel M. Zwemer. AMS Press: New York, 1980 (reprint by T.&T. Clark: Edinburgh, 1928). pp. 50–75 ("Nestorianismus in Arabien"); J. Assfalg. "Arabien: III. Kirchengeschichte & IV. Arabisch-christl. Literatur". cols. 788–790 in: Karl Rahner (ed.). Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche. vol. 1. Herder: Freiburg: 1986 (1957 reprint); Annemarie Schimmel-Tari. "Arabien: Vorislamisch." cols. 525–526 in: Kurt Galling (ed.). Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart. vol. 1. J. C. B. Mohr: Tübingen, 1986 3rd ed. (1957); as well as the literature named in these lexicon articles; additionally the standard work by Georg Graf. Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur. vol. 1. Studie e testi 118. Vatikanstadt, 1944 (Nachdruck: Graz, 1959). pp. 11–602 (edition of the complete works, 5 vols. 1944–1953, reprint 1959–1960).

[18] Comp. Georg Graf. Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur. vol. 1. op. cit., pp. 20–24.

[19] Comp. ibid., pp. 11–20, as well as the complete list of tribes pp. 25–27.

[20] Ibid., p. 13.

[21] Comp. the standard work by Georg Graf. Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur. vol. 1. op. cit., pp. 11–602 (edition of the complete works 5 vols. 1944–1953, reprint 1959–1960).

[22] Ibid., pp. 586–593 – several of the texts are forgeries.

[23] The names ibid. p. 593; regarding Arabic participation in additional councils see pp. 597–602.

[24] Comp. ibid., p. 587.

[25] Comp. above all the standard work by Carl Brockelmann. Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur (sic). 1. vol. E. J. Brill: Leiden, 1943 2nd. ed. pp. 20–23.

[26] Georg Graf. Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur. vol. 1. op. cit., p. 34ff.

[27] See the scrupulously precise list in ibid., pp. 85–223; comp. also O. F. Fritzsche. "Bibelübersetzungen". pp. 437–450 in: J. J. Herzog, G. L. Plitt (ed.). Real-Encyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche. J. C. Hinrich: Leipzig, 1978, vol. 1, here pp. 444–447.

[28] Comp. Georg Graf. Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur. vol. 1. op. cit., p. 139.

[29] Comp. ibid., pp. 39–142.

[30] Comp. Olaf Schumann. Der Christus der Muslime. op. cit., p. 23, note 22.

[31] A. Ziad Turkamani. "'Allah' gleich 'Gott'?". op. cit.; comp. also Georges Ch. Moucarry. Zwischen Bibel und Koran: Ein arabischer Christ begegnet dem Islam. Brunnen: Gießen, 1994. especially pp. 26–28 and many additional publications by Arab Evangelicals.

[32] Adelgunde Mertensacker. Muslime erobern Europa. Christliche Mitte: Lippstadt, 1998. p. 59 = Heinzpeter Hempelmann. "Verkündigung des Kreuzes im Islam". op. cit., p. 7 (comp. for close alignment with Mertensacker ibid. notes 31–36).

[33] Comp. my essays "Urzeitmythen der afrikanischen Völker." Factum 10/1984: 18–25; Gian Andrea Caduff. Antike Sintflutsagen. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1986. Wort und Wissen Intern No. 9 (Oct 1986): 24 = Gemeinde Konkret Magazin 4/86: Buch Konkret pp. 1–2; "Die Religion in der Geschichte der Völker". Factum 7+8/1985: 48–50; the last four contributions are printed in: Galilei-Legenden ... VKW: Bonn, 1995; also extensively the various prior listed versions of "Wissenschaftliches Nachwort" for the third edition. pp. 237–250 in: Don Richardson. Ewigkeit in ihren Herzen. Liebenzeller Mission: Bad Liebenzell, 1988 3rd.

ed.; 1999 4th ed.; slightly modified version: "Zur Urmonotheismusthese und Missionsmethode von Don Richardson". Bibel und Gemeinde 90 (1990) 4: 388–399 and Galilei-Legenden ... op. cit.

