

English Arabic Contact - A Cultural Bridge

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Abstract

Interaction between languages is a sign of cultural contact. The Arabic contact with English has been going on for more than a thousand years. Arabic made its way into English either through direct contact or through other languages. The immediate sources of Arabic words in English were Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. However, the largest group of Arabic words in English came through direct contact through the centuries .

Arabic made its way into English through several channels: Spain, which was a home for Arabic for eight centuries; translation from Arabic into Latin from the 10th century onwards; the Crusader Wars from the 10th till the fourteenth century; English travelers and merchants who came into personal contact with Arabic speaking people as a result of colonial and mercantile expansion; the community of scholars in England who began to study Arabic and teach Arabic at Oxford University in the sixteenth century. Arabic contributions to the English language and culture cover all fields of life.

Key Words: Arabic, English, direct and indirect contact, Spain, translation, the Crusader Wars, trade, travelers, teaching Arabic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic is a Semitic language and its sisters are Akkadian, Aramaic, Babylonian, Canaanite or Phoenician, Hebrew, Syriac and Ugaritic. Early Arabic evolved among Nabatean Arabs who settled in the fourth century in the northeast Arabia, and then spread west to Hijaz. At the beginning of the sixth century, it was adopted by the upper classes of the tribe Qureish, the tribe of Mohammad in Mecca. By the end of the sixth century, Arabic script developed in the city of Kufa in Iraq.

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Arabic gained its high status with the revelation of Islam. The Holy Koran was revealed to Mohammad in Arabic and, therefore, Moslems consider Arabic a divine language. With the expansion of Islam and Islamic Empire in the seventh century Arabic spread into the East and the West, affecting most cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe. In some countries, it replaced the local language or languages; in others it mixed with them or influenced them to a high degree. In the East, Arabic reached Persia, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Indonesia and Malaysia. In Africa, it reached the whole of North Africa, and several countries in East, West and Central Africa.

Arabic has given many words to many Asian and African languages. About one third of Urdu, spoken in Pakistan, Afghanistan and some areas in India, come from Arabic. A large proportion of Persian, Turkish and Malay words come from Arabic. Hindi has borrowed a few dozen words; Amharic has over one hundred words, but almost half of Swahili is of Arabic origin (Barter, 1970).

In the West, Arabic had already had contact with Greek and Latin before Islam and it had served as a bridge between European languages and other Semitic Oriental languages. There had been mutual borrowing either through direct contact, or indirectly through sister languages of Arabic. From the seventh to the 15th century, the Arab Moslems in North Africa, the Moors, as they were called, ruled the Iberian Peninsula (Spain), and brought high civilization with them.

Arabic was the medium through which the Arabs introduced new architecture methods, schemes of cultivation and irrigation, agricultural innovations, vegetables, new types of fruit, minerals, foods, clothes, arms, and entertainment. Above all, they introduced the Arabic culture and sciences, which they inherited or translated from the Greeks or they themselves invented, developed and innovated. These include philosophy, alchemy, mathematics, astronomy, algebra, geometry, biology, botany, geography and zoology.

According to Fennell (1892), Arabic is the seventh largest source that contributed to the vocabulary of English. Taylor (1933) collected about 1000 items; al-Sayyed (1973), examined 515 items; the historical Oxford English Dictionary recorded more than 900 items, Serjeantson listed 168 familiar items, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1993) provided 327 items, Cannon (1994) collected more than 2000 items. The most up-to-date collection of Arabic words in English is the collection of Salloum (1996), which consists of 3000 basic words and 5,000 derivatives of the basic words.

2. ENGLISH ARABIC CONTACT

2.1 Indirect Contact

- a) Indirect contact between English and Arabic took place through Semitic or Indo-European languages. Most of the English words from Arabic origin took their indirect route into English through Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew or Urdu (Salloum, 2001). Spain was a home for Arabic for more than seven centuries, from the 8th to the 15th centuries. By the eighth century, Arabic ousted Latin as the dominant language in North Africa. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Arabic civilization had fully spread through Spain and spread through Spain's trade, universities and literature into Europe. Many of the Arab scholars in Spain knew how to write and read Latin. The Mozarabs, such as Gerardus of Cremona (1114-1187) and Galippus or Ghalib, were Spanish Christians, who could read speak and write Arabic, and worked in translation for the rulers (Butterworth and Kessel eds. 1994).
- b) Translation was another bridge of cultural contact. It started in Spain in the eighth century. By 724, John, bishop of Seville was already translating the Bible into Arabic (Metlitzki, 1977). Translation from Arabic into Latin in

the 10th century onwards was an important channel of Arabic and Arab culture into Europe and European languages.

