

**THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEMATIC
TERMONOLOGY OF THE UNDERSTANDING AND
WRITING HISTORICAL EVENTS**

الإشكالية الابستمولوجية المصطلحية في فهم وكتابة الإحداث التاريخية

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Abstract

The research, entitled "The Epistemological Problematic of Understanding and Writing Historical Events", is a very important topic in the field of historical academic studies, highlighting a very important issue that many history scholars and teachers are ignorant of the basics. The main problem of this study is clear among the undergraduate, higher studies students, and scholars. The research is divided into two main subjects: the first one is "Fundamental terminology problems in the division of historical eras. In this subject, we define two main academic terms, what are History and Epistemology? In addition that the

basic historical terms .The second subject deals with" Linguistic terminology associated with cognitive problems in the methodology of historical research." In this topic, the most important linguistic terms that are unknown to students and researchers of history as the words era, period, age and century have been of time and phenomenon or those terms associated with historical research methodology such as document, source, reference, manuscript, historical novel, story, tale and literary novel.

Keywords : Epistemology , History , historical terms , methodology of historical , research Linguistic terminology.

الملخص

يدور البحث الموسوم " الاشكالية الاستمولوجية المصطلحية في فهم وكتابة الاحداث التاريخية " وهو موضوع مهم جدا في حقل الدراسات الاكاديمية التاريخية , البحث ينقسم الى محورين اساسيين " إشكاليات مصطلحية أساسية في تقسيم العصور التاريخية " وفيه تناولت اهم المصطلحات التاريخية التي يجهلها طلبة التاريخ في مراحل البكالوريوس والباحثين الاكاديمين , المحور الثاني يتطرق الى "الإشكاليات المصطلحية اللغوية والمفاهيمية المرتبطة بالمعرفة التاريخية " وفي هذا المحور يدرس أهم المصطلحات اللغوية التي يجهلها طلاب وباحثي التاريخ ككلمة عهد وفترة وعصر وقرن وقد من الزمن وظاهرة او تلك المصطلحات المرتبطة بمنهجية البحث التاريخي كالوثيقة والمصدر والمرجع والمخطوط والمذكرات التاريخية والقصة والرواية الأدبية .

الكلمات المفتاحية: استمولوجية , تاريخ , اشكاليات مصطلحية , مفاهيم ومصطلحات تاريخية , مفاهيم منهجية تاريخية .

المدخل

يهدف البحث الى تسليط الاضواء على مسألة في غاية الاهمية اذا العديد من دارسي ومدرسي التاريخ يجهلون أساسيات مصطلحية تتعلق بحقول المعرفة التاريخية . وهذه الإشكاليات نابعة من ضعف المعرفة في تخصصات متعددة من العصور التاريخية , فمثلا يواجه دارس - الطالب العصور الإسلامية الوسطى في الجامعات العراقية مصاعب في ربط حقول التاريخ الإسلامي الوسيط بما يقابلها في التاريخ الأوربي الوسيط فضلا عن فوضوية معلوماتية ناتجة من عدم ربط العصور التاريخية مع بعضها . ومن

Introduction

My research deals with real scientific teasers connected with studying, learning , and writing history of the different academic levels at departments of history of Iraqi's Universities. Therefore, I found these problems through my educational academic tasks at history department when I was repeater and professor 25 years ago.

So that this study concentrates that two main subjects. The first one crystallizes the fundamentals problematic, as the historical terms, among the undertreated students and the students of the higher historical studies and the historical plights of the academic historical researches connected with the acknowledgements of the coincided of historical ages , ancient , medieval , modern ". It dealt with the most important historical terms that are unknown to the students in the stages of bachelor and academic researchers of history. These problems clear that the weakness of knowledge in various disciplines of historical times. For example, the Iraqi scholars and students have difficulties in linking the fields of Islamic history with the intermediary in European history, as well as the media chaos resulting from the failure to link the historical ages with each other. Other examples include the ignorance of linking the events of Islamic history with each other because they belong to the middle ages, especially the history of Islam and the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties and Islamic states in the Levant, etc.

