

From Historicity to Conceptual Reconstruction: Modernity and the Logic of Translation in Abdallah Laroui's Thought

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Abstract

This study aims to explain the historical-conceptual mechanism through which modernity is formed and transmitted in Abdallah Laroui's thought and to clarify the relationship between historicism, ideological critique, and its conceptual translation in the Arab context. To this end, the study asks how a concept formed within a particular historical context, when transferred to a different context, moves beyond the level of lexical transfer and is reformulated in terms of meaning, temporality, and conceptual relations. Adopting a qualitative, interpretive, and historical-conceptual approach and employing intratextual, extratextual, and intertextual analysis, the study examines three principal works by Laroui: *Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, and *Mafhum al-Tarikh* as its primary analytical corpus. The findings show that modernity in Laroui's intellectual project cannot be regarded as a fixed model independent of history; rather, its intelligibility depends on the historical conditions of production, temporal structures, the historical position of reception, and the surrounding network of concepts. Historicism, by historicizing the concept, creates the possibility of criticizing the universalization of a particular historical experience, while ideological critique reveals processes of decontextualization, naturalization, and abstraction of the concept. The study's innovation lies in introducing an analytical distinction between "conceptual translation" and "conceptual reconstruction": conceptual translation refers to a change in the meaning and function of a concept in a new context, whereas conceptual reconstruction refers to its simultaneous reconfiguration in relation to history, temporality, conceptual relations, and the conditions of the destination context. From this perspective, the article offers a relational and nonlinear framework for understanding the circulation of modernity that moves beyond simple Western/Eastern and tradition/modernity dichotomies.

Keywords: Abdallah Laroui; modernity; historicism; ideological critique; conceptual translation; history of concepts; ḥadātha; Eurocentrism.

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1. Introduction and Problem Statement

The problem of modernity in this study is shifted from the level of essential definition or identification of the components of a fixed model to the examination of the formation, circulation, translation, and historical transformation of a concept across different contexts of transfer. Accordingly, modernity is understood not as a general and homogeneous stage of history, a fixed set of institutions, or a cultural-civilizational model, but as a historical, contested concept dependent on time, place, language, historical experience, and relations of power. This theoretical shift, particularly in the study of societies whose encounter with modern concepts has taken shape within colonialism, asymmetric knowledge transfer, and historical inequality, makes it possible to move beyond reducing the problem to the acceptance or rejection of a “Western model.” Within this framework, the central question is not the degree to which a society conforms to a predetermined model, but how a historical concept enters a different network of semantic, historical, and political relations and how its meaning and function change in this process. From the same perspective, translation is not merely a linguistic operation; it is part of the history of a concept's movement, because in the process of transfer it is not only the word that moves, but also a set of denotations, conceptual relations, epistemic presuppositions, and historical experiences that are re-configured (Ifversen, 2024; Serteser Baştuğ, 2025; Zwischenberger, 2025).

Within this theoretical framework, Abdallah Laroui's thought occupies a central position because of its systematic articulation of history, modernity, ideology, and the Arab-West relationship. *Al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira* formulates the problem of the Arab encounter with the West in connection with historical consciousness and ideological critique; *Mafhum al-Tarikh* elevates history from the level of the narration of events to a conceptual and epistemological problem, including through the distinction among “lafz,” “madhhab,” “mafhum,” and “asl” (words, doctrines, concepts, and principles); and *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib* applies this historical sensitivity at the level of historiography and in relation to documents, narrative, colonialism, and periodization. These three works can therefore be regarded not as isolated texts, but as complementary levels of a single theoretical problem in which the relationship between concept and history, and between history and its forms of representation, is examined simultaneously. This reading is also consistent with Riecken's interpretations of historicism, temporality, and historical epistemology in Laroui's thought (Riecken, 2015, 2016).

One of the fundamental consequences of this approach is the redefinition of the problem of “lateness” through an analysis of temporality and historical heterotemporality. Locating modernity within a linear, homogeneous, and centrist time reduces the difference among societies to a distance from the “present” of a

dominant center and consequently places some societies in the position of the “past.” By contrast, an analysis of heterotemporality makes it possible to understand historical differences in terms of different rhythms, experiences, and temporal positions, rather than as different degrees of distance from a single line of progress. In Riecken's reading of Laroui, this issue is connected to a critique of homogeneous forms of time and to the tension between the fundamental rupture of historical events and the effort to produce continuity and coherence (Riecken, 2019a). Historical difference, therefore, cannot be translated directly into “backwardness”; rather, it must be examined within different regimes of temporality and historicity.

This issue is directly connected to ideological critique and the critique of centrism. If historicism reveals the conditions under which a concept is formed, ideological critique explains how a particular historical form can become detached from the context of its emergence and appear as natural, self-evident, and universal. In this sense, ideology does not mean merely an incorrect political belief; it can also operate at the level of the formulation of history, namely when a particular historical experience is presented as the general form of history and other historical differences are marginalized. Accordingly, the critique of centrism in this study does not mean denying Europe's historical role; rather, it targets the transformation of European experience into an exclusive and universal criterion for measuring the histories of other societies. On this basis, universality must be rethought in a manner that preserves the possibility of comparison and shared concepts without making them dependent upon a single historical center.