At the end of the 11th century, the European nations showed increased interest in Arabic culture and began translating from Arabic into Latin, not only the original writings of the Arab philosophers and scientists, such as Avicenne/ Avicennia, Averroes, al-Razi, al-Khawarizmi and others, but also the Arabic versions of the ancient Greeks works such as *Almagest*, (the greatest), Ptolemy's great astronomical compendium.

A committee of learned translators was established and a center for translation was organized in Toledo in 1130 CE. The committee was presided by Archbishop Raymond de Sauvetat (1126-1151) and his successor Juan (1151-1166). The Koran itself was translated into Latin in this period by Robert of Chester, officially commissioned by the Abbot of Cluny, who financed a team of translators working in Spain. The translation was completed in 1142-3 (Delisle and Woodsworth, 1995). In a later period most translated works into Latin or Spanish were translated into English too.

- c) Teaching of Arabic in Europe constituted another indirect channel of English-Arabic contact. According to Leo Wiener (1921), from the ninth to the thirteenth century, many words entered the Germanic languages through the Frankish St Gall School, where, during the 8th century, Arabic was a major subject. Gothic scholars in this school diffused Arabic words into Germanic languages and adopted Arabic words School that permeate the European languages today, including English (Salloum, 2001).

2.2. Direct Contact

Direct contact between English and Arabic in England started in the eleventh century. Adelard of Bath (c. 1080-1150) traveled to mainland Europe from England in order to study Arabic learning; he translated into

Latin the astronomical tables of Al-Khawarizmi, from whose name the words “algorism” and “algorithm” were borrowed. Soon many scholars were in search of Arabic treatises to translate, and “Arabum studia” became a legitimate pursuit in the twelfth century England (Wilson, 2001). Studying and teaching Arabic in England started in the 16th century. William Bedwell (1561-1632), who is known as “the Father of Arabic in England”, was the first to introduce Arabic in England. His pupil, Edward Pococke (1604-1691) was the first to teach Arabic at Oxford University. He gave lectures on Wednesday morning at eight in Lent and during the vacation, attendance of which was compulsory to all bachelors. By the mid 1600s, Pococke, author of *Specimen of the History of the Arabs*, held the Laudian chair in Arabic at Oxford University, while Gerard Langbaine, Keeper of the Archives of the University, was in charge of the University’s Arabic type (Burnett, 1997).

From the sixteenth century onwards, the English interest in Arabic increased. Travelers, archeologists and merchants started coming to the Arab Islamic countries and came into personal contact with the Arabic-speaking people. The colonial and mercantile expansion of the British Empire strengthened the mutual English Arabic contact and influence.

There is a popular notion that Arabic words came into English at the time of the Crusades, but there is no foundation for that notion, and there is no evidence of ‘borrowed words’ in this period. The Arabic names of ships and merchandise and business operations had already been known through French and Spanish. However, the Crusades did their share in transmitting Arabic culture into Europe through the commercial treaties that followed the wars and this kept the contact alive (Taylor, 1933).

3. CHRONOLOGY OF ARABIC WORDS IN ENGLISH

3.1 The Old English Period (450-1066)

The earliest recorded Arabic word in English is “mancus”, the name of a gold coin. In Arabic it is “manqush”; in English it was an Anglo-Saxon monetary unit, named in Medieval Latin by 811 A.D. It is a gold or silver piece representing (thirty pence). Another word that was borrowed from Medieval Latin is “myrr” (c.825 A.D.) and it means “bitter”- the same meaning in English. “cumin”, which is a plant cultivated in Levant for aromatic seeds used in flavoring, appeared in c.897 A.D.. In Arabic it is “kummun”. The word “balsam”, which is an aromatic plant of pharmaceutical salves with resinous substances, appeared in c. 1000 (Cannon, 1994) and *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) (1933).