The second subject deliberates that "Linguistic terminology associated with cognitive problems in the methodology of historical research." In this topic, the most important linguistic terms that are unknown to students and researchers of history as the word era, period, age and century have been of time and phenomenon or those terms associated with historical research methodology such as document, source, reference, manuscript, historical notes, story and literary novel.

Problematic Study

The real academic trouble of this research appears with the general understanding of the meaning of history and the concepts .firstly the definition of history and what is the epistemological term for the students and scholars together.

As a lecturer I found this is a real scientific problem 25 years ago, that the students and researchers suffered from misunderstanding these historical terms. Therefore, these real academic problems reflected on the understanding the historical ages and events, so that they produced weakness historical researches.⁽¹⁾

The Main scientific problem starts with understanding the fundamental historical concepts which connected with the methodology of historiography from the 1st stage (B.A), till 4th stage , and continue to the higher studies.

Therefore, first of all we need to define history and epistemology, history, in order to pass the comprehensive problems.

The majority of undergraduate students at departments of history can't recognize the definable simplified historical concepts.

Firstly: - Fundamental Terminology Problems

1- History and Epistemology

First of all we have to define History?

We can give many simplified definitions. **History** is the study of or a record of past events considered together, especially events of a particular period, country, or subject: something that happened or ended a long time ago and is not important now, or a person who is not important now, although they were in the past: At one level this diagram is a definition

⁽¹⁾This is a personal experience since 1991-till now as a repeater and lecturer at department of history college of Arts –Baghdad University. With different levels, undergraduate, higher students and researchers.

that makes perfect sense in separating the past from history and it highlights the fact that everything that historians do is about the past but it is not the actual past. It is an important distinction that is part of the fascination of history.

However, this definition also raises controversy by suggesting that historians can never hope to recover or re-create the past accurately.

At one extreme, there are those who suggest that historians are simply writing about the past and that by adding explanations and organizing the chaotic events of the past into tidy narratives, they are almost making up their own stories.

More traditional historians have argued strongly against this extreme view. They point out that all reputable historians are bound by the evidence they find in the sources and their record of the past and any interpretations they propose must be supported by this evidence. Further, the work of all historians is subject to a process of debate and revision which, it is argued, helps to bring it closer and closer to the actual truth of the past. Indeed, while contestability will always be inherent in history, there is also a good deal of agreement about much that has been written about the past. As the historian the past happened, and we really can, if we are very scrupulous and careful and self-critical, find out how it happened and reach some tenable though always less than final conclusions about what it all meant.⁽²⁾

Secondly we have to know the relation between history and Epistemology.

Epistemology is the study of knowledge. Epistemologists concern themselves with a number of tasks, which we might sort into two categories.

First, we must determine the nature of knowledge; that is, what does it mean to say that someone knows, or fails to know, something? This is a matter of understanding what knowledge is, and how to distinguish between cases in which someone knows something and cases in which someone does not know something. While there is some general agreement about some aspects of this issue, we shall see that this question is much more difficult than one might imagine.

⁽²⁾Carr.E,H, *WhatisHistory*, (London,1961) and see for more information Rouse, A,L *The Use Of History*, (London, 1948).

Second, we must determine the extent of human knowledge; that is, how much do we, or can we, know? How can we use our reason, our senses, the testimony of others, and other resources to acquire knowledge? Are there limits to what we can know? For instance, are some things unknowable? Is it possible that we do not know nearly as much as we think we do? Should we have a legitimate worry about skepticism, the view that we do not or cannot know anything at all?

While this article provides an overview of the important issues, it leaves the most basic questions unanswered; epistemology will continue to be an area of philosophical discussion as long as these questions remain. ⁽³⁾

Any way the suitable understanding of epistemological history is the general knowledge which connected with historical ages and historiography.

Briefly, we can give an abstracted suitable definition of historical is a general or comprehensive knowledge of any historian (trainee or professional) who wants to work or search in history.