Along these lines, the relationship among modernity, modernité, and ḥadātha is examined not as three linguistic forms for a fixed meaning, but as an instance of the circulation and re-signification of a concept across different historical contexts. Riecken's analysis of the translation of modernity formulates this process in relation to history, politics, epistemology, and the “politics of historicity” (Riecken, 2019b). However, the present study does not claim a complete absence of previous scholarship; rather, drawing on this literature, it pursues a narrower and more precise problem: reconstructing the internal mechanism connecting historicism, ideological critique, and conceptual translation in Laroui's understanding of modernity. Accordingly, “conceptual translation” is an analytical category of the present study, not a term that can be unqualifiedly attributed to Laroui himself; hence, a clear methodological distinction is maintained between the thinker's conceptual vocabulary and the analytical apparatus of the present study.

Ultimately, the central claim of the study is that the historical transfer of modernity cannot be separated from its conceptual reformulation. Through a systematic reading of Laroui's three principal works, the study seeks to reconstruct, within a single interpretive architecture, the relationship among word and concept, concept and history, history and ideology, and translation and power. Within this framework, modernity in a non-Western context is not a fixed model to be accepted or rejected, but a historical and changing concept that, as it moves across contexts, can be reconfigured in its meaning, temporality, conceptual relations, and political function. On this basis, the article's thesis as an inference of the present study rather than a direct quotation from Laroui is formulated as follows: historicity is a condition for the critical understanding of modernity; ideological critique reveals the mechanisms through which a concept is detached from history and naturalized; and conceptual translation, as an analytical category, is a process through which the concept enters into relation with history, temporality, the position of reception, and a new conceptual network in the destination context and, when such reconfiguration takes place, leads to conceptual reconstruction.

2. Significance and Necessity of the Study

The theoretical significance of the present study lies in redefining modernity as a historical-conceptual problem; an approach that distinguishes among the history of the concept's formation, the trajectory of its circulation at the transnational scale, and the historical and conceptual conditions of its reception and reconstruction in the destination context. Within this framework, social and political concepts emerge from historical conflicts, linguistic structures, temporal horizons, and specific experiences, and their transfer across contexts does not necessarily preserve their initial meaning; therefore, translation is part of the history of a concept's transformation, not merely a linguistic operation performed after its production (Ifversen, 2024; Serteser Baştuğ, 2025; Zwischenberger, 2025). Accordingly, the analytical focus shifts from asking about the "nature" or fixed model of modernity to examining the historical, conceptual, and power conditions of its circulation and reconstructed transfer. This shift, particularly in the study of non-Western societies, makes it possible to move beyond the "acceptance/rejection" dichotomy concerning the Western model and to focus instead on how the meaning, position, and function of a historical concept change when confronted with a different network of experience, time, conflict, and power. In this context, Laroui's three works *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, and *Mafhum al-Tarikh* make it possible to reconstruct the relationship among historical consciousness, ideological critique, historiography, and the epistemology of the concept; in this respect, the significance of

studying Laroui goes beyond examining one thinker's thought and extends to extracting the mechanism linking history, concept, power, and consciousness.

The second dimension of the study's theoretical significance concerns temporality, heterotemporality, and universality. Fixing modernity within a linear and centrist historical time reduces differences among societies to "lateness" and distance from a dominant standard, whereas a historicist reading of Laroui and Riecken's interpretation of time, heterotemporality, and the critique of centrism makes it possible to analyze historical difference without turning it into essential difference or a civilizational hierarchy (Riecken, 2015, 2016, 2019a). In this view, critiquing universality does not mean denying the possibility of comparison or rejecting Europe's historical experience; rather, it seeks to prevent a particular historical experience from becoming the only legitimate criterion for understanding other histories. Thus, in connection with the literatures on the history of concepts, conceptual translation, and the critique of centrism, the present study treats modernity not as a fixed object but as a historical and mobile concept that, in its circulation among asymmetrical contexts, can undergo reconfiguration in meaning, temporality, conceptual relations, and political function. From this perspective, the article's theoretical value lies in offering a relational reading of the circulation of concepts and explaining the conditions under which the historical transfer of a concept results in its actual reconstruction in the destination context.

3. Literature Review

3.1. The History of Concepts, the Universality of Modernity, and the Critique of Eurocentrism

The first strand of literature relevant to this study comprises works examining the relationship among the history of concepts, modernity, and Eurocentrism. Within this tradition, the central question is whether European history can be taken implicitly, and without being explicitly stated, as the model of world history. Chakrabarty's discussion of "Provincializing Europe" and Dietze's response raise the issue from the level of substantive critique to the methodological level, because the problem is not merely that Europe has been assumed to be excessively important, but how a particular historical experience can become a priori a criterion for understanding other histories (Chakrabarty, 2008; Dietze, 2008).

Along the same lines, Thomassen's critique of the "multiple modernities" paradigm is important. According to what is presented in the article file, merely adding multiple forms to the concept of modernity does not necessarily eliminate Eurocentrism, because the concept of modernity itself may retain its normative position and simply be divided into plural forms (Thomassen, 2012). From this perspective, the issue in the present article is not choosing between "one modernity"

and “multiple modernities,” but examining the conditions under which a historical concept is employed in different contexts.

3.2. The Conceptual History of Modernity in the Arab World

The second strand concerns the conceptual history of modernity in the Arab world. Abu-‘Uksa’s study of the language and genealogy of modernity in nineteenth-century Arabic shows that Arab formulations of modernity cannot be regarded merely as products of Western acceptance or imitation. According to the framework presented in the file, the concept of *tamaddun* emerged in connection with the rediscovery and reorganization of earlier conceptual resources and under conditions of the emergence of the nation-state and confrontation with imperialism; therefore, Arab modernity must be understood from within the temporality of its own historical situation, rather than from outside and according to preconstructed standards (Abu-‘Uksa, 2019).

