

## New Words

Explain how Europe benefited from [cultural diffusion](#) during the period c. A.D. 1000 - 1500.

This list is a very small sample. A more extensive list can be found at [English Words of Arabic Origin](#).

### [admiral](#)

**c.** 1205, from Arabic title amir-ar-rahl "chief of the transport," officer in the Mediterranean fleet, from amir "leader," influenced by **L.** ad-mirabilis (see [admire](#)).

### [amber](#)

1365, "ambergris," from **O.Fr.** ambre, from **M.L.** ambar, from Arabic anbar "amber," a word brought home to Europe by the Crusaders. The sense was extended to fossil resin **c.**1400, which has become the main sense as the use of ambergris has waned. This was formerly known as white or yellow amber. In **Fr.**, they are distinguished as ambre gris and amber jaune.

### [assassin](#)

1531 (in **Anglo-L.** from c.1237), via **Fr.** and **It.**, from Arabic hashishiyyin "hashish-users," **pl.** of hashishiyy, from hashish. A fanatical Ismaili Muslim sect of the time of the Crusades with a reputation for murdering opposing leaders after intoxicating themselves by eating hashish. The **pl.** suffix -in was mistaken in Europe for part of the word.

### [azimuth](#)

"distance of a star from the north or south point of the meridian," **c.**1391, from **O.Fr.** azimut, from Arabic as-sumut "the ways," **pl.** of as-samt "the way, direction" (see [zenith](#)).

### [azure](#)

**c.**1325, from **O.Fr.** azur, false separation of Arabic lazaward "lapis lazuli," as though the -l- were the French article l'. The Arabic name is from **Pers.** lajward, from Lajward, a place in Turkestan, mentioned by [Marco Polo](#), where the stone was collected.

### [candy](#)

1274, from **O.Fr.** sucre candi "sugar candy," from Arabic qandi, from **Pers.** qand "cane sugar," probably from **Skt.** khanda "piece (of sugar)," perhaps from [Dravidian](#).

#### Key to Abbreviations

<b>Anglo-L.</b>
Anglo-Latin, the form of Medieval Latin used in England during the Middle English period.
<b>c.</b>
Century, when following a number (16c.); circa (around) when preceding one (c.1500).
<b>Fr.</b>
French, Romance language spoken chiefly in France.
<b>It.</b>
Italian, the Romance language spoken in Italy, it evolved out of the Tuscan dialect in the Renaissance.
<b>L.</b>
Classical Latin, the Italic language of ancient Rome until about 4c.
<b>M.Fr.</b>
Middle French, the French language as written and spoken c. 1400-c.1600.
<b>M.L.</b>
Medieval Latin, Latin as written and spoken c.700-c.1500.
<b>O.Fr.</b>
Old French, the French language as written and spoken c. 900-1400.

**jar**

"cylindrical vessel," 1421, possibly from **M.Fr.** jarre "liquid measure" (smaller than a barrel), from **Prov.** jarra, from Arabic jarrah "earthen water vessel" (whence also **Sp.** jarra, **It.** giarra).

**mattress**

**c.**1290, from **O.Fr.** materas, from **It.** materasso, from **M.L.** matracium, borrowed in Sicily from Arabic al-matrah "the cushion" literally "the thing thrown down," from taraha "he threw (down)."

**soda**

1471, "alkaline substance," from **It.** sida (or **M.L.** soda) "a kind of saltwort," (bushy plant of Old World salt marshes and sea beaches having prickly leaves; burned to produce a crude soda ash) from which soda is obtained, probably from Arabic suwwad, the name of a variety of saltwort exported from North Africa to Sicily in the Middle Ages, related to sawad "black," the color of the plant. The meaning "carbonated water" is first recorded 1834, a shortening of soda water (1802). Carbonated drinks started in the Arab world and Cola was brought by West African slaves to the South, the birth place of Coca-Cola

**sofa**

1625, "raised section of a floor, covered with carpets and cushions," from **Turk.** sofa, from Arabic suffah "bench." Meaning "long stuffed seat for reclining" is recorded from 1717.

**Pers.**

Persian, also known as Farsi, modern Iranian language spoken in Iran and Afghanistan.

**pl.**

Plural, the form of a word that denotes it refers to more than one person or thing.

**Prov.**

Provençal, Romance language of several dialects in southern France.

**Sem.**

Semitic, major subgroup of Afroasiatic language family, including Hebrew, Aramaic, Akkadian.

**Skt.**

Sanskrit, the classical Indian literary language from 4c. B.C.

**Sp.**

Spanish, also known as Castilian, Romance language spoken in Spain and Spanish America.

**Turk.**

Turkish, Turkic (non-Indo-European) language spoken in Turkey.