2- Historical Terms

When I was a repeater at history department in 1991, I from shortage of historical knowledge, connected with historical terms at the fourth stage. This problem appeared when the undergraduate students want to achieve their proposals, so that they could not read and quoted to the historical texts from the sources.

-A-The Linguistic and Historical Terms

The first obstacle faces the undergraduate students is linguistic historical terms, because they did not used to read and understand the historical texts well, since they were at secondary schools, so that they ignored any linguistics concepts which connected with history, even when they become a students at history departments of Iraqi Universities .

⁽³⁾P. Martinich, Avrum Stroll . Epistemology: .Encyclopedia Britannica, (London , 2016)

-A-1- Era

A period of time of which particular events or stages of development are typical, and in other definitions :- " a period of time marked by distinctive character , events , it is a period of time to which anything belongs or is to be assigned, and third a system of chronologic notation reckoned from a given date, and fourth it is a point of time from which succeeding years are numbered as the beginning of a system chronology, and it is a data or an event forming the beginning of any distinctive period'.⁽⁴⁾

In spite of this word is not obvious for the students at history departments through their materials of texts books, but they couldn't limit it.

For examples:

- 1- Mohammed Era⁽⁵⁾
- 2- The Orthodoxy Caliphs Era⁽⁶⁾
- 3- The Roman Era⁽⁷⁾
- 4- Haron Al-Rashid Era⁽⁸⁾

A-2-Period-:

This word means: - a length of time, a division of time in the day when a subject is taught⁽⁹⁾ Bachelor's students often miss a word because they indicate a general time. For example, when they reduce the rule of Caliph Haroun al-Rashid or reduce the dark period, the fall of Baghdad, which is called by the Iraqi historians and even students??

A-3-Age

⁽⁴⁾Era: - see Zenty, Anower .M, Dictionary of Historical Terms, 1ed (Cairo, 2007). P69.

⁽⁵⁾Al-Ali, Salih Ahmed, The State of Prophet Mohammed Era , 1ed (Baghdad, 1983.

⁽⁶⁾see:- Encyclopedia Of Islam , Shorter , 1ed (London , 1934)- Orthodox Caliiphes.

⁽⁷⁾see:- Cambridge Ancient History , Vol V Roma –Cambridge 1933.

⁽⁸⁾see-AL-Khateeb, Mustafa Abd Al-Kareem, Dictionary of Historical terms , 1ed(Berut 1996)-Harown Al-Rashed.

⁽⁹⁾Period –see-Uthman , Hassan , The Historiography, 5ed , (Cairo, 2000), p 39.

The term AGE often means 'Era' and sometimes it means 'age in English' but in Arabic it overlaps its meaning so that major historians fail to define the time frame of individual ages. Sometimes they refer to the age of the Mamon, meaning the era of the Mamon and often write the Seljuk era and this period includes more than two centuries.⁽¹⁰⁾

A-4-Century

There is no doubt that the word "century" in English means 100 years of time, but in Arabic many non-specialists are ignorant of the meaning of this word for a time. For the students of the history departments in their early stages, they recognize it in the context of the books. None of the teachers devote a distinction between the word "century" and "decade" Lectures. This is what I discovered when I went to pray for my students for 25 years in the history department.⁽¹¹⁾

A-5-Time

The word "time" is a general term. Many students of the Departments of History, but also teachers, fail to identify it because it is also a general term:-" the part of existence that is measured in minutes, days, years, etc., or this process considered as a whole" and the system of those sequential relations that any event has to any other, as past, present or future, indefinite and continuous duration regarded as that in which events succeed on another.⁽¹²⁾

A-6-Timeframe

It means that:-"a period of days, weeks, months, etc. within which an activity is intended to happen"⁽¹³⁾

The time frame is a very important one, which is often overlooked by many teachers. It is important for students who are not graduates and for the specialists of historians who confuse the time frame of each era.

⁽¹⁰⁾Craezer, Klawns, and Varnrdem, Hans Goj, A Dictionary of Islamic World, translated by Kitora , (Berut, 1991), Mamon Era.

