

The Problem of the Development of Ideas and the Historical Methods

Souad Lebsir ¹

¹Professor Lecturer B, Postgraduate School of Professors Constantine Asia Jabbar (Algeria).

The Email Author: lebsir.souad@ensc.dz , lebsouad@yahoo.com

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Abstract:

Arabs and Muslims in general have contributed to the development of historiography as an independent discipline. Through analysis and reasoning, historical material can be accessed through various methods and approaches, including source criticism, empirical research, comprehensive history, and world history. In this context, the emergence of New History among Western scholars is noteworthy. It aims to address the problem of human existence and reconstruct it by linking the past with the present and envisioning the future. This phenomenon highlights the openness and cross-fertilisation of history with other sciences, which contributes to the development of traditional historical discourse. It also opens avenues for connections between different methodologies and sciences, and for exploring the epistemology of historical knowledge.

Keywords: History, historiography, anthropology, source criticism, new history.

Introduction:

The field of history and its theories are of great importance to both the general public and scholars. This importance extends beyond the nature of history and its interplay with science and literature, to its status as a vital subject in its own right. This study aims to explore the nature of history by examining its methods and approaches, ultimately understanding it as a discipline with its own foundations, characteristics and evolution based on the principles of development and growth. Like other sciences, history has evolved through historical periods that have been shaped by its methodologies and approaches. The main focus of this study is to highlight the cognitive context of history, starting with the problematic aspects. This is done by defining the concept of history linguistically and providing a conceptual framework that reflects its cognitive references and components.

The study then looks at the concept of history in antiquity, tracing its stages of development and examining recent developments, particularly what is commonly referred to as 'new history'. Given that history operates through various mechanisms and processes that depart from its static nature, disentangling the intertwined concepts requires differentiating how history is used, whether as an interpretation of historical content or as a formulation of the method to be used in dealing with historical material.

Thus, the discussion of history goes beyond it being an independent science with its own references and methodologies. This is exemplified by the perspective of Dr Qasem Abdo, who says: "When the word 'history' is used to refer to the journey of human civilisation since

ancient times, and the phrase 'writing history' is used to express the constructive intellectual process that attempts to reconstruct and interpret humanity on its planet"¹.

Therefore, we will try to highlight and address this perspective through the following problematic aspects:

- What is the science of history, its methodologies, and the stages of its evolution from documentation to an independent discipline?

Answering this question requires a scientific and historical approach that includes the following elements:

- The linguistic, terminological and historical foundations of history.
- The role of Arabs and Muslims in the construction of historical material.
- The foundations of historiography in the Western tradition and its convergence with Arab-Islamic methodologies.

The linguistic and terminological roots of history:

The literary and cultural presence of history is reflected in the different meanings of the word "history" in Arabic dictionaries. Ibn Manzur states that history means "time", from which "recorded history" is derived, since everything that has happened is called history, just as a child is called history. It is also said that history is derived from "haddith"¹ (recent) because it refers to recent events².

It is important to note the difference between the term "history" with a soft "alif" and the term "ta'rikh" with a hamza on the "alif". While "tarikh" is used to refer to the study of the past, the term "history" itself refers to the past³.

Al-Alusi suggests that the term "history" in language refers to its purpose and time, as it reaches and confirms it⁴. Al-Sakhawi also adopted this meaning, quoting al-Jawhari who stated that history means "time" and "recorded history" is like it. It is said that history is derived from "arakh", which refers to the young female offspring of a wild cow, because it means something that happens to a child⁵.

The Arabic origin of the word "history" is said to be derived from the Greek word "arch", pronounced "arakh", which means old or ancient. This is why the study of ancient artefacts is called "archaeology" in Arabic. In European languages, "history" is used to mean origin or original, as in "archetype" in English. In Arabic, it entered Islam with the meaning of tale or

¹ - Qasim Abdul Qasim: A Reading of History, Evolution of Thought and Method, Ain for Studies, Cairo, 2009, p. 33.

² - Ibn Manzur: "Lisan al-Arab," vol. 1, entry "Arkh."

³ - Saad Badeer Al-Helwani: "Ta'rikh al-Tarikh", Introduction to the Science of History and Research Methods, 2nd edition, Cairo, 1999, p. 10.

⁴ - Mahmoud Shakri Al-Alousi: "Bulugh al-Arab fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-Arab", vol. 3, Cairo, 1935, p. 214.

⁵ - Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Shams al-Din al-Sakhawi (831-902 AH / 1427-1497 CE): "Al-I'lan bi al-Tawbikh liman Zamma Ahl al-Tarikh", 1st edition, translated by Saleh Ahmed Al-Ali, Al-Risalah Foundation, Syria, 1407 AH / 1986 CE, p. 33.

See also: Asad Rostam, "Mustalah al-Tarikh", Sidon, Beirut, 1955, p. 33.

story, and the term "asatir al-awwalin" (stories of the ancients) is frequently mentioned in the Qur'an in this sense¹.

And in this context, there is a narration by Al-Biruni about Umar ibn al-Khattab, as related by Maymun ibn Mahran: When a document was presented to him in the month of Sha'ban, Umar asked, "Which Sha'ban are we in, the current one or the one to come? Then he gathered the companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and asked them about his confusion regarding the determination of the times. They said, "We must learn the method from the Persians. So they called the astronomers and took their advice. Umar said, "We have a calculation called 'mah ruz', which means the calculation of months and days. They translated 'mah ruz' and said: historian and they made its root of 'the history' and they explained to them [the companions] the method of using it and its similarity to what the Romans do..."². And so the meaning of the word became "months" in Persian, derived from the word "mah ruz".

However, the majority of historians disagree with this suggestion. Dr Hassan Nassar argues that it is an ancient Arabic word common to Semitic languages and similar to the word "yarih", which means "moon" and also "month" in Hebrew³. This view is closer to the truth, as it has already been mentioned that the Arabs adopted lunar time.

This was also the case with the Semitic peoples, who based their months on the moon rather than the sun. Consequently, they built their calendar around nights rather than days. Thus, the word "tarikh" originally referred to the determination of months. It then expanded to include the general concept of recording events or specifying a particular event⁴.