This orientation is consistent with Hanssen and Weiss’s study of the modern Arab intellectual tradition, which places language, mind, freedom, and time at the center of analysis and shows that the formation of modern Arab thought is intertwined with transformations in vocabulary and the temporal horizons of historical experience (Hanssen & Weiss, 2016). Consequently, “modernity” in the Arab context cannot be treated merely as a lexical equivalent of modernity in English; rather, it must be examined within the history of Arab historical and political self-consciousness and its specific conceptual network.

3.3. Abdallah Laroui, Historicism, and the Problem of Time

The third strand concerns studies devoted specifically to Abdallah Laroui. In his study of history, time, and temporality in a global frame, Riecken treats Laroui’s historicism as more than a method for studying the past and analyzes it as a framework for criticizing the stabilization of the political within “absolute time.” According to this interpretation, Laroui problematizes both the homogeneous time of secular progress and the homogeneous time of divine truth and emphasizes historical heterotemporality and the tension between historical rupture and the attempt to produce continuity (Riecken, 2015).

The importance of this reading for the present article lies in the fact that, in Laroui’s thought, history is not merely a criterion for comparing past and present; it itself becomes a field of contestation over the definition of the present, past, and future. In addition, in her study of “authenticity” and the Moroccan and Arab subject, Hassanzadeh emphasizes that Laroui cannot readily be placed within a universalism lacking sensitivity to historical difference; the distinction between “authenticity” and “particularity” is crucial in this reading (Hassanzadeh, 2024).

Nevertheless, according to the assessment made in the article itself, although this literature has clarified the relationship among history, temporality, and centrism, it has not necessarily reconstructed the precise mechanism linking these components to the conceptual translation of modernity in the same structural form pursued by the present study. This point must be stated cautiously: the present article does not claim a “lack of research” on this relationship; rather, it claims to provide a more integrated reconstruction of the relationship among these components across Laroui's three principal works.

3.4. The Translation of Modernity in Laroui's Thought

The most direct precedent for the present problem is Riecken's study of Modernity, Ḥadātha, and Modernité. This study examines the globalization of the concept of modernity as a process of translation and shows that Laroui's engagement with modernity is connected to the history, politics, and epistemology of translation within the intellectual and political space of the Maghreb. The significance of this approach is that it does not treat modernity, modernité, and ḥadātha as fully equivalent linguistic forms, but situates them within different histories of power, time, and self-understanding (Riecken, 2019b).

As a result, every new formulation concerning Laroui must explicitly position itself in relation to this study. According to the claim of the present text, its contribution lies in shifting the question from “How is modernity translated?” to the narrower and more structural question, “How does conceptual translation operate within the logic of Laroui's historicism and ideological critique?” The importance of this shift is that translation is no longer merely a mediator of conceptual transfer; it becomes a point at which the relationship among history, power, temporality, and meaning is contested.

Table 1. Position of the present article in relation to Riecken (2019b)

Comparison dimension	Riecken (2019b)	Present article
Main issue	Translation and globalization of modernity	Historical-conceptual mechanism of translation and reconstruction
Primary unit of analysis	modernity / modernité / ḥadātha	The concept in relation to history, time, context, and power
Focal point	History of translation and the politics of historicity	Link between historicism, ideological critique, and translation
Concept of “translation”	Historical process of transfer and resignification	Analytical category for identifying change in meaning and function

Concept of “conceptual reconstruction”	—	Article's proposed category for reorganizing the historical-conceptual network
Level of analysis	Circulation of the concept	Conditions and mechanisms of conceptual transformation
Claim of the present article	—	Analytical and operational extension of the concept of translation to the level of reconstructing the conceptual network

3.5. Travelling Concepts and the Translational Turn

The fifth strand of the literature consists of studies that fundamentally examine the movement of concepts across contexts as part of the history of the concepts themselves. Lianeri links the concept of “untranslatables” to the historicity of translation and the temporality of concepts and treats translation as an internal process in conceptual transformation (Lianeri, 2014). Ifversen, in the discussion of “travelling concepts,” likewise emphasizes the intercultural and transnational character of the history of concepts (Ifversen, 2024). Subsequently, Serteser Baştuğ speaks of a “translational turn” in the history of concepts and regards translation, for studies dealing with the temporal and spatial transfer of concepts, as an intrinsic part of the method of analysis (Serteser Baştuğ, 2025).

Zwischenberger likewise places “travelling concepts” within a framework in which concepts, in the process of their circulation and transfer, become the primary object of analysis (Zwischenberger, 2025). van Eekelen, in connecting the history of the social sciences with travelling concepts, emphasizes the capacity of this approach to illuminate the movement of concepts across intellectual traditions and different contexts (van Eekelen, 2022). Although the present article draws on this literature to broaden its methodological horizon, its empirical corpus and central argument remain grounded in Laroui's three works.