3.2. The Middle English Period (1066-1500)

Arabic loanwords in the Middle English period appeared at the end of the 12th century. The earliest registered word is “Araby” c. 1175, (pluralized as ‘Arabies’) and refers either to an Arab person or an Arab horse. The word “saffron,” which is an orange-colored spice used in confectionery, color, and dishes, appeared first in Trinity College Homilies (speeches) in 1200. The word “admiral” which was borrowed through French (admiral) from Arabic “ amir al-bahr”, which means “the prince of the sea” and appeared in English c. 1205.

Chaucer (c.1340-1400) was the first to use Arabic words in writing. He used twenty-four new loanwords from Arabic, loaned primarily from French. The Arabic loanwords first recorded in Chaucer’s works (between 1386-1391) include:

Almagest, almanac, almucantar, almury, Alnath, nadir (of astronomy)

Alkali, azimuth, borax, tartar, amalgam (of chemistry or alchemy)

Satin, gipon (of clothing)

Lacengay, jupon (of the military)

Fers, checkmate (of games)

Damask, Sarsenish, fen, Arabic, ribibe, carrack, dulcarnon (of miscellaneous fields): (Wilson 2001).

The word “damask”, which refers in English to “fabric” or “steel” or “roses” from Damascus, appeared English in c.1250 and was first used by Chaucer. Its other versions are “damaskeen”, “damasked” and “damascene”. Shakespeare (1564-1616) used the word in his Sonnet “My Mistress’s Eyes are not like the sun” in the line “I have seen roses damasked, red and white...” Shakespeare also used the word “saffron”, which is borrowed from Arabic “za’faran”: In his play ‘The Winter’s Tale’, one of the characters says: “I must have saffron to colour these Waldon pies”.

Saffron Walden is a center for pie-making in England today. (Bennet, 1993)

More words were borrowed in the 14th century, the age of Chaucer and these include: “azure”, “cotton”, “orange”. Scientific words were also borrowed in this century. They include: alchemy”, “alembic”, “amber”, “azimuth”, “cipher”, “syrup,” “zenith”.

The borrowed words in the 15th century included various fields, e.g. “candy,” “crimson”, “jacket”, “lemon”, “mosque”, “mummy”, “sandal”.

3.3 Early Modern English Period (1500-1800)

In the 16th century, the early modern English period, English borrowed words from political or military ranks, plants, flowers, animals, foods and drinks such as: ‘abutilon’, “albacore”, “albatross”, “alcaide”, “alcohol”, “apricot”, “artichoke”, “carob”, “coffee”, “gazelle”, “giraffe”, “hashish”, “jasmine”, “mameluke”, “masquerade”, “monsoon”, “mufti”, “sheriff”, “soda”, “spinach’, “talc”, “tamarind”.

In the 17th century, more words of the sea, people, building, weather, colours, clothing, animals and sciences were introduced, e.g. “afreet”, “arabesque”, “alcazar”, “alkermes”, “arsenal”, “cipher”, “fakir”, “felluca”, “fella”, “fennec”, “hooka”, “khamsin”, “harem”, “henna”, “imam”, “lilac”, “matador”, “muslin”, “sahib”, “sirocco”, “sofa”, “zero”.

3.4 Modern English Period (1800-Present Day)

The 18th century continued to borrow words related to plants, animals, clothes and people, e.g. “adobe”, “arabesque”, “attar”, “aubergine”, “carmine”, “dirham”, “ghoul”, “risala”, “sayyid”,

The 19th century borrowings were related to Eastern products, e.g. “alfalfa”, “alizarine”, “ardeb”, “benzene”, “camise”, “canun”, “cassab”, “feddan”, “kef”, “loof”, “loofa”, “ottoman”, “qadi”, “tabla”, “tuna”, “umma”, “vilayet”, “zoco”

Borrowing continued its way into the 20th century, too. The words spread over various fields. Some examples are: “berseem”, “bulgur”, “bundook”, “darabukka”, “fatwa”, “falafel”, “feddan”, “humus”, “hijab”, “riyal”, “sabra”, “sharav”, “shish kebab”, “tabbuleh” and “tandoori”

In the last two decades, English has borrowed some words connected to the political situation in the Middle East such as “feda’i”, “intifada”, “Hizbullah”, “shahids”, “Hamam”.