In the ancient Arabic etymology of the word "tārikh", al-Asma'i distinguishes between the languages of the Banu Tamim and Qays: "The Banu Tamim say 'warrikhat al-kitab tawrikha' and Qays say 'arrikhtuhu ta'rikha'"⁵. This context suggests the idea of documenting or recording events in writing. Similarly, As-Suli mentions in the same context that "arrikht" and "warrikht" in the Tamim language serve as emphatic confirmations. As for "tarikh" in the Qays language, it refers to what people commonly use.

Thus, the word "tarikh" encompasses both the narration of an event itself and its specific dating or recording, based on its ancient Arabic roots⁶.

Dr Shakir Salim presented his argument that the root "warkh" is a Semitic root, but derived from the language of southern Yemen, rather than from the Hebrew or Syriac word "yarakh" or "tarikh" (meaning moon or month)¹.

¹- Hussein Muwannis: "Al-Tarikh wal-Mu'arrikhun", A Study in the Science of History: Its Nature, Subjects, Methodologies, and Schools among Western Scholars, an Investigation into the Philosophy of History, and an Introduction to the Jurisprudence of History, 2nd ed., Dar Al-Rashad, Cairo, 1974, p. 09.

²- Abu al-Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Biruni al-Biruni: "The Remaining Vestiges from Empty Centuries," Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1380, p. 30.

³- Hussein Nasar: "The Emergence of Historical Documentation Among the Arabs," 2nd ed., Iqra Publications, Lebanon, 1400 AH / 1980 CE, p. 09.

⁴- Hasan Nasar: "The Emergence of Documentation Among the Arabs," p. 66.

⁵- Abd al-Malik ibn Quraib al-Asma'i (215 AH / 830 CE), cited by al-Sakhawi, p. 09.

⁶- Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Yahya al-Suli (d. 335 AH): "The Literature of Books," corrected and annotated by Dr. Muhammad Bahjat al-Athari and examined by Sayyid Mahmud Shukri al-Alousi, Al-Maktaba al-Arabiyya, Egypt, Cairo, 1341, p. 180.

Dr Al-Arwi engaged in a debate on this issue, affirming the Arabic origin of the term "tarikh" because the compilation of Islamic history was an Arab creation. All attempts to find external Greek or Persian influences, as suggested by some scholars in the fields of theology and philosophy, have failed. Therefore, the word "tarikh" is indeed an Arabic word².

Beyond the linguistic perspective and despite the differences in determining its origins, the contextual consensus among scholars highlights the terminological meaning of the word "tarikh". It includes the definition of the period in which the circumstances are set, which includes the birth of the narrators and scholars, their life span, mental and physical health, travels, pilgrimage, preservation, regulation, documentation, authentication and criticism. It examines the conditions and circumstances of their beginnings, their present state and their future reception³. It is an art through which one explores the events of time in terms of determination and timing, delving into the world and the human being as its subject. It examines their detailed circumstances in the realm of transient human conditions in time⁴.

Muhi al-Din ibn Sulayman al-Kafiji mentions that "the science of history is the study of time and its conditions, as well as the circumstances related to it in terms of determination and timing"⁵. Sayyid Qutb supports these definitions by stating that "history is the determination of place and time"⁶. It is commonly understood and defined as a period of time that is attributed to an absolute time, whether it has passed, is present or is yet to come. It has been said that history is the definition of time by tracing it back to the first occurrence of an event. It has also been defined as a known duration between the occurrence of a visible event and other subsequent events⁷.

Thus, it becomes clear that Qutb al-Rahā has emphasised in the historical process that the terminological context of the word "tārīkh" has been formulated on the basis of its association with time by all researchers, despite their different cultures and affiliations. Ibn Khaldun defined it in his introduction as "a phenomenon that includes accounts of days, states, and past events from the earliest centuries. In its essence, it involves the observation, investigation and justification of entities and their principles, with a precise understanding of the intricacies and a profound knowledge of the mechanisms and causes of events... History is one of the arts. It rises to the level of understanding the rules and patterns, as in its apparent form it is no more than accounts of days, states and past events from the earliest centuries, while in its essence it involves observation, investigation, justification, with precise understanding of the principles and profound knowledge... and the causes of events are profound. Thus, it possesses deep wisdom and an ancient heritage..."⁸.

¹ - Shaker Mustafa: Arab History and Historians, a study of the evolution of the science of history and knowledge of its figures in Islam, Vol. 1, 1st ed., Dar al-Ilm for Millions, Beirut, 1978, p. 50.

² - Abdullah Al-Arwi: The Concept of History in Terms and Schools, Concepts and Principles, Arab Cultural Center, 2005, p. 10.

³ - Al-Sakhawi: Declaration through Reproof, p. 84.

⁴ - Same, p. 35.

⁵ - Mohammed bin Sulaiman bin Saad Al-Kafihi (d. 879 H): The Useful Abridgment in the Science of History, illustrated in the Aya Sofia Library, No. 3402, p. 02.

⁶ - Sayyid Qutb: In History, Idea and Approach, 8th ed., Dar al-Shorouk, 2001, p. 103.

⁷ - Al-Kafiji: The Useful Abridgment in the Science of History, p. 08.

⁸ - Ibn Khaldun: The Introduction, p. 10.

Dr Hussein Mo'nes considered Ibn Khaldun's introduction to be "the most accurate statement ever made about this science among the Arabs"¹. Based on this account, Ibn Khaldun classified history as a science with its own characteristics, philosophical foundations, laws, investigations and justifications².

Al-Jabarti provides a comprehensive yet simple definition of history as "a science that seeks knowledge of the conditions of communities, their lands, customs, industries, lineages and deaths"³. Returning to the Arab-Islamic roots of historiography, there is no greater effort than that made by the early historians to understand the life and wars of the noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which formed the original history. The first history was linked to this continuous effort to create unity among diverse entities and to force many to unite at the level of collective ideology. History is deeply rooted in Arab culture, while acknowledging foreign contributions. Islam itself is a defining historical event for different peoples, creating a sense of belonging to collective ideologies⁴ and the belief that they are the inheritors of history. This is reflected in the way Islamic historians wrote their history in relation to world history⁵.