4. Research Gap, Innovation, and Theoretical Contribution

The literature review shows that the principal components of the problem including the historicity and temporality of concepts, the critique of centrism, the genealogy of Arab modernity, historicism in Laroui's thought, and the translation process of modernity/modernité/ḥadātha have previously been studied independently or in partially related ways. The research gap in this article therefore does not consist in the absence of existing studies, but in the absence of a coherent reconstruction of the structural relationship among these components within a specific textual corpus. Although previous studies, especially Riecken's analysis

of the relationship among modernity, ḥadātha, and modernité, have shown that modernity, in the process of globalization, circulates through translation and in connection with the politics of historicity, the issue addressed here is not merely a reaffirmation of that proposition. Nor is the contribution of this study exhausted by proposing “conceptual translation” as an independent phenomenon, since the historical and translational circulation of modernity in Laroui's works has already been examined. The distinction of the present article lies at another level: reconstructing the internal mechanism through which the historicity of the concept, the historicization of the conditions of production and reception, structures of temporality, ideological critique, and reconstruction of the destination context jointly affect the quality of conceptual transformation. From this perspective, the article's question shifts from “Is modernity translated?” to “What historical and conceptual conditions determine what kind of reformulation translation produces?” Accordingly, “conceptual reconstruction” is used in the present article not as a concept explicitly named by Laroui, but as an analytical category for explaining a distinct stage in the process of conceptual transformation. At this stage, a mere change in the denotation of the word, or even a change in the function of the concept, is insufficient; rather, the relationship of the concept to temporality, historical experience, adjacent concepts, the position of reception, and the political horizon of the destination context is also reconfigured. The article's principal claim is therefore not the discovery of conceptual translation in Laroui's thought, but the explanation of the conditions and mechanisms under which the circulation of a historical concept can lead to the reconfiguration of its conceptual network in the destination context. This shift moves the article's contribution from rereading one thinker toward an intervention in the broader debate on the historicity, circulation, and transformation of modern concepts in asymmetrical historical contexts.

5. Research Objectives

5.1. General Objective

The general objective of the study is to reconstruct the historical-conceptual mechanism of the formulation and transformation of the concept of modernity in Abdallah Laroui's thought, with particular emphasis on how historicity, historicism, temporality, and ideological critique shape the possibility of translating and reconfiguring the concept in the Arab historical context.

5.2. Specific Objectives

1. To reconstruct the historical formulation of the concept of modernity in Abdallah Laroui's thought and explain how its meaning and function depend on the historical conditions of production, the historical position of reception, and the network of related concepts.

2. To explain the relationship between historicism and ideological critique in Laroui's thought and to analyze how processes of dehistoricization, naturalization, and universalization of a historical experience can emerge in the process of receiving and reproducing a concept.

3. To analyze the role of temporality, heterotemporality, and forms of historical periodization in Laroui's thought and to explain their implications for understanding the concept of lateness and for formulating the conceptual relationship between the West and Arab society.

4. To reconstruct the analytical distinction among lexical transfer, conceptual translation, and conceptual reconfiguration of modernity and to determine the conditions under which changes in the meaning and function of a concept are accompanied by the reconfiguration of its relations with history, temporality, the position of reception, and the conceptual network of the destination context.

6. Research Questions

6.1. Main Research Question

How is the concept of modernity formulated in Abdallah Laroui's thought in relation to historicity, historicism, temporality, and ideological critique, and how do these components explain the possibility of its conceptual translation and reconfiguration in the Arab historical context?

6.2. Sub-questions

1. How is modernity formulated in Laroui's three principal works as a historical and situated concept, and what implications does this historicity have for understanding the meaning and function of the concept in the Arab context?

2. How are historicism and ideological critique in Laroui's thought connected in analyzing the dehistoricization, naturalization, and universalization of a particular historical experience?

3. How do temporality, heterotemporality, and historical periodization in Laroui's thought affect the understanding of lateness and the formulation of the relationship between the West and Arab society?

4. On the basis of a historical-conceptual reading of Laroui's three principal works, what distinction can be reconstructed among lexical transfer, conceptual translation, and conceptual reconfiguration, and under what conditions are changes in the meaning and function of the concept accompanied by a reconfiguration of its historical and conceptual relations?

7. Theoretical Foundations and Conceptual Model of the Study

The theoretical framework of the study formulates modernity not as a static and transhistorical concept but as a historical, relational structure dependent on time, historical experience, semantic conflicts, and relations of power. Accord-

ingly, the analysis is situated at the intersection of the history of concepts, historicity, temporality, and ideological critique and is aligned with contemporary literature on travelling concepts and conceptual translation. The fundamental distinction between “word” and “concept” in Laroui's *Mafhum al-Tarikh* constitutes the point of departure of this approach; therefore, the transfer of a linguistic sign does not necessarily mean the transfer of the same conceptual structure. Within this framework, the problem of modernity is not merely to find a linguistic equivalent for it in Arabic, but to examine its historical position and function within a network of concepts, experiences, and conflicts specific to the Arab context; hence, ḥadātha must be analyzed in relation to different histories of power, temporality, and self-understanding. At the same time, historicism means that not only phenomena but also the ways in which they are observed, classified, and compared are historical and situated; consequently, the concept of “lateness” cannot be treated as an inherent or merely chronological reality, but must be understood within different regimes of historical time and comparative mechanisms. Such an approach prevents historical difference from being converted into a linear hierarchy of “advanced/backward” and, alongside the critique of centrism, shows that turning a historical experience into a universal criterion is itself a historical and power-laden process.