As a result of the October 11th 2001 events in the United States and the War in Afghanistan, new words of Arabic origin have become commonly used in the mass media. The most common ones appeared in the 20th and 21st centuries are: “al-Moqata’a”, Yasser Arafat’s headquarters in Ramallah, “Taliban”, “mujahideen”, “al-Qaeda” from the Afghanistan War, and “Daesh”, an acronym of the Arabic equivalent of the “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria” and its Arabic language acronym “داعش *dā’ish*”

4. ETYMOLOGY OF POPULAR WORDS IN ENGLISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES

a) ALGEBRA (= ARABIC= الجبر ALJABR)

Etymology

ORIGIN: (16th century) **Algebra** (symbolizes the debt of western culture to Arab mathematics, but ironically when it first entered the English language it was used as a term for the setting of broken bones, and even sometimes for the fractures themselves (*The helpes of Algebra and dislocations*, ‘Robert Copland, *Formulary of Guydo in surgery* 1541). This reflects the original literal meaning of the Arabic term **al jebr**, ‘the reuniting of broken parts,’ from the verb **jabara** ‘reunite’. The anatomical connotations of this were adopted when the word was borrowed, as **algebra**, into Spanish, Italian, and Medieval Latin, from one or other of which English acquired it. In Arabic, however, it had long been applied to the solving of algebraic equations (the full Arabic expression was *‘ilm al-jebr wa’lmuqabalah*, ‘the science of reunion and equation,’ and the mathematical al-Khawarizmi used **aljebr** as the title of his treatise on algebra, and by the end of the 16th century this was firmly established as the central meaning of **algebra** in English.

ALGEBRA in Other Languages

Albanian= algjeber/ Czech= algebra/ Danish= algebra/ Dutch= algebra/ English= algebra/ Estonian= algebra/ Finnish= algebra/ French= algebre/ German= die Algebra/ Hungarian= algebra/ Greek= avlgebra (pronounced as “algevra”)/ Icelandic= algebra/ Italian= algebra/ Latvian= algebra/ Lithuania= algebra/ Norwegia= algebra/ Polish= algebra/ Portuguese= algebra/ Romanian= algebra/ Russian= алгебра/ Slovak=algebra/ Spanish= algebra/ Swedish= algebra/ Turkish= cebir/

b) **ALGORITHM** (= **ARABIC**= الخوارزمي **AL-KHAWARIZMI**)

Etymology

ORIGIN: Algorithm comes from the name of the Arab mathematician abu Ja'far Mohammad ibn-Musa al-Khwarizmi (c. 780-c. 850), who lived in Baghdad and whose works in translation introduced numerals to the West. The last part of his name name means 'man from Khwarizm', a town on the borders of Turkmenstan, now called Khiva. The Arabic system of numeration and calculation based on 10, of which he was the chief exponent, became known in Arabic by his name – al-Khwarizmi. This was borrowed into Medieval Latin, as **algorismus** (with the Arabic –izmi transformed into the Latin suffix –ismus '–ism'. In Old French **algorismus** became augorime, which was the basis of the earliest English form of the word, **augrim**. From the 14th century onwards, Latin influence gradually led to the adoption of the spelling **algorism** in English. This remains the standard form of the word when referring to the Arabic number system; but in the late 17th century an alternative version, **algorithm**, arose owing to association with Greek **arithmos**, 'number' (source of arithmetic), and this became established from the 1930 onwards as the term for a step-by-step mathematical procedure, as used in computing. **Algol**, the name of a computer programming language, was coined in the late 1950s from algorithmic language'. Due to this, some scholars today like to call al-Khwarizmi as "the Father of Computing". Ayto, John (1993), *Dictionary of Word Origins*

c) **ALGORITJM in Other Languages :**

Albanian= alдоритем/ Bulgarian= логаритъм/ Czech= logaritmus/ Danish= logaritme/ Dutch= logaritme/ English= logarithm/ Estonian= algoritim/ Finnish= logaritmi/ French= logarithme/ German= der Logarithmos/ Greek= logavriqmo (pronounced as= loga'rithmos)/ Hungarian= logaritmus/ Icelandic= logaritmi/

Italian= logaritmo/ Latvian= logaritms/ Lithuanian= logaritmus/ Norwegian= logaritme/ Polish= logarytm/ Portuguese= logaritmo/Romanian= logarithm/ Russian= логарифм/ Slovak= logaritmus/ Spanish= logaritmo/ Swedish= logarithm/ Turkish= logaritma/

d) ZERO/ CIPHER (=ARABIC صفر= SIFR)

Etymology

ORIGIN- In common with many other English mathematical terms, zero comes ultimately from Arabic. Its distant ancestor is Arabic sifr, a noun use of an adjective meaning ‘empty’, which also produced English cipher. It passed into English via Old Spanish zero and French zero.