From this perspective, history appears as the intersection of time and place, from which unique and unrepeatable events emerge. The greatest handicap historians face is anachronism, which is made up of two terms: "ana", which in Greek means negation, and "chronos", which means time. Anachronism occurs when the author goes beyond the logical framework on which history is based, because history is a series of causes according to their occurrence in time, acknowledging that everything has its own time and place⁶.

History thus becomes an event whose content oscillates between the duality of time and place. Beyond definitions, history remains in a state of theoretical reflection, which requires delving into the depths of events and their meanings in order to arrive at historical truth. Historical texts have both an apparent and an underlying aspect, which can only be grasped by those who are well versed in them and who have devoted much time to contemplating them. The apparent aspect consists of the information that a hurried reader mechanically absorbs. The underlying aspect, on the other hand, is what compels the reader to draw conclusions and engage in exploratory processes, that is, to grasp the unknown within the known. Once we know how to extract the hidden aspects of the text through systematic inquiry, we will have delved into its underlying meaning⁷.

This is exactly what Ibn Khaldun intended, and Ibn Bashir also supported this notion when he saw history as a noble science that provides lessons, reflection and awareness of the cyclical events of time and knowledge of the conditions of past societies. This stimulates the mind and

¹ - Hussein Moanes: History and Historians, p. 12.

² - Jamal al-Din Fath al-Kilani: Journeys and Travelers in Islamic History, a historical study, a study in the sources of intermediate Islamic history, Dar al-Zanbaka for Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, n.d., p. 07.

³ - Abdul Rahman al-Jabrati: Wonders of Antiquities in Biographies and News, Vol. 1, Al-Amira Al-Sharifa Printing Press, 1322 H, p. 02.

⁴ - Ali Oumlil: Historical Discourse, p. 14.

⁵ - Same, p. 15.

⁶ - Hassan Othman: Research Methodology in History, Dar al-Maaref, 2000, p. 23.

⁷ - Mohammed Zniber: Excavations about the Personality of Yaqub Al-Mansur, Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Issue 5, 1982, p. 23.

thoughts and allows rational individuals to measure themselves against the examples of the past in these countries¹. It is a literary description of any human activity, whether carried out by individuals or groups, which is reflected in the perceptions of any community or individual and influences their development. In this sense alone, history can be the subject of scientific study in the strict sense² or an independent discipline that transmits the recorded history that is open to analysis.

The role of Arabs and Muslims in the establishment of the science of history and its methodologies:

It is manifested in authentic historical research through analysis and deduction, which is achieved through different methodologies and approaches that vary according to the perspectives and affiliations of those who study its subjects. It highlights the role of Arabs and Muslims and the historical methods they used in their writings, as well as the symbolic evidence that traces its origins back to Arab-Islamic roots. It is distinguished by its presentation of the beginnings of Arab and Muslim authorship.

Experts in the field agree on the absence of historical material or historical writing during the pre-Islamic era, which explains the presence of myths and legends when attempts were made to write about this period during the Islamic era. This is despite the fact that there were civilisations in Yemen, the northern Hijaz and the southern Levant. The reason for this is probably the Arabs' lack of familiarity with the Himyarite script³ and other ancient Arabic scripts. The few works that exist in this context are the inscriptions found in the monasteries of Hira and its churches, later discovered by Al-Kalbi⁴.

Nevertheless, there was a form of oral history among the Arabs, who would recount their days and victories in poetry or a combination of poetry and prose. In addition to genealogies, each tribe would preserve its lineage and pass it on to its descendants, a practice that would become important in history after the advent of Islam. The Arabs were also familiar with the history of neighbouring nations such as the Persians and the Romans⁵.

After the advent of Islam, Arabs and Muslims witnessed an active movement in this field in accordance with the needs of the time. Muslims had to interpret the verses of the Qur'an, understand their occasions, the reasons for their revelation and the events to which they referred. This led to the need for historical documentation, along with the desire to explore what the scriptures said about nations, tribes and prophets. As a result, what came to be known as "Israiliyat" (narratives from Jewish and Christian sources) emerged. Prominent

¹ - Othman bin Bishr: Title of Glory in the History of Najd, Vol. 3, Modern Riyadh Library, Riyadh, n.d., p. 2.

² - Franz Rosenthal: The Science of History among Muslims, Translated by Dr. Saleh Ahmed Al-Ali, Al-Risalah Foundation, n.d., p. 18-19.

³ - The historians refer to this script as the "Himyar script" due to its association with the Himyar civilization in southern Arabia. Inscriptions of this script have been found in southern Arabia, the Arabian Peninsula, and Iraq, making it the official script for the region. See Hashem Mohammed Al-Khattat: "Qawaid al-Khat al-Arabi," Alam al-Kutub, 1406 AH - 1986, p. 183.

⁴ - Hasan Nasr: "Nasha'at al-Tadween al-Tareekhi ind al-Arab," p. 11.

⁵ - Abdul Hamid Al-Ayadi: "Ilm al-Tareekh," Committee for Compilation, Translation, and Publishing, Egypt, n.d., p. 07.

figures in this field include Ka'b al-Ahbar, who died in 34 AH, and Wahb ibn Munabbih, who died in 110 AH¹.

The role of hadith (prophetic traditions) was also significant in the emergence of written documentation and the birth of the science of history among Muslims. It was within the realm of the sciences of Hadith that historical documentation began. Historical criticism was used as a practical tool to purify and sift historical accounts. Around the middle of the second century AH (8th century CE), the Arabs began to show interest in recording historical accounts, driven primarily by religious motives. This marked the beginning of historical writing in Islamic civilisation².

In the first century AH (7th century AD) historical accounts were relatively scarce, both as sources and as subjects. Tribal influence remained significant, and tribal dynamics shaped events throughout the century. The content and sources of historical narratives were primarily regional and influenced by the conditions of specific regions. In the Levant (Greater Syria), the focus was on the role of the tribes in conquest and their political service to the Umayyads. In Iraq, the emphasis was also on the role of tribes in conquest. The early historians who recorded the events of the first century AD relied on oral narratives as the basis for their accounts³.