⁽¹¹⁾See: Mahdi, Hussam, Glossary of Arabic terms for the preservation of cultural heritage, ICCROM, 31-702008).

⁽¹²⁾See- Acten , Lord , J.E , Lectures on Modern History , (London , 1930).

⁽¹³⁾See: - Crup, G.G History and Historical Research (London, 1886).

B- Historical Political Terminology

There is no doubt that history contains the news of the past and present and this news focuses on the political side of countries and nations. Therefore, political terminology takes a great place in historical studies such as the term King, Kingdom, Caliph, Caliphate, Sultan, Sultanate, Emir and Emirate, and we will give some of these definitions that are not recognized by historians in the early stages.

B-1- Kingdom and king

The kingdom is a political system of a state run by the king and usually inherited from the father to the son. In ancient times, all the authorities are in the hands of the king. He is the executive and legislative authority. He has the land and the people in turn. This concept changed in modern times to some countries such as Britain. ⁽¹⁴⁾

B- 2- Caliphate, Caliph

The Caliphate is a political and religious post that was created after the death of the Prophet Muhammad so that the Caliph would take over the religious and secular matters of Muslims. This term is mentioned in the Al-Rashidi era, but it is not explained in broad terms for specialists in Islamic studies. ⁽¹⁵⁾

B-3- Sultanate, Sultan

The Sultanate, as a political term, appeared to the Seljuks. The two powers enjoyed wide executive, military, administrative and economic powers, but remained within the legitimacy of the Abbasid Caliphate. However, the Seljuk Sultan has a large number of lands and territories. ⁽¹⁶⁾

⁽¹⁴⁾ Al-Khateeb, Dictionary of Historical terms, Kingdom.

⁽¹⁵⁾ AL-Khadrawy , Deep , Dictionary of Islamic Words. 5ed (Damascus , 2012)

Caliphate and see :Arnold, , The Caliphate , (Oxford, 1924).

⁽¹⁶⁾ Al-Khateeb, Dictionary of Historical terms, Sultanate.

B-4- Emirate, Emir

The Emirate as a concept emerged in the Abbasid and Emiric Islamic ages. It has extensive influence in the leadership of the army and administration. These powers are taken from the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad such as the Emirate of Aghlabid in Tunisia. ⁽¹⁷⁾

Secondly: Linguistic Terminology Associated With Cognitive Problems in the Methodology of Historical Research

A-Historical Methodological Terms

The methodological terminology of the science of history from academic scientific concepts is very important for its association with historical thinking and research. I will know the most important terms related to induction such as document, source, interview, manuscript, memory, story, short story, historical novel and literary novel.

A- 1-Document

In general, a document (noun) is a record or the capturing of some event or thing so that the information will not be lost. Usually, a document is written, but a document can also be made with pictures and sound. A document usually adheres to some convention based on similar or previous documents or specified requirements. Examples of documents are sales invoices, wills and deeds, newspaper issues, individual newspaper stories, oral history recordings, executive orders, and product specifications. ⁽¹⁸⁾

A-2-Source

It is the place something comes from or starts at, or the cause of something: someone or something that supplies information.

⁽¹⁷⁾Fawzi, Farouk Omar, and others, Islamic Systems, I, Baghdad, 1985)-Imarah.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Margaret Rouse, what is document, Waltals.com 2005.

and see- Buckland, Mecheal,K , What is Document, Journal of American Society sept 1997, p. 804. and see:- Tawfeeq , Mohammed , The term of Ottoman rule documents , (Cairo, 1943)

In history a source is anything that can be used to investigate the past. It can be an object (artifact) that remains from the past, such as a tool, coin, letter, gravestone, photograph or building. Or it can be an account or interpretation of the past, such as an online biography, a book or film about an individual from the past.