Along these lines, ideological critique and conceptual translation operate as complementary mechanisms of analysis. Ideological critique shows how a particular historical form can become detached from the conditions of its emergence, naturalized, and universalized; hence, distinguishing between the “historical concept” and the “ideological form of the concept” is important for exposing the process of dehistoricization. At the methodological level, “conceptual translation” in this study means the semantic, historical, political, and epistemic reconfiguration of a concept within the conceptual network of the destination context and, unlike lexical substitution or normative indigenization, requires examining the concept's relations with categories such as *turāth*, authenticity, reform, colonialism, the state, and the West. On this basis, the study distinguishes between “conceptual translation” and “conceptual reconstruction”: the former explains a change in the meaning and function of a concept in a new context, whereas the latter encompasses the simultaneous reorganization of the concept's relationship with the network of adjacent concepts, historical experience, temporal structure, and political objectives of the destination context. The result is a processual-relational and non-causal model that begins with the historicity of the concept, proceeds through historicism and the analysis of heterotemporality and then ideological and centrist critique, reaches conceptual translation, and finally arrives at the

conceptual reconstruction of modernity in the Arab context; with the qualification that these relations are not linear and mechanical, but recursive and dialectical. The central claim of the study as a synthetic inference rather than a direct attribution to Laroui is therefore that the historical transfer of a concept is always accompanied by some form of reformulation and that the quality of this reformulation depends on the extent to which the history, temporality, position of reception, and conceptual network of the destination context are reconstructed. Consequently, the fundamental unit of analysis is the relationship among concept, history, time, power, and context, rather than static binaries such as West/East, tradition/modernity, or universalism/relativism.

7. Research Method and Methodology

7.1. Research Method and Methodology

In terms of approach, the present study is qualitative, interpretive, and historical-conceptual, while in terms of data collection and analysis it is documentary and library-based. This choice is consistent with the nature of the research question because the aim is not to measure empirical variables or test statistical relationships, but to reconstruct historically and conceptually how concepts such as modernity, modernité, ḥadātha, historicism, and ideology are formed, transferred, and transformed in Abdallah Laroui's thought. The primary corpus consists of *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, and *Mafhum al-Tarikh: al-Alfaz wa al-Madhahib wa al-Mafahim wa al-Usul*, selected on the basis of the complementarity of their analytical levels: *Mafhum al-Tarikh* provides the epistemological and conceptual foundation for the problem of history and time; *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib* provides the practical form of historiography and the reconstruction of historical experience; and *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira* covers the ideological and political level of the Arab-West encounter. The unit of analysis is the “conceptual proposition in a historical-theoretical text,” and analysis is conducted through intratextual, extratextual, and intertextual reading. In this process, concepts are examined not as isolated words but in relation to historical context, conceptual networks, temporal structures, and power relations, with attention to categories such as conceptual definition and distinction, historical context, interconceptual relations, naturalization and ideological elimination, and changes in and resignification of concepts in the destination context (Ifversen, 2024; Serteser Baştuğ, 2025; Zwischenberger, 2025).

Table 2. Analytical criteria distinguishing lexical transfer, conceptual translation, and conceptual reconstruction

Analytical criterion	Lexical transfer	Conceptual translation	Conceptual reconstruction
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Movement of sign/word	Re- quired	Required or possible	Required or possi- ble
Change in conceptual denotation	No	Yes	Yes
Change in conceptual function	No	Yes	Yes
Reconfiguration of relations with adjacent concepts	No	May occur	Required
Reconfiguration of relation to his- torical experience	No	May occur	Required
Change in temporality structure	No	May occur	Required
Change in position of reception	No	Yes	Yes
Change in political/social horizon	No	May occur	If present, part of re- construction
Final diagnostic condition	Move- ment of the word	Change in meaning/func- tion in a new context	Change in mean- ing/function accompa- nied by reorganization of the historical-con- ceptual network

Data analysis in this study was conducted at four interconnected levels.

Table 3. Operational stages of historical-conceptual analysis

Level of analysis	Guiding ques- tion	Researcher operation	Data/evi- dence used	Output
1. Propo- sition ex- traction	How is this con- cept defined or dis- tinguished in the text?	Identifying conceptual propositions	State- ments re- lated to mo- dernity, his- tory, the West, turāth, ideology, and time	Concep- tual propo- sition
2. Context reconstruc- tion	Under what his- torical and epis- temic conditions was this proposition produced?	Reconstruct- ing the context of production	Work's history, in- tellectual po- sition, his- torical prob- lem, and ad- jacent con- cepts	Histori- cal-epis- temic con- text

3. Inter-textual comparison	What continuity/discontinuity does the concept display across Laroui's works?	Comparing the three works	Corresponding or conflicting passages in the three texts	Change in meaning, function, or position
4. Translation identification	Is the conceptual change caused by entry into a different context?	Examining source/destination differences	Textual evidence and secondary literature	Conceptual translation
5. Reconstruction identification	Has the historical and conceptual network also been reorganized?	Simultaneously examining temporality, context, and conceptual relations	Evidence across multiple texts	Conceptual reconstruction
6. Interpretive control	Is the result merely the researcher's inference?	Confronting supporting and disconfirming evidence	Primary text + secondary literature + researcher interpretation	Interpretive validity

At the first level, conceptual propositions related to modernity, history, time, ideology, the West, *turāth*, and the relationships among them were extracted from the three principal works. The criterion for selecting propositions was not merely the presence of the terms under study, but the role of the proposition in defining, distinguishing, historically explaining, or reconfiguring the meaning of a concept. At the second level, each proposition was examined within the historical and epistemic context in which it was produced in order to identify its temporal conditions, historical problem, the author's position, and its adjacent concepts. At the third level, the relations among propositions and concepts across the three works were compared in order to identify continuity, displacement, changes in meaning, changes in function, and changes in conceptual position. At the fourth level, the term "conceptual translation" was used only when textual evidence indicated a change in the meaning or function of a concept in connection with a different historical context; and the term "conceptual reconstruction" was used only when, in addition to a change in meaning or function, the concept's relation to temporality, historical experience, adjacent concepts, or the political

horizon of the destination context had also been reconfigured. On this basis, the analysis distinguishes among three kinds of propositions: an explicit proposition in the primary text, an interpretation found in the secondary literature, and an analytical inference of the present study. No theoretical inference in the article rests solely on a single piece of evidence; rather, the central propositions are formulated through the juxtaposition of multiple pieces of evidence from different works, intertextual comparison, and assessment against competing interpretations. This procedure makes it possible to preserve the boundary between what Laroui explicitly states and what the present study infers from the body of evidence and to prevent a new analytical concept from being incorrectly attributed to the author.