In fact, organised historical work among Muslims became closely associated with the second century AD (8th century CE) and the Prophetic traditions (Hadith) - especially those related to the expeditions or campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. As a result, the city of Al-Madinah became the centre of early historical scholarship. Prior to the second century AH, there was little emphasis on compiling works specifically related to the expeditions. However, in other regions⁴, the school of Al-Madinah encouraged the documentation of the Prophet's biography, with active contributions from several historians, notably Az-Zuhri, at the request of the Umayyads. There was a conscious effort to move away from regionalism towards a comprehensive coverage of state affairs, influenced to some extent by the methodology of the Hadith scholars. Many of these hadith scholars lived in the mid-second century AH, including Said ibn 'Umar (d. 180 AH/796 CE), 'Awanah ibn Al-Hakam (d. 147 AH/765 CE), and Abu Muhdath (d. 157 AH/775 CE). They played an important role in preserving and documenting the early stages of Islamic history⁵. Thus, the tree of historiography among the Arabs grew in the soil of the transmitted Hadith, supported by the critical analysis of the narrators (the science of Jarh and Ta'dil) concerning the reliability of the chain of transmission, as they are the basis of narration and other related matters⁶.

¹ - Hasan Nasr: "Nasha'at al-Tadween al-Tareekhi," p. 15.

² - Al-Riyah Hamad Al-Nil Al-Laith: "Manahij Kitabat al-Tareekh al-Islami bayn al-Muarrkhin al-Muslimin wa al-Mustashriqin," University of Omdurman, Sudan, n.d., p. 04.

³ - Antoine Khalil Tomtom: "History in Islamic Medieval Ages," 1st ed., Dar Al-Hadatha, Beirut, Lebanon, 2005, p. 51.

⁴ - Saeed Badeer Al-Helwani, "Ta'rikh al-Ta'rikh" (History of History), p. 66.

⁵ - See Hasan Nasar: "Nash'at 'Ilm al-Tareekh" (The Emergence of the Science of History), p. 13.

⁶ - Hasan Muwannis: "Al-Ta'rikh wa al-Mu'arrikhun" (History and Historians), p. 362.

It is worth noting that before this period the Arabs did not use the word "history" but the term "khabar", which means history. They also used the terms "akhbar" and "akhbari". Then, gradually, the word "tarikh" began to replace the word "khabar" and came to be used for the process of historical documentation and for new developments in news and reporting. The word "tarikh" then came to be used for the field of history, including historical events, news and biographies. It also referred to the books that contained such information, completely replacing the words "khabar" and "akhbari", which declined in value before disappearing from use in the fourth century AH (10th century CE)¹.

The term "tarikh" (history) became widespread in the second century AH (8th century CE), along with the methodology of *isnad* (chain of transmission). In this methodology, historical accounts were traced back to the prophetic traditions and their narrators. These narrations and their chains of transmission became a prominent feature for historians. They sought to investigate and verify the news of Islamic conquests by interviewing the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, who accompanied him on his expeditions. Thus, Islamic history emerged from the biography of the Prophet, and its pioneer was Muhammad ibn Ishaq².

Thus, the historical books that combined *hadith* (prophetic traditions) and history were primarily the books of *maghazi* (Islamic military expeditions) and *seerah* (biography). These books played a crucial role in guiding Islamic legislation and its organisation. Historical writing at that time relied heavily on the method of *isnad*-based narration, which Dr. Sa'id Badr Al-Halwani identified with characteristics such as a narrative style, the inclusion of poetry, and a lack of chronological coherence between the events narrated³.

This development led to the emergence of books on social classes (*tabaqat*) and genealogy with their respective historians. The most prominent of these scholars was Muhammad ibn 'Umar Al-Waqidi (d. 207 AH). Since these historians originally came from the field of *hadith*, they naturally tended to organise *hadith* narrators into social classes, first according to their importance and social status, and later according to their geographical location. As a result, the books on social classes focused primarily on the Companions of the Prophet and the Successors because of their important role in narrating and recording *hadith*, which served as the main source of historical writing in their works⁴.

The Arabs' interest in their genealogy led to the emergence of genealogists (*nasabun*), especially after Umar ibn al-Khattab established the *Diwan*, which began with the genealogy of Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Later, the Banu Hashim clan was given special attention for religious reasons. This pattern of genealogical writing continued during the Umayyad period. One of the notable scholars of Kufa during this period was Muhammad ibn al-Sa'ib al-Kalbi (d. 146 AH), who played a significant role in the writing and study of genealogies⁵.

¹ - The same, p. 363.

² - Nour al-Din Hatoum and others: "Introduction to the Science of History," Damascus, 1401/1402 AH, p. 167.

³ - Saeed Badeer Al-Helwani: "History of History," p. 76.

⁴ - Muwaffaq ibn Abdullah ibn Abdul Qadir: "The Science of Attestation and Biographical Dictionaries of Scholars and Sheikhs and the Art of Writing Biographies," Umm Al-Qura University, Mecca, 1421, p. 19.

⁵ - Nour al-Din Hatoum: "Introduction," p. 29.

In the context of the historical development of historiography, world history emerged at the end of the third century AH and the beginning of the fourth century AH. The historical books of this period were characterised by their comprehensiveness. Historians began their books with the origins of humanity, followed by the stories of the prophets, interspersed with accounts of kings and nations, highlighting their achievements. The focus then shifted to the early period of Islam, with a central emphasis on narrating the lives of the noble Prophet and the Caliphs⁵. Prominent examples of this approach include the works of al-Dinawari (The Accounts of the Ancients), al-Tabari (History of the Prophets and Kings), al-Masudi (The Meadows of Gold) and others¹.

In their history, Arabs also delved into recording the history of states, as some focused on writing independent histories for specific countries or ruling dynasties. Others were interested in the history of caliphs, kings or particular sultans. Those who followed this historical approach dealt with ethical and behavioural issues, including administrative matters, as seen in the work of Abd al-Rahman ibn Isma'il al-Maqdisi, "The Gardens in the Chronicles of the Two Noble and Righteous States" by Abu Shamah.²

The period between the third and sixth centuries of the Hijri calendar witnessed an upsurge in historical composition, providing a rich array of works. During this period, there was an increase and diversification of major trends in historical writing. These included local histories of cities and regions, which were treated almost as independent entities. One of the earliest of these works is the book "Futuh Misr wa Akhbaruha" (The Conquests of Egypt and Their News) by Ibn Abd al-Hakam Abd al-Rahman ibn Abdullah (d. 207 AH/871 CE)³.