Sources that come from the time being investigated are called primary sources. Sources produced after the time being investigated, such as a textbook, documentary or film, are called secondary sources. Both primary and secondary sources are vital to the study of history.⁽¹⁹⁾

A-3-Manuscripts

A manuscript is essentially the earliest draft of a book. It is the unpublished version of a book submitted to agents and editors for publication consideration. In book publishing, agents and editors will often refer to books in manuscript form, noting that the book is in the earliest stages of preparation and other definition is written by hand or typed manuscript or political documents as a book in manuscript form will be edited. Often it is sent back to the author for to be rewritten.⁽²⁰⁾

A-4-interview

A formal consultation usually to evaluate qualifications (as of a prospective student or employee). A meeting at which information is obtained (as by a reporter, commentator, or pollster) from person, a report or reproduction of information so obtained.⁽²¹⁾

The interview as a source of inspiration for the historian is one of the most important sources, especially for the historian of modern and contemporary history, who must meet with eyewitnesses of events in which they represent political or social neutral or neutral views according to their proximity or after the nature of the historical event.

A-5-Memories

⁽¹⁹⁾ Freeman. E.A, *The Methods of Historical study* (London, 1886): source.

⁽²⁰⁾ Dehal, Racheal. *What is Manuscript*, Media Vocabulary Jan 26 , 2017 for more information about Islamic manuscripts see:- Rosental , Franze, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden , 1952).

⁽²¹⁾ See all the numbers of: - *American Historical Review*, New York 1879.

It is the ability to remember information, experiences; it is a good/bad memory. And the personal memos of politicians and thinkers is one of the most important sources of history, whether it is specialized in medieval or modern history because it sheds light on information of very important and contemporary to the historical event and accordingly I have not personally seen any interest by specialists in teaching the methodology of historical research in the spotlight on the importance of personal notes of the historian and therefore many students who graduated from the departments of history in Iraqi universities are unaware of the importance of writing research and letters. ⁽²²⁾

Officially, the designated revolution that took place in historical theory since the Second World War is that of the so-called 'linguistic turn'. But as the postmodernist era in historical theory begins to fade, one begins to wonder if the real revolution in post-war historical theory actually consisted of the rise of memory studies. As the editor of this collection points out in her introduction, 'Memory is now as familiar a category for historians as politics, war or empire. ⁽²³⁾

History & Memory explore the manifold ways in which the past shapes the present and is shaped by present perceptions. The journal focuses on a wide range of questions relating to the formation of historical consciousness and collective memory, the role of historical memory in modern and premier cultures, and the relationship between historical research and images of the past in different societies and cultures.

History & Memory aim to explore not only official representations of the past in public monuments and commemorations but also the role of oral history and personal narratives, the influence of the new media in shaping historical consciousness, and the renewed relevance of history writing for emerging nations and social conflicts. ⁽²⁴⁾

A-6- Story

Description, either true or imagined, of a connected series of events:

⁽²²⁾ Patrick H. Hutton, 'Memories of trauma: problems of interpretation', *History and Theory*, 43 (2004), 258.B.

⁽²³⁾ *Journal of Indian University* Bloomington, *History and Memory*, 2010 : introduction ,Pp. 1-6,

⁽²⁴⁾ *Op.cit*, P.6.

Will you read/. . Two words History and Story can be confusing to some English learners as both are translated in the same way in some languages such as French and Spanish. However, these two words cannot be used interchangeably since they have different meanings and usages. The main difference between history and story is that history refers to the past whereas story refers to a narrative. ⁽²⁵⁾

A story is a narrative. It narrates how something happened. A story can be a fiction based on imagination or on real facts. Stories can be of various types; some stories describe how something came into being, how a certain civilization started, some stories carry certain advice and moral messages for the listener or reader. Folktales, myths, legends, fables all fall into the category of stories. They may be based on imagination or real incidents that took place in the history. In addition, different genres of literature such as novels, movies, dramas, etc. all consist of a story. A good story or a plot is one of the essential features for the success of literary works. ⁽²⁶⁾

Stories are also an essential part of the culture of any nation. Every culture has their own stories to explain their origins. For example, the story of Romulus and Remus narrates how the city of Rome came into being. Moreover, different religions have different stories, which are unique to them. These stories generally carry morals, religious belief to the religious followers. For example, Jātaka tales in the Buddhist literature illustrates the previous lives of Buddha and each of these stories carry a certain moral advice. In addition, storytelling is one of the oldest forms of entertainment in any culture. Even today, the main purpose of a story is entertainment. ⁽²⁷⁾

A-7-Tale

A story, especially one that might be invented or difficult to believe:

⁽²⁵⁾Abraham and Roger, *Story and History*, Oxford 1981), P.10.