CIPHER – The central meaning of **cipher** is **zero** . It entered English through Old French **cifre**, which came via medieval Latin **cifra** from Arabic **sifre** (source of English **zero**) ; this was a nominal use of an adjective meaning ‘empty’.

“ZERO” in Other Languages

Albanian== zero, shifer/ Bulgarian== шифр/ Czech= sifra/ sifrovane/ Danish== ciffer/ Dutch= zero/ cijfer/
English= zero, cipher/ Estonian= siffer/ French= zero , chiffre arabe/ German= zero, chiffre , ziffer/ Hungarian= zero/ Italian= zero , cifra/Latvian= sifrs , sifra/ Lithuanian= sifras/ Norwegian= chifferskrift/ Polish= zero, szyfr/ cyfra/ Portuguese= zero , cifra/ Romanian= zero , cifru/ Russian= шифр/ Slovak= sifra/ Spanish= cero , cifra/ Swedish= siffra , chiffer/ Turkish= sifir , sifre/

e) ALCHEMY (= ARABIC WORD الكيمياء= AL-KIMIA)

Etymology

ORIGIN– *Alchemy comes, via Old French alkemie and Medieval Latin alchemia, from Arabic alkemia. Broken down into its component parts, this represents Arabic al “the” and “kimia”, a word borrowed by Arabic from khemioa ‘alchemy’ - that is, the art of transmuting base metals into gold. (It has been suggested that khemia is the same as Khemia, the ancient name of Egypt, but it seems more likely that it derives from Greek khumos ‘fluid’ – source of English chime – itself based on the verb khein ‘pour’). Modern English chemistry comes not directly from Greek khemia, but from alchemy, with the loss of the first syllable.* Ayto, John (1993), *Dictionary of Word Origins*

Albanian= alkimi/ Bulgarian= алхимия/ Czech= alchymie/ Danish= alkymi/Dutch= alchimie , chemische/ English= alchemy/ Estonian= alkeemia/ Finnish= kemia/ French= alchimie , chemie/ German= alchimie , de Chemie/ Greek= alchmeiva (al Himia)/ Hungarian= alkiminia , kemia/ Italian= alchimia/ Latvian= alkimija , kemija/Lithuanian= chemija/ Norwegian= kjemi/ Polish= alchemia , chemia/ Portuguese= alquimia/ Romanian= alchimie/ Russian= алхимия , химия/ Slovak= chemia/ Spanish= alquimia/ Swedish= alkemi , kemi/ Turkish= simya; alsimi , kimya/

f) ALCOHOL (= الكحول = al-kohool)

Etymology

ORIGIN – (16th century) Originally, alcohol was a powder, not a liquid. The word comes from Arabic **al-kuhul**, literally ‘**the kohl**’ – that is, powdered antimony used as a cosmetic for darkening the eyelids. This was borrowed into English via French or medieval Latin, and retained this ‘powder’ meaning for

some centuries (for instance, They put between the eyelids and the eye a certain black powder made of a mineral brought from the kingdom of Fez, and called Alcohol, ‘George Sandys, *Travels* 1615). But a change was rapidly taking place: from specifically ‘antimony’, **alcohol** came to mean any substance obtained by sublimation, and hence ‘quintessence’. *Alcohol of Wine* was thus the ‘quintessence of wine,’ produced by distillation or rectification, and by the middle of the 18th century **alcohol** was being used on its own for the intoxicating ingredient in strong liquor. The more precise chemical definition (a compound with a hydroxyl group bound to a hydrocarbon group) developed in the 19th century.