Within the depths of these writings, Muslim historians adopted several approaches in dealing with the writing of the historical events they covered, the most important of which are:

1. The Isnad method: It emerged in the last third of the first century AH due to the need to rely on witnesses who narrated the events from their original sources. Therefore, the names mentioned by historians such as al-Tabari, al-Waqidi or al-Baladhuri in the isnad (chain of narrators) actually reveal the names of the earlier and later transmitters. Consequently, it became necessary to examine the texts found in these reliable works, especially since a group of written sources can be traced back to even older sources⁴.

¹- Hasan Othman: "Methodology of Historical Research," 8th ed., Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 1964, p. 60.

²- For more information on the subject, refer to:

- Saad Badeer Al-Helwani, "History of History," p. 98.

- Sayed Abdul Aziz Salem: "History and Arab Historians," p. 49.

- Hasan Nasar: "The Emergence of Historical Recording among the Arabs," p. 18.

- Shakir Mustafa: "Arab History and Historians," Vol. 1, p. 90

³- Also, see: Jawad Ali: "Resources of al-Tabari's History," Vol. 1, Introduction by Dr. Mohammed Saleh Al-Salami, Arab Journal Publications (Iraqi Scientific Journal), 2012, p. 33.

⁴- Additionally, refer to:

- Antoine Khalil Tomtom: "History in the Middle Ages," p. 75.

- Jamal Abdel Hadi: "Errors that Must be Corrected in History (Methodology of Writing Islamic History: Why and How?)," 3rd ed., Al-Wafa for Printing and Publishing, Cairo, 1994, p. 102.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that after the spread of writing in the second century AD, historical methodology broke away from the Isnad approach, which required historians to be mere transmitters of information through writing¹.

2. The chronological method: Historians in this historical approach adopted the writing of events year by year. The events of each year are recorded, excluding the events of other years or even the continuation of an event that has continued into the second year. The writing of the event ends at the end of the year, and when the following year is covered, the historian can return to continue the event. However, in recording the events of each year, it ends and is followed by the phrase "Then came the year [specific year]". One criticism of this method is that it tears apart the event and its long historical context presented over several years, mentioning only what is relevant to the year being discussed, while gathering all the events that occurred in that year². Historians who have used this method include Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Jarir and al-Tabari³.

3. The thematic method (or history by theme): This method takes the subject as the basis for the history, which may be a series of successive personalities, a particular geographical area, a particular region or a state. In the case of personalities, all events revolve around each individual in chronological order. In the case of a region, the historian will also cover what happened in each town or area separately. If the subject is a state, the historian covers the news of each region within the state independently, maintaining the chronological order. The Baladhuri used this method in his books "Futuh al-Buldan" and "Ansaab al-Ashraaf", and it is also used by geographers. When the subject is a prominent person, this method becomes biography (taraajim)⁴.

4- The comprehensive or general approach to history:

The periodic historical books were considered to be comprehensive world histories. The earlier works were not comprehensive, but rather consisted of selected news, some based on Arabic narrators and others on translated writings. As a result, they often appeared contradictory and had gaps in the timeline or lacked chronological connections. The attribute of comprehensiveness does not generally apply to the content, and the historical perspective continues to consider world events. It was an attempt to link historical thought and human events, based on a general and comprehensive view of cosmic events in accordance with the Qur'anic perspective on the past and the history of Arabs and Muslims in general⁵. An example of a historian who approached this field is Al-Dinawari in his book "Al-Akhbar Al-

¹- Hasan Othman: "Methodology of Historical Research," 3rd ed., Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 1970, p. 60.

²- Antoine Khalil Tomtom: "History in the Middle Ages," p. 73.

³- Salah al-Din al-Munjid: "Signs of History and Geography Among the Arabs," 2nd ed., Dar al-Kitab al-Jadeed, Beirut, 1978, p. 126.

⁴- Refer to:

- Abu Hanifa Ahmed ibn Dawood al-Dinawari (d. 282 AH): "Al-Akhbar al-Tawal," edited by Abdul Moneim Amer, reprinted by Al-Ofoq Library in Baghdad, Iraq, from the edition of 1379 AH, p. 410-411.

- Also, see Ghareeb Muhammad Shafiq: "Methods of Writing History Among the Arabs," Journal of the Arab Language Academy, Vol. 14, 1962, Cairo, p. 301.

Fouad al-Sayyid Ayman: "Sources of Yemen's History in the Islamic Era," printed by the French Scientific Institute, Cairo, 1974, p. 540

⁵- Abdul Aziz al-Douri: "Al-Mas'udi as a Historian," 1st ed., Arab Historians Union Publications, University Press, Baghdad, 1402 AH, p. 26-28.

Tawal", in which he covered the beginning of creation and the revelation to the Prophet Adam, and then dealt with general topics, including Persian history and the history of Yemen in different periods¹. Al-Yaaqubi followed a similar approach as the scope of Muslim historians widened to include new subjects that were previously unknown. Al-Yaaqubi was one of the first historians to recognise the importance of the history of ancient nations. When Ibn Jarir al-Tabari came along, he produced a work similar to Al-Yaaqubi's (but he focused on the history of some nations from a different perspective than Al-Yaaqubi)².

Another prominent Muslim historian who broadened his thinking beyond narrow local or regional perspectives to make history serve global civilisation and Islamic culture in general was Al-Masudi. His works in this field included several compilations, some of which still exist, while others have been lost. The titles he gave to his historical works reflect the depth of his historical thinking and reveal his broad global worldview, which was not obscured by numerous influences. His choice of words, style and thought can be seen in statements such as "...and the annihilation of the nations of the past and present generations and the kingdoms that existed", referring to nations that flourished in the past, experienced the passage of time and centuries, and eventually became extinct or disappeared. Similarly, he used phrases such as "...and what happened in the ancient ages", which underline the importance he attached to the history of nations and peoples, even though most of them had ended or disappeared. He believed that their heritage and ideas were worth documenting and preserving³. His literary works focused mainly on the history of creation⁴.