To control interpretive validity and prevent inferences from drifting away from the evidence, the analytical path moves from textual evidence, through conceptual coding and reconstruction of the historical context, to the identification of interconceptual relations and, ultimately, to an interpretive proposition. Accordingly, three levels are distinguished: explicit propositions in Laroui's works, interpretations presented in the secondary literature, and composite inferences of the present study. "Conceptual translation" and "conceptual reconstruction" are likewise employed as analytical categories of the article and are not treated as explicit terms named by Laroui. Interpretive validity is pursued through textual-theoretical triangulation, intertextual comparison, conceptual control, and attention to both supporting and disconfirming evidence, and direct quotations, where used, are presented on the basis of the original text with precise page references. Consequently, the study does not claim statistical generalization or propose a universal causal law; the scope of inference is limited to the three works examined and the reconstructed historical-conceptual mechanism within them, while the applicability of this framework to other contexts is presented only as an exploratory capacity to be investigated in future comparative research.

Table 4. Levels of proposition attribution and control of interpretive inference

Proposition level	Origin	Mode of expression in the article	Example	Epistemic status
Primary proposition	Laroui's direct text	"Laroui says ..."	Propositions concerning time, history, the West, and ideology	Primary evidence

Secondary interpretation	Other studies	"Riecken interprets ..."	Temporality, centrism, translation	Existing interpretation
Composite inference	Present study	"From the juxtaposition of this evidence, it can be inferred ..."	Conceptual translation, conceptual reconstruction	Inference of the study
Theoretical generalization	Present article	"This finding may ..."	Relational model of concept circulation	Limited and conditional claim

8. Findings and Historical-Conceptual Analysis

8.1. Modernity as a Historical and Situated Concept

Analysis of Abdallah Laroui's three principal works shows that modernity in his intellectual system is not a fixed model independent of historical context, but a historical and situated concept whose meaning and function are formed in relation to the historical conditions of production and reception. In this view, history is not merely an external context for understanding modernity; it is part of its conceptual structure. Accordingly, understanding modernity requires reconstructing the historical conditions in which the concept was formed, received, and employed within a different network of social and political relations.

In *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, the relationship among the historical past, the position of the present, and the process of reconstructing historical knowledge shows that the knowledge of history is always formed within a specific temporal and epistemic position. The proposition "The historical past is a mental world ... the object of history is the past that is present" indicates that, for the historical subject, the past is not a reality completely independent of the present, but an object made meaningful through the position of the present and the process of epistemic reconstruction (Laroui, *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, p. 38). The significance of this proposition for the problem of modernity is that if historical knowledge itself is situated, then the concept of modernity likewise cannot be understood as a transhistorical unit independent of its epistemic conditions.

In *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, this logic persists in the manner of dealing with the past, documents, narrative, and historical periodization. The past, as an object of knowledge, is reconstructed within the historian's historical position; therefore, the relationship between concept and context extends beyond epistemology to the very way history is formulated. In *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, the connection between the beginning of the "new age" in the Arab world and the experience of colonialism likewise shows that the modern condition in the Arab context was formulated under historical conditions different from the European experience.

The combined implication of these pieces of evidence is that the historicity of modernity is not limited to its historical origin but also includes the epistemic, temporal, and political conditions of its reception. Therefore, when modernity appears in a different historical context, it does not necessarily retain the same initial semantic and functional structure. This finding provides the necessary basis for the subsequent analysis of conceptual translation without requiring the claim that Laroui himself formulated the concept of "conceptual translation" under that name.

8.2. Modernity in Laroui's Thought: A Historical and Situated Concept

The first finding and most fundamental conclusion of the analysis is that modernity in Laroui's thought cannot be treated as a "transferable historical object"; that is, it cannot be regarded as a fixed set of institutional, value-based, or cultural elements that can be transferred independently of history from one society to another. In *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, the relationship among the historical past, its representation, and the position of the present shows that the past is not separated from the present position in the process of historical knowledge. Laroui writes: "The historical past is a mental world ... the object of history is the past that is present" (Laroui, *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, p. 38). The importance of this statement for the present argument is that history is not merely a collection of past events; in the process of reconstruction and knowledge, it becomes a conceptual problem.

The same logic appears in *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib* through the connection between past and present. On the basis of the evidence contained in the file, history here is not a closed repository of events but a field through which the past becomes intelligible from the position of the present. Therefore, if history itself has such a relational structure, the concept of modernity likewise cannot be conceived as an object independent of its own history. What gives a concept meaning is not merely its linguistic signifier, but the set of historical, social, and epistemic relations that have formed around it.

This conclusion becomes more explicit in *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira* at the level of the Arab-West encounter. By connecting the beginning of the "new

age” in the Arab world with the experience of colonialism, Laroui writes: “We must assume ... that the modern age in the Arab world begins only with colonial occupation” (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 49). The importance of this evidence for the present analysis is not merely the dating of a period; rather, it shows that the “modernity” of the Arab world was formed within a specific historical relationship and therefore cannot be separated from the experience of colonialism.