“ALCOHOL” in Other Languages

Albanian= alkool/ Bulgarian= alkohol/ Czech= alkohol/ Danish= alkohol/
Dutch= alcohol/

English= alcohol/ Estonian= alcohol/ Finnish= alkoholi/ French= alcool/
German= der Alkohol/ Greek= alkoovl (pronounced as=alko’ol)/ Hungarian=
alkohol/ Icelandic= alcohol/Italian= alcol/ Latvian= alcoholos/ Lithuanian=
alkoholis/ Norwegian= alcohol/ Polish= alkohol/ Portuguese=
alcool/Romanian= alcool/ Slovak= alcohol/ Spanish= alcol/ Swedish= alcohol/
Turkish= alkol/

g) **ADMIRAL** (= أمير البحر = AMIR AL-BAHR)

Etymology

ORIGIN- (13th century). Admirals originally had nothing to do with the sea. The word comes ultimately from Arabic ‘**amir** ‘commander’ (from which the English later acquired **emir**(17th century). This entered into various titles

followed by the particle **-al- 'of' (amir al-bahr)** 'commander of the sea', **amir al-mu'minin** 'commander of the faithful', and when it was borrowed into European languages, **'amir al-** was construed as an independent, free-standing word. Moreover, the Romans, when they adopted it, smuggled in their own Latin prefix **ad-**, producing **admiral**. When this reached English (via Old French) it still meant simply 'commander' and it was not until the time of Edward III that a strong naval link began to emerge. The Arabic title **amir al-bahr** had had a considerable linguistic influence in the wake of Arabic conquests around the Mediterranean seaboard (Spanish **admirante de la mar**, for instance), and specific application of the term to a naval commander spread via Spain, Italy, and France to England. Thus the 15th century England had its **admiral of the Sea** or **Admiral of the Navy**, who was in charge of the national fleet. By 1500, the maritime connection was firmly established, and **admiral** came to be used on its own for 'supreme naval commander'.

“ADMIRAL” in Other Languages

Albanian= admiral/ Bulgarian= адмирал/Czechs= admiral/ Danish= admiral/
Dutch= admiral/ English= admiral/ Estonian= admiral/ Finnish= amiraali/
French= amiral, admirale/ German= der Admiral/ Hungarian= admiralis/
Italian= ammiraglio/ Latvian= admiralis/ Lithuanian= admirolas/ Norwegian=
admiral/ Polish= admiral/ Portuguese= almirante/ Romanian= amiral/Russian=
адмирал/ Slovak= admiral/Spanish= almirante/ Swedish= amiral/ Turkish=
amiral/

**h) ARSENAL (= ARABIC WORD دار الصناعة TRANSLITERATION=
DAR AL-SINA'A H)**

Etymology

ORIGIN - (16th century) - The word **arsenal** has a complicated history, stretching back through Italian to Arabic. The Arabic original was **dar-as-sina'ah**, literally 'house of the manufacture'. This seems to have been borrowed into Venetian Italian, somehow losing its initial **d**, **arzana**, and had been applied specifically to the large naval dockyard in Venice, (which in the 15th century was the leading naval power in the Mediterranean). The dockyard is known to this day as the **Arzenale**, showing the subsequent addition of the **-al** ending. English acquired the word either from Italian or from French **arsenal**, and at first used it only for dockyards ('making the Arsenal at Athens, able to receive 1000 ships' Philimon Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History* 1601); but by the end of the 16th century it was coming into more general use as 'military storehouse.' The English soccer club Arsenal gets its name from its original home to be a British government arsenal.

"ARSENAL" in Other Languages

Albania= arsenal/ Bulgarian= арсенал/ Czech= arsenal/ Danish= arsenal/
Dutch= arsenal/ English= arsenal/ Estonian= arsenal/ Finnish= arsenaali/
French= arsenal/ German= arsenal/ Hungarian= arsenal/ Italian= arsenale/
Latvian= arsenals/ Lithuanian= arsenalas Norwegian= arsenal/ Polish=
arsenal/ Portuguese= arsenal/ Romanian= arsenal/Russian= арсенал/
Slovak= arsenal/Spanish= arsenale/ Swedish= arsenal/

i) **MUMMY** (= **ARABIC WORD** مومياء **TRANSLITERATION=** **MUMIYA**)

Etymology

ORIGIN- The Egyptian **mummy** (14th century) comes ultimately from Arabic **mumiya** 'embalmed body,' a derivative from **mum** 'embalmed wax,' but when it first arrived in English (via Medieval Latin **mumia** and Old French **mumie**) it was used for a 'medicinal ointment prepared from

mummified bodies' (Take myrrh, sarcocol [a gum-resin], and mummy... and lay it on the nucha [spinal cord] *Lanfranc's Science of Chirurgie*, c. 1400). The world's original sense 'embalmed body' did not emerge in English until the early 17th century.