The outstanding feature among historians is that the diversity of methodologies used in historiography does not mean that a historian adheres to a single approach in his writings. Many historians use multiple methodologies, such as Tabari, who used both *isnad* (chain of narrators) and the *annalistic* method. The characteristics of a general and objective history also appeared in some of his works, such as the "History of Prophets and Kings".

In order to appreciate the value of these works, it is necessary to refer to the sources on which historians rely to extract historical material. One of the most important sources is the books of *tabaqat* (biographical dictionaries)⁵, which are considered to be an Islamic method that focuses on documenting and classifying individuals according to their social status in a hierarchical structure. The significance of this method lies in the fact that it lasted for a very

¹- Suleiman ibn Abdullah al-Madid al-Subaykat: "The Method of Al-Mas'udi in His Book of History," Doctoral Thesis in Islamic History, Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, 1405/1984, pp. 256-257. Additionally, Hadi Hussein Hamoud: "The Works of Al-Mas'udi," *Al-Mawrid Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1399 Issue, p. 60.

²- Muhammad Zaneer: "Excavations," p. 24. Also, refer to:

- Rosenzweig Franz: "The Science of History Among Muslims," p. 151.

- Ali Hassani: "Global and Human Trends in Al-Mas'udi's Thought," *Journal of the College of Social Sciences*, Riyadh, No. 7, Riyadh, 1403 AH, p. 131.

- Muhammad Kurd Ali: "Treasures of Ancestors - Al-Mas'udi," *Journal of the Western Scientific Institute*, Vol. 22, No. 9 and 10, Damascus, 1366, p. 60.

- Nabeeh Aqeel: "Al-Mas'udi, the Arab Historian," *Al-Arabi Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 48, Kuwait, 1382, p. 160.

³- Shakir Mustafa: "Arab History and Historians," Vol. 4, p. 164.

⁴- Antoine Khalil Tomtom: "History in Islamic Middle Ages," p. 79.

⁵- Franz Rosenzweig: "The Science of History," p. 142.

long time and was associated with religious figures, such as the *tabaqat* of the Shafi'i or Hanbali scholars¹.

Rosenthal also discusses this issue by examining the books of *tarajim* (biographies), considering them as evidence of historical expression among the Arabs. These books played an important and useful role in the writing of Islamic history². Therefore, the Arabs referred to biographical and genealogical works as "history", which is directly in line with the definition of this literary genre, which focuses on the history of the lives of individuals.

On this basis, Islamic methodologies began to take shape in the middle of the second century of the Islamic calendar (8th century AD). These methodologies included *isnad*, the annalistic and thematic approaches, general history, and the use of methodologies adapted to the needs of the time and the perspective of the historian. As a result, the term "history" has multiple and diverse meanings among Arabs and Muslims.

- The flow of time and events, representing historical development.

- The history of individuals, equivalent to "biography".

- The process of historical recording or historiography, involving the description, analysis and interpretation of historical developments.

- The science and knowledge of history, including historical books. Corresponds to "history".

- The specification of the time of an event or occurrence by day, month and year³.

In summary, Arab and Muslim approaches to history encompass several meanings embedded in the word "*tarikh*," including the flow of time⁴, individual biographies, the process of historical recording, the science of history, and the specification of the times of events⁵. It's worth noting that the writing of history in the early Islamic era began with the term '*khbar*', which was a comprehensive description of events similar to the stories of the days. This approach evolved over time to include specific methods, characteristics and analyses, leaving a mark influenced by the unique structure and overarching vision of Islam⁶.

IV-2- The foundations of Western historiography and its convergence with Arab and Islamic methodologies

Most Western historians attribute the rise of historical studies to the modern era, specifically to the first half of the nineteenth century, when European archives opened their doors to scholars who began to extract and disseminate their treasures. This immense wealth became a catalyst for many to pursue the study of history based on these sources. In this context, two major trends emerged in the West during the 19th century: the objective empiricist trend, which emphasised the need to write history as it was in the past, and the genetic view of history, expressed by the proponents of historicism, which emphasised the continuous and evolving process of historical events over time⁷.

¹ - Zaki al-Din Abdul Azim: "Supplement to *Al-Wafayat al-A'yan*," Vol. 1, Edited by Bashir Awad Ma'ruf, Al-Risalah Foundation, 1981, p. 11.

² - Refer to the third chapter of the first section for the biography details.

³ - Shakir Mustafa Salim: "Arab History and Historians," Vol. 1, p. 17.

⁴ - The same, p. 130.

⁵ - Franz Rosenzweig: "The Science of History," p. 150.

⁶ - Antoine Khalil Tomtom: "History in the Middle Ages," p. 49.

⁷ - Hassan Moenes: History and Historians, p. 65.

In order to understand Western historical methodologies, it is important to explore their compatibility with Arab and Islamic methodologies. The school of documentary historians and advocates of complete documentation in the West, such as Leopold von Ranke and Jacob Burckhardt, reached the pinnacle of historical scholarship in the 19th century. This was the starting point from which Muslim historians, especially the ardent Hadith scholars, began to adopt a similar approach, relying on solid chains of narrators known for their truthfulness and integrity¹. This methodology, known as *isnad*, is one of the primary approaches followed by Arab and Muslim historians.

Since the early 18th century, history has become a discipline in its own right, with its own rules and scientific principles. It moved from the realm of literature, philosophy, reflections, legends of saints and praise of kings to the realm of solid knowledge. This is how the science of history was born in the West², with its epistemological concept. Pioneers in this field include Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) with his work "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" and Adam Smith (1733-1790), the founder of economics, with his book "The Wealth of Nations"³.

Although these scholars, among others, drew people's attention to the importance of studying history as a scientific discipline and recognised its great value as an authentic humanistic study, they did not establish a solid foundation or prescribe methodologies for historical research⁴.