[34] Rudi Paret. Mohammed und der Koran. W. Kohlhammer: Sttutgart, 1980 5th ed. p. 18.

[35] Louis Gardet. Der Islam. J. P. Bachem: Köln, 1968. p. 48. Literature regarding the supporting documents for Allah in pre-Arab literature is presented by D. B. Macdonald. "Ilah". op. cit. 1993.

[36] Olaf Schumann. Der Christus der Muslime. op. cit., p. 17.

[37] Ibid., p. 17–18.

[38] Comp. Christine und Thomas Schirrmacher. Mohammed. Schwengeler Verlag: Berneck (CH), 1984 1st ed., 1996 4th ed. pp. 19–21.

[39] According to, in particular, Olaf Schumann. Der Christus der Muslime. op. cit., p. 18.

[40] Joseph Henninger. "La Réligion Bédouine Préislamique" (1959). pp. 11–33 in: Joseph Henninger. Arabica Sacra, Freiburg/Göttingen, 1981. p. 43.

[41] Emanuel Kellerhals. Der Islam. GTB Siebenstern. Gütersloher Verlagshaus: Gütersloh, 1978 2nd pb. ed. pp. 23–24.

[42] This point of view is found in every etymological dictionary, e.g., Duden Ethymologie: Herkunftswörterbuch der deutschen Sprache. Der große Duden Band 7. Bibliographisches Institut: Mannheim, 1963. p. 229; Lutz Mackensen. Deutsche Ethymologie. Schünemann: Berlin, 1962. p. 69; Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. Deutsches Wörterbuch. vol. IV, Section I., Part 5. S. Hirzel: Leipzig, 1958. col. 1017–1019; Wolfgang Pfeifer (ed.). Ethymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen. vol. 1. A–G. Akademie-Verlag: (Ost-)Berlin, 1989. p. 588; comp. also Friso Melzer. Das Wort in den Wörtern: Die deutsche Sprache im Lichte der Christus-Nachfolge: Ein theo-philologisches Wörterbuch. J. C. B. Mohr: Tübingen, 1965. pp. 178–179.

[43] Ibid., p. 178.

[44] Ibid., p. 290–291; comp. my articles "'Lex' (Law) As Another Word for 'Religion': A Lesson Learned from the Middle Ages". Chalcedon Report No. 320 (March 1992): 7–8 = Calvinism

Today 2 (1992) 2: 5, 14; In German as "'Lex' (Gesetz) als ein anderes Wort für 'Religion': Eine Lektion aus dem Mittelalter". in: Ethik. Hänssler: Neuhausen, 1993.[1] vol. 1. pp. 64–68.

[45] Friso Melzer. Das Wort in den Wörtern. op. cit., p. 193.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Comp. Wellhausen Hans-Joachim Kraus. Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments. Neukirchener Verlag: Neukirchen, 1982 3rd ed.. pp. 255–274.

[48] Ibid., p. 271 using quotes by Julius Wellhausen und Rudolf Smend.

[49] Wilhelm Möller. Schäden und Schuld der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft. Johannes Herrmann: Zwickau, year not given (1936). p. 9.

[50] Julius Wellhausen. "Medina vor dem Islam." pp. 1–64 in: Julius Wellhausen. Skizzen und Vorarbeiten – Heft 4. de Gruyter: Berlin, 1985 (reprint by Georg Reimer Berlin, 1889); Julius Wellhausen. Reste arabischen Heidentums. de Gruyter: Berlin, 1961 3rd ed. (reprint by de Gruyter: Berlin, 1927 2nd ed., this again as a reprint by Georg Reimer: Berlin, 1897 2nd. ed.; comp. 1887 1st ed.).

[51] Ibid., p. 217.

[52] Ibid., pp. 218–219.

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