Albanian= mumje/ Bulgarian= мумия/ Czechs= mumie/ Danish= mumie/ Dutch= mummie/ English= mummy/ Estonian= muumia/ Finnish= muumio/ French= mumie/ German= die Mumie/ Greek= mouvmia/ Hungarian= mumia/ Icelandic= mumia/ Italian= mumia/ Latvian= mumija/ Lithuanian= mumija/ Norwegian = mumie/ Polish = mumia/ Portuguese = mumia/ Romanian= mumie/Russian = мумия/ Slovak= mumia/ Spanish= mumia/ Swedish = mumie Turkish = mumya

j) **CHECKMATE (= (الشاه مات) الشطرنج= SHAH MAT/ THE KING IS DEAD)**

Etymology

*ORIGIN- (14th century)- The word is originally a chess term meaning "threaten the king" It comes from Old French eschequier, a derivative of the noun eschec (source also of English chess) , which goes back via Vulgar Latin *saccus and Arabic shah to Persian shah ' king' (whence also, of course, English shah).*

(**Checkmate** [14th century] comes via Old French **eschec mat** from Persian **shah mat** 'the king is left helpless' ; the second element turns up again in **mat** or **matt** 'lustreless.'). In Arabic, the first part means "king" and the second part '**mat**' means "died". Thus, '**shah mat**' means '**the king died**'.

Chaucer was the first to use the words "chess" in English in his poem "The Book of the Duchess" and "checkmate" in *Troilus and Cryseyde*". The *Black Night* imagines that he has lost a chess game with Fortune and says:

At the ches with me she gon to pley= At the chess with me she gone to play

With her false draughts dryvers = With her false draughts drives

She stal at me and tok my fers = She stole at me and took my fers

And whan I sawgh my fers awaye = And when I saw my fers away

Allas, I kouthe no longer playe = Allas, I could no longer play

In Troilus and Cresidyde, when Criseyde announces her determination not to remarry she says:

“Shal noon housbonde seyn to me ‘Check mat!’= No husband shall say to me “Checkmate!”

Etymologically, the word “checkmate!” comes from the Arabic and Persian words “The Shah Mat”. The words “Shah in Persian means “the King”; the word “mat” in Arabic means “died”. The word “fers” from Arabic “Fersan” (Knights). The word “Checkmate” is used when the “King is dead” and here the game ends. Today use the Hindi word “Shat-Ranj” for chess, which means “Six-Colours” that used to be given to the six players in chess.

In Chaucer’s use of the words “chess”, “checkmate” and “fers”, we can see the gradual emergence of Arabic influence in both language and culture – within medieval England and Middle English (Wilson, 2001).

“CKECKMATE” in Other Languages

Albanian= mat ; shah mat/ Bulgarian= шах и мат/Czechs= Sachmat; mat/ Danish= mat (i shak)/ Dutch= Schaactmat/ English= checkmate/Estonian= shahh ja matt/ Finnish= sakkimatti/ French= echec et mat/ German= das Schactmatt/ Greek= mavt/ Hungarian= sakk-matt/Icelandic= mat/ Italian= scacco matto/Latvian= mats saha/ Lithuanian= matas/Norwegian= sjactmatt/ Polish= mat/ Portuguese=

xeque-mate/ Romanian= sah-mat/ Russian= шах и мат/ Slovak= mat/
Spanish= jaque mate/ Swedish= schack matt/ Turkish= mat/

k) **COFFEE** (= قهوة = QAHWAH)

Etymology

ORIGIN- (16th century). The word coffee first reached us in form which we now would recognize in the 17th century, probably via Italian caffè'. It is ultimately, however, of Middle Eastern origin, and the earliest spellings recorded in English reflect this; chaoua, cauwa, kahue, cahve, etc are modeled closely on Turkish kahveh and its source Arabic qahwah . Where the Arabic word came first is not known for certain; probably it is based in some way on Kaffa, the name of an area in the south Abyssinian highlands from which the coffee tree is said to originate, but it has also been claimed to have signified originally some sort of wine. Cafe' (19th century) comes of course from French café, whose source was Italian Caffè'. From the French was derived caffeine, from which English gets caffeine (19th century), while Spanish café' produced cafeter 'coffee-seller' source of English cafeteria (20th century).