Indeed, it is difficult to discuss Western historical methodologies without acknowledging the intertwined nature of their works. The emergence of a group of thinkers engaged in epistemological inquiry, which involves a critical examination of the principles and logical foundations of the sciences, played an important role in this regard. History occupied a prominent position within these investigations, as Jacques Le Goff noted when he spoke of the emergence of a new history led by Henri Pirenne, who first used the term in 1930. Le Goff stated: "In this prominent position, history owes its uniqueness to two essential aspects: its total renewal and its deep rootedness in ancient and solid traditions... Every form of new history is an attempt to create a comprehensive history"⁵.

Muslim historians in the Middle Ages also adopted this approach, constructing some of their works through a comprehensive treatment of themes.

In the context of the Western historical renewal, what is known as geographical history emerged, with the aim of highlighting the interplay between geography, especially human geography, and the new history. This requires the geographer to have the knowledge and professionalism of a historian and to think simultaneously as a historian and a geographer⁶.

¹ - Hassan Moenes: History and Historians, p. 69.

² - Same, p. 65.

³ - Edward Ducair: What is History, trans. Dr. Ahmed Hamdi Mahmoud, review: Adham, Cairo, n.d., p. 60.

⁴ - Hussein Moenes: History and Historians, p. 67. See also: Ernest Kassard: On Historical Knowledge, trans. Dr. Qasim Abdo Qasim, Dar Al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 1979, p. 166.

⁵ - Jack Lugo: (The New History), Translated by Muhammad Al-Tahir Al-Mansouri, Reviewed by Abdelhamid Haniya, Arab Organization for Translation, Beirut, 2007, p. 76.

⁶ - Jack Lugo: (The New History), p. 77.

He suggested that Braudel approach his work from a different angle, focusing on the Mediterranean itself rather than Philip II. Thus the subject changed and the Mediterranean became the central theme, which for the historian was a geographical theme¹. Environment and place became equal terms in Braudel's framework. He believed that civilisation fundamentally takes place in a specific place where man and history intersect. The meaning of civilisation lies in the concentration of a certain type of humanity in a certain place².

Braudel revolutionised the concept of history by introducing the notion of multiple historical times and emphasising the importance of long duration, slow time and semi-constant time. This opened the door to interaction between history and anthropology. He translated these ideas into his works such as "The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II" and "Civilisation and Capitalism: 15th-18th Century"³.

In a historical approach similar to the Braudelian methodology, thought extends to the works of Muslims who combined history and geography in an appealingly scientific manner. One notable figure is Al-Masudi, whose works, especially in the early parts of his books "Muruj al-Dhahab" (The Meadows of Gold) and "Al-Tanbih" (The Notification), exemplify this combination.

In Muruj al-Dhahab, Al-Masudi incorporates geographical elements into his historical writing. He begins with a geographical introduction in which he discusses the earth, its shape, seas, oceans, rivers, mountains and the seven regions. He also discusses the movement of the seas, including famous ones such as the Red Sea and the Mediterranean⁴.

In "Al-Tanbih", Al-Masudi delves into astronomical and cosmological aspects, exploring the stars, their formations and influences. He discusses the elements, their compositions and actions, and explains the division of time, the seasons, the winds and their effects. Through these works, Al-Masudi deepens the link between history and geography, making his geographical and astronomical studies a prelude to understanding history⁵.

In the context of the historical development of the discipline of history, Western scholars became acquainted with the so-called "new history" through the emergence of the Annales school or method. This coincided with the creation of the journal "Annales d'histoire économique et sociale" in France in 1929. These studies focused on the study of humanity through temporal changes⁶.

This approach was championed by a generation of historians who came to be known as the "new history". Its proponents include Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloch, Fernand Braudel, Georges

¹- Fernand Braudel: A French historian born in 1920 in the city of Luneville in the Barrois region on the border of the Champagne and Lorraine provinces. His father, a teacher, gained prominence in history after obtaining his baccalaureate degree in three years at the age of 21 in Constantine, Algeria. He is a French historian and the founder of the Annales School. See Francois Duss: (History Presented from Annales to Modern History), Translated by Muhammad Al-Tahir Al-Mansouri, Arab Organization for Translation, Beirut, 1st ed., 2009, p. 66.

²- Francois Duss: "Al-Tareekh Al-Muftat," p. 103.

³- Braudel (F): "La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Époque de Philippe II" (The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Time of Philip II), ISL 2, p. 107.

⁴- Muhammad Ahbaida: (Writing History), Readings and Interpretations, Rabat, Dar Anas Raqraq, 2013, p. 44.

⁵- Sulaiman Abdullah Al-Madid Al-Suweikat: (The Approach of Al-Masudi in Writing History), p. 263.

⁶- Christophe Wolff: (The Science of History, Culture, and Philosophy), 1st ed., Translated by Professor Al-Marzouqi, Dar Al-Mutawassitah Lil-Nashr Kalimah, Abu Dhabi, 2009, 1430 H, p. 95.

Duby, Jacques Le Goff and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie. Their work was characterised by a shift towards problem analysis and an analytical approach to history rather than the traditional narrative account of events. They emphasised the study of human actions and aspirations rather than prioritising political history. To achieve this, they advocated interdisciplinary collaboration with other fields such as geography, sociology, psychology, economics, linguistics, and social anthropology¹. This represented a re-evaluation of the theory of progress and a transformation of historical thinking into other fields beyond its traditional scope. This period was characterised by the emergence of new social sciences².

And so narrative history moved away from researching the creation of laws based on the repetition and regularity of phenomena. It became a terminological science that sought uniqueness and singularity, leaving the task of discovering the laws of nature to other disciplines. This conception of history led to the advancement of research through special attention to source criticism, classification and the development of scientific exploration³. The study of man in the context of temporal change and the diversity of human life in different periods became the basis, focusing on human emotions, lived experiences, thoughts, work, aspirations and dreams. This broadened the ascending purposes, research complements and methodologies⁴.

Based on these premises, the renewal assumptions of the new history among Western scholars aimed to expand the scope of research and exploration in history, with a focus on the history of mentalities and historical individuality.