⁽²⁶⁾Op,cit, P. 11.

⁽²⁷⁾Ibid, P. 12.

A narrative that relates the details of some real or imaginary event, incident, or case; story, and it is a literary composition having the form of such a narration.⁽²⁸⁾

A-8-Historical Novel

Historical novel, a novel that has as its setting a period of history and that attempts to convey the spirit, manners, and social conditions of a past age with realistic detail and fidelity (which is in some cases only apparent fidelity) to historical fact. The work may deal with actual historical personages, as does Robert Graves's *I, Claudius* (1934), or it may contain a mixture of fictional and historical characters. It may focus on a single historic event, as does Franz Werfel's *Forty Days of Musa Dagh* (1934), which dramatizes the defense of an Armenian stronghold. More often it attempts to portray a broader view of a past society in which great events are reflected by their impact on the private lives of fictional individuals. Since the appearance of the first historical novel, Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), this type of fiction has remained popular. Though some historical novels, such as Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1865–69), are of the highest artistic quality, many of them are written to mediocre standards. One type of historical novel is the purely escapist costume romance, which, making no pretense to historicity uses a setting in the past to lend credence to improbable characters and adventures.⁽²⁹⁾

A-9-The Literary Novel

The literary novel we all know one when we see it, although deciphering what it is or telling someone else how to spot one is problematic. In a tautological definition, literary works are often defined as those that win literary awards, such as the Booker Prize for Fiction which would rule out any novels written before 1969 being classed as literary. Another definition is that this type of fiction is “writerly”—clearly nonsense since every book is, by definition, writerly—someone wrote it, after all!⁽³⁰⁾

⁽²⁸⁾ Gunnar Thorvaldsen and others, *A Tale of Transcriptions of Historical sources*, Historical Life Course Studies, Volume 2, 1-19.

⁽²⁹⁾ Encyclopedia Britannica, (London , 2016):- Historical novel.

⁽³⁰⁾ Freidman, Jane What Is a Literary Novel? *Sugre Island* March 27, 2012.

Conclusion

After extensive and in-depth reading of the subject of cognitive problematic to understand and write history, I have come to the following conclusions:

- 1- Ignorance of the concepts and time terminology related to palettes and historical texts, especially the vocabulary of time, time, time frame, age, etc. This resulted in the misuse of historical sources
- 2- A simple look at the scientific problems resulting from a lack of understanding of time terms among students who are not graduates in the departments of history and graduate students is due to the lack of interest of the teachers to those concepts intentionally or ignorance and both cases created a weakness in the historical knowledge between students and researchers specializing in the studies of the history.
- 3- There is a temporal overlap between concepts - time - covenant - but in terms of language there is a big difference in that.
- 4- The weakness of the scientific and ignoring these historical terms is due to the weakness of the teaching staff who study the subject of the research method and limit them to the theoretical material, so study the material to pay attention to the introduction of a book or a document or a story or a literary novel and explain its importance to the students which make the scientific lecture for students is useless and difficult to understand and lack of interest in the application of students In writing research and university reports.
- 5- The accurate understanding of the temporal vocabulary associated with the science of history makes it easier to understand the particles and the generalities of both the student and the researcher. This is reflected in the professional academic writings and lack of understanding leads to cognitive problems that result in historical productions that do not represent poor writings that do not conform to a comprehensive.
- 6- The total comprehension of the sources of history, starting with the source and its branches, the primary and secondary sources, through the document, the manuscript, the literary sources, the verbal correlations, the personal interviews and the social

sources, from personal memoirs and literary quizzes, written or spoken, helps the historian to diversify the sources and create a more holistic and unbiased picture of the past. Cognitive Problems of the Professional Historian.

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