'QAHWAH'= 'COFFEE' IN WORLD LANGUAGES

Afghan Dari= kaafi/ Afrikaan= koffie/ Albanian= kafe/ Austrian= café/
Azerbaijani= qehwve/ Bashkir= kofe/ Belarus= kava/ Bengali= kophi/ kafe/
Bulgarian= kafe/ Burmese= kahpi/ Cambodian= gaafay, kaafii/
Cantonese= gaafe'/ Catalan= café/ Chechen= kofi/Chinese (Standard)=
ka-fei/ Corsican= caffè'/Croatian= kava/ Czeq= kav'va , kafe'/Danish=
kaffe/ Dutch= koffie/English= coffee/ Estonian= kohvi/ Farsi= ghahv'veh/
Fiji-Hindi= kaafii/Finnish= kahvi/ French= caf/German= kaffee/ Greek=
kafe, kafes/ Haitian= kafe/ Hausa= kof/Hawaiian= kope/ Hebrew=
kafe'/Hindi= kofii , kaapii/ Hungarian= ka've/Icelandic= kaffi/ Indonesian=
kopi/Irish= caife/ Italian= caffè'/Japanese= koohii/ Javanese=

kopi/Kazakh= kofe/Kongo= kafi/Korean= k'op'i/ Kurdish= qehwe/Kyrgy= kofe/ Lao= kaafe'h/Latin= coffea/ Latvian= kafija/Lithuanian= kava/ Mcedonian= kafe/Malagasy= kafe/ Malay= kopi/Maldivian= kofi/ Maltese= kafe'/Mandarin= ka-fei/ Maya= kaape'/Mohawk= kahwe/ Mongolian= kofi/ Navajo= gohwe'e'h/ Nepali= kafi/Norwegian= kaffe/ Persian= ghahve/Polish= kawa/ Portuguese= café/Punjabi= kaafi/ Pushtu= qawawe/Romanian= cafea/ Russian= kofe/Samoa= kofe/ Serbian= kafa/Sicilian= coffe'/ Sinhalese= koopi/Slovak= ka'va/ Slovenian= kava/ Somali= qahwe/ Spanish= café/ Swahili= kahawa/ Swedish= kaffe/Taiwanese= ka-pi/ Tamil= kaapi/Thai= gafae/Tibetan= kafi/Turkish= kahve/ Ukrainian= kava/Urdu= kofii/ Uzbek= kofe, qahva/Vietnamese= kafe/ Welsh= coffi/Yiddish= kave/ Yuruba= kofi/ Zulu= ikhofi/

5. Linguistic Changes

Through the process of borrowing and transmission of Arabic into English, certain words have undergone various linguistic changes in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

a) Phonology

Phonologically speaking, there has been substitution of phonemes in most borrowed words. However, vowel substitutions outnumber consonant ones. Some verbs have undergone loss of vowel sounds or change in their length or stress. It is noticed that the more recently the word has been borrowed, the more likely it is to retain its original pronunciation.

b) Morphology

Morphologically, a lot of words have changed their form by omission of affixes or addition of suffixes. Others have retained their original form in Arabic. One important aspect is the prefix (al-). In most cases, this 'definite article prefix' has been retained.

c) Syntax

Syntactically, borrowed words have undergone the least changes. Many words have kept their class as nouns, verbs or adjectives. Very few have changed. Most of the borrowed words are nouns, less are verbs and the least are adjectives or interjections.

d) Semantics

Semantically, most borrowed words have retained the same original meaning and semantic field. Few cases indicate a slight change where figurative or metaphorical meaning has evolved, but still the original has been retained. Today, some borrowed words have been assimilated into English and are considered as part of the English lexicon and are used in everyday speech. Many words are obsolete (Cannon, 1994).

To sum up, English-Arabic contact and the spread of Arabic words into other languages indicates the great cultural contact that has been going on between the East and the West for more than fifteen centuries. Arabic has served as a great connecting bridge between world cultures.

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