This reflects the renewal of comprehensive history, while being rooted in the traditions of the dominant historical approach of the 19th century. It involved moving away from an exclusive emphasis on economic and social aspects, namely the writing of total history, and conducting research in fields of knowledge concerned with historical demography, ethnic history and sociological history, based on historical documents. This traditional approach represents the dual image of the Annales school (modern history)⁵, which sought to benefit from new concepts such as the long durée, which explains the forces that shape history and overcomes semi-static or slow history. Moreover, the present must be seen as the starting point for bridging the gap between history and other sciences, such as anthropology, which focuses on clothing, food, temperament, behaviour and physical techniques. The relationship between history and economic and demographic sciences is often debated, especially given the latter's reliance on short or medium-term perspectives and technical aspects of mathematical, quantitative and computer statistics. It involved moving away from an exclusive emphasis on economic and social aspects, namely the writing of total history, and conducting research in fields of knowledge concerned with historical demography, ethnic history and sociological history, based on historical documents. It involved moving away from an exclusive emphasis on economic and social aspects, namely the writing of total history, and conducting research in fields of knowledge concerned with historical demography, ethnic history and sociological

¹ - Francois Duss: (The Shattered History), p. 96.

² - Jack Lugo: (The New History), p. 33.

³ - Francois Duss: (The Shattered History), p. 62.

⁴ - Christophe Wolff: (The Science of History), 2009-1430, p. 95.

⁵ - See Jack Lugo: (The New History), p. 83.

history, based on historical documents. It involved moving away from an exclusive emphasis on economic and social aspects, i.e. writing total history, and conducting research in fields of knowledge concerned with historical demography, ethnic history and sociological history, based on historical documents³. The relationship between history and economic and demographic sciences is often debated, especially given the latter's reliance on short or medium-term perspectives and technical aspects of mathematical, quantitative and computer statistics¹.

Within this framework, the new history delves into the field of mentalities, in accordance with its foundation of adopting the long *durée*, which is considered the most appropriate timeframe for approaching the mental realm. It thus emphasises the importance of mentalities as the most appropriate means of touching the truth of the presence of history in the present through the mental forms condensed over time. The history of mentalities is the distinctive field of the long *durée*, because it encompasses the developments that people do not perceive².

In this context, mentality is defined as "conceptual forms of thought that are like historical primordial consciousness, distinct from thought itself. They are also emotional inclinations. It is the womb that defines sensation, which can only reach it through pathways receptive to knowledge, naming and mentalities that impose cognitive, creative and emotional preparations on their bearer³.

Thus the history of ideas, opinions, beliefs and imaginings appears as an exploration of the hidden, whether within or without consciousness. It is not judgments or timeless facts, but experimental judgments that govern the family relationships of human groups, with each individual and with nature, life, death and Allah⁴. Philip Ariès considers it to be a part of cultural history, which has weight and significance in the necessity of history, because it studies the evolution of the thought of human groups and uses it as a basis for highlighting the historical significance of certain events and phenomena. This is done by examining the intellectual insights accumulated in the imaginations of these groups, taking into account the element of long *durée* that contributes to the consolidation of customs, traditions and rituals⁵. According to Aries, this history began with the First World War and, through social history, represented the focus of economic history. It helped to establish itself as an independent history by emphasising demographic studies to understand the movements of human communities⁶.

Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch are considered pioneers in the field of the history of ideas or mentalities. Despite their occasional differences, they both adopted an analytical approach in which the history of mentalities is constructed. Febvre focuses on the mentalities of the group (individual/group), while Bloch observes the sensory connections between religious positions

¹ - Mohammed Hanawi: (Historical Writing and the Challenges of New Approaches), Rabat Al-Kitab Magazine, an electronic magazine specialized in books and their issues, January 22, 2009.

² - See Khalid Tahtah: (Historical Writing), Casablanca, Dar Boutqal, 2012, p. 130.

³ - Christophe Wolff: "The Science of History," p. 112.

⁴ - Christophe Wolff: "The Science of History," p. 100.

⁵ - Bloch (M): "The Royal Touch: Sacred Kingship and Scrofula in England and France," New Edition, Paris, Colin, 1961, p. 201.

⁶ - Muhammad Ahbaida: "Writing History," Readings and Interpretations, p. 52.

and social realities, based on the dialectical principle of influence and influenceability. In this way, the mental backgrounds of groups can be explained (rituals and customs are practices that have developed over a long period of time and that combine the categories mentioned as the mental reality of the group)¹.

In addition, Bloch introduced religious rituals and social practices by blending tradition with the present, based on the consideration of worldly sanctity and its heavenly duality, and the collective mental images that have accumulated around them. He interpreted historical events on the basis of a religious mental reservoir accumulated over a long period of time. For example, it would be impossible to understand the Crusades without recognising the religious mentality, i.e. Christian fanaticism and the traditional animosity between Christians and Muslims². However, this approach was strongly rejected and criticised by François Dosse, who argued that the history of mentalities leads to the fragmentation and multiplicity of historical subjects to the point of saturation, resulting in the loss of identity and disintegration with the third generation of historians. As a result, history deviates from its intended goal of creating a comprehensive history that simultaneously encompasses economic, social and cultural structures³.

In the methodological context of following the development of the new history, which aims to address the problematic nature of human existence and reconstruct it by linking the past with the present and projecting into the future, there is an obvious phenomenon of openness and cross-fertilisation between this discipline and anthropology. This contributes to the advancement of traditional historical discourse and opens up possibilities for linking different approaches, sciences and the cultivation of openness to the epistemology of historical knowledge.

Conclusion:

Based on the discussion presented, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The Arabic origin of the term "history" has historical significance and has been influenced by foreign cultures.
- Arabs and Muslims have played a significant role in shaping the concept of history and establishing a lasting tradition of historical writing through documentation, research and analysis of events.
- Approaches to history range from positivist to holistic, culminating in global history, which overlaps with Western methodologies.

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¹ - Febre (L): "The Problem of Unbelief in the 16th Century: The Religion of Rabelais," Ed. Albin Michel, Paris, 1947, p. 302.

² - Mohammed Ahbaida: (Towards a Problematic History), Selected Translations, Al-Qunaitra, Publications of the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, 2004, p. 120.

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