From these pieces of evidence, a limited and defensible inference can be drawn: the historicity of modernity includes not only its historical origin but also its conceptual structure, conditions of possibility, and mode of reception. Therefore, the “transfer of modernity” cannot be reduced to the transfer of a ready-made package. This proposition is an inference of the present study from the juxtaposition of evidence, not a direct quotation from Laroui.

Table 5. Matrix of textual evidence for the historicity and situatedness of modernity in Laroui's three works

Work	Concept/theme	Key textual evidence	Theme of evidence	Limited inference
Mafhum al-Tarikh	History and the position of the present	“The historical past is a mental world ... the object of history is the past that is present” (p. 38)	The past is understood in relation to the present position	Historical knowledge is inherently situated
Mafhum al-Tarikh	Historical method	“The method employed is determined temporally and spatially ...” (p. 21)	The method is bounded in a specific time and place	Knowledge/method is not transhistorical
Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib	Method and understanding of the past	“This is what we call criticism and verification ... we merely replace one	A change in the mode of expression is not necessarily a change in the	Transfer of methodological form is not identical to conceptual transformation

		mode of expression with another" (p. 12)	horizon of knowledge	
Al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira	Beginning of the modern condition	"The modern age in the Arab world begins only with colonial occupation" (p. 49)	The Arab modern condition emerges under different historical conditions	Arab modernity has a different historicity
All three works	Concept-history relationship	Juxtaposition of evidence	Concept, method, history, and position are interconnected	Modernity cannot be treated as a fixed package for transfer

8.3. The Rupture between the Concept and the History of its Production: The Source of the Crisis of Transfer

The second finding shows that, from the perspective of the present reading, the central problem in encounters with modern concepts cannot be reduced merely to historical difference among societies; the crisis emerges when a concept is separated from the historical and epistemic conditions of its production and reproduced abstractly in another context. In *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, Laroui states: "The method employed is determined temporally and spatially and surrounded by a series of problems and doubts" (Laroui, *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, p. 21). This proposition emphasizes the situatedness of method and knowledge and provides a basis for understanding that the concept, too, is not produced in a historical vacuum.

In *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, the distinction between a change of method and a change in the horizon of knowledge is likewise highlighted. Laroui writes: "This is what we call criticism and verification, but it changes nothing in our view of the past. We merely replace one mode of expression with another" (Laroui, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, p. 12). This evidence shows that a change in the form of method or expression is not, in itself, equivalent to a change in the historical mode of understanding. Therefore, transferring a method or concept without reconstructing its epistemic context does not necessarily produce a transformation in understanding.

In *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, Laroui also distinguishes between discourse corresponding to reality and ideological discourse: "In the West there is speech that corresponds to reality and other speech that does not (that is, ideology)" (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 57). When this evidence is placed alongside the two preceding pieces of evidence, it leads to an important inference: a concept loses its critical capacity when its relation to the historical, epistemic, and social conditions of its production is severed.

On this basis, the article proposes an analytical chain:

Separation of the concept from history → abstraction of the concept → formal transfer → disruption of historical understanding → possibility of ideological reception

Conversely:

Historicization of the concept → reconstruction of production conditions → analysis of historical difference → rereading of the destination context → possibility of conceptual reconstruction

This chain should be understood as an analytical reconstruction of the present study, not as a formula that Laroui literally presents in his works.

8.4. The Ideologization of the Concept and the Concealment of its Historicity

The third finding clarifies the structural relationship between historicism and ideological critique. In this reading, ideology cannot be reduced merely to an "incorrect political belief." The deeper level of the problem appears when a particular historical form replaces historical reality and presents itself as self-evident, general, and transhistorical. In *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, Laroui writes: "The shaykh therefore thinks that the Orientalist's discourse is the discourse of the whole West, whereas it is the discourse of a group removed from the engine of Western society" (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 55).

In this evidence, the problem is not merely a mistake in attributing a viewpoint; rather, the speaker's social and historical position has been removed from the process of understanding. A segment of Western discourse becomes the "voice of the entire West," and consequently the differences among the social and historical positions of the producers of meaning disappear. From this perspective, ideologization is not merely the result of a false proposition; it can also result from the elimination of the context in which meaning is produced.

Laroui further states: "Because of the backwardness of Arab society, the initial statement, which is supposed to correspond [to reality], becomes itself an ideological distortion" (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 57). The importance of this statement for the present analysis is that even a proposition that

can bear a plausible relation to reality in one historical position may appear in distorted and ideological form when received and reproduced in another field. Ideology, therefore, must also be examined in relation to the transfer and transformation of the context of meaning.

Mafhum al-Tarikh likewise emphasizes the consequence of separating method from historical changes: "When the method is not seen within historical changes, it provides us with a complete study ... but one that is non-historical" (Laroui, Mafhum al-Tarikh, p. 21). Placing this proposition alongside the evidence from al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira shows that the "completeness" of a form of knowledge does not necessarily mean that it is historical. Accordingly, three levels of ideologization can be distinguished in the reconstruction of the present study: historical distortion, essentialism, and conceptual imitation. Yet again, this classification is an analytical formulation of the article and should not be presented as an explicit classification by Laroui.

8.5. The West: A Fixed Model or a Historical Position?

The fourth finding concerns the concept of the "West." In the works under study, the West cannot be regarded merely as a fixed geographical or cultural unit. In al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira, Laroui writes concerning the image of the West constructed by some Arab intellectuals: "The shaykh encounters an outdated Western consciousness in which the contemporary West no longer recognizes itself" (Laroui, al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira, p. 55). Thus, even the image of the "West" can be historical, variable, and subject to becoming detached from its object.

In Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib, this issue becomes clearer at the level of historical periodization. The proposition "The ancient age is the age of Rome, the modern age is the age of France, and between them is the age of the Arabs" (Laroui, Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib, p. 36) is used in the article to demonstrate the political character of some historical divisions. Laroui himself states: "This is, on the surface, a purely pedagogical division, but in reality it conceals a political opinion" (ibid., p. 36). Historical periodization, therefore, is not merely a neutral tool for organizing events; it can carry political formulations concerning societies' place in history.

Laroui's reference to the study of Moroccan history by the French colonial administration and to the effects of "colonial thought" likewise shows that the production of historical knowledge is not separate from power relations (Laroui, Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib, p. 47). The implication of this evidence is that, in Laroui's project, the West is, before being merely a "model," a historical-conceptual position that itself must be historicized. This proposition is also an inference of the present study derived from bringing the evidence together.

This analytical shift has an important consequence. If the West is understood merely as a model, modernity too will be regarded as a pattern to be repeated. But if the West is a historical position, the question shifts toward the historical conditions under which modern concepts, institutions, and forms were formed. Accordingly, the critique of Westernism in this article does not mean rejecting the West, but rejecting its transformation into a transhistorical criterion for evaluating other societies.

8.6. Historicity and the Possibility of Comparison: Beyond Relativism

The fifth finding is of particular theoretical importance: historicizing concepts in Laroui does not necessarily lead to relativism or to the denial of the possibility of shared knowledge. Mafhum al-Tarikh states: “The object of history is the past that is present” and also “History is a field of inference ... and history is a field of human freedom” (Laroui, *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, pp. 38–39). On the basis of this evidence, history is both a field of reconstructing meaning and a field of human action and possibility.

In *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, Laroui likewise asks: “How was the same reconciliation achieved in the West? How many wars and revolutions ... before the West reached what it enjoys today?” (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 149), thereby placing historical difference within a comparative horizon. Thus, provided that comparison does not turn historical difference into a cultural essence, it is not only compatible with historicism but can also be one of its achievements.

At this point, excessive use of the term “situated universalism” should be avoided. According to the article file, this expression belongs to the interpretive literature and to the reconstruction developed by the study, rather than being a conceptual designation that should be attributed directly to Laroui without mediation. Its use is therefore justified only as a tool for explaining the type of universality discussed in the article.

8.7. Turāth: From an Identity Reference to an Object of Historical Knowledge

The sixth finding moves the relationship between tradition/turāth and modernity beyond the simple “preservation or elimination” dichotomy. *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib* states: “Past generations are present among us. Every day our awareness of the need to interrogate the past increases” (Laroui, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, p. 30), and the reconstruction of Moroccan history is subsequently linked to the problem of modernizing society (*ibid.*, p. 25). This evidence shows that re-reading the past in Laroui is not merely a return to the past; it can also be a way of producing a new possibility for understanding society.

In *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, the intellectual's task is likewise linked to the necessity of reconstructing social reality: "The intellectual has no choice but between clinging to a fragmented image of a vanishing reality and ... the elements necessary for rebuilding that broken society" (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 249). Bringing these pieces of evidence together, analytically, shows that the past for Laroui is not a frozen source of identity legitimization, but material for knowledge and critical reconstruction.

Accordingly, the proposition "Modernization does not require the elimination of *turāth*; it requires historicizing *turāth*" can be presented as an inference of the present study. Its significance lies in enabling a move beyond the tradition/modernity dichotomy: the issue is neither the negation of the past nor its sacralization, but a change in the epistemic and historical mode of relating to the past.

8.8. Temporality as a Component of the Structure of Modernity

The seventh finding shows that time in Laroui's project is not merely a neutral container for the occurrence of events. The manner of periodization, the ordering of events, the definition of the "new era," and the placement of societies in different temporal positions themselves participate in the production of meaning and power. In *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, Laroui writes, in explaining the difference between the temporal position of the historian and that of the event: "The record [observes] the events as they occur, analyzes them from its own position ... and anticipates results that are still hidden" (Laroui, *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, p. 46). This proposition indicates a difference between the temporal position of the observer and that of the event.

In *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, the political character of some historical divisions is also explicitly emphasized, and in *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira* Laroui speaks of differences in the pace of change across different social and political fields: "a divergence in the pace between the transformations of culture and the developments of politics among us" (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, pp. 102–103). The totality of this evidence shows that the history of modernity cannot be fixed within a single, uniform temporal line.

On this basis, the temporal difference between Arab society and Europe should not be easily converted into "lateness." "Lateness" becomes a negative distance from a standard only when history is understood as a single linear time. The analysis of historical heterotemporality in the literature related to Laroui shows that different forms of time must be understood in relation to one another rather than treating one as an incomplete version of another (Riecken, 2015, 2019a). The DOI of these two articles is recorded in the reference list of the file.

8.9. Conceptual Translation: Distinguishing Word Transfer from Structural Transfer

The eighth finding relates directly to the central research question: transfer of a word and transfer of a concept are not identical. In *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, Laroui emphasizes the relationship among the document, the evidence, and the narrative: “There is no abstract document; all that exists is a distinct document used by the researcher,” and also, “For him, the evidence is not the narrative, although it is embedded within it” (Laroui, *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, p. 81). These pieces of evidence show that even data that appears direct and raw is situated within interpretive and conceptual relations.

In *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, Laroui establishes a direct relationship between the type of document and the concept of the event: “The type of document changes ... so the concept of the event changes, and consequently criticism and composition change” (Laroui, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, p. 14). This evidence is especially important for the present analysis because it shows that a change in a contextual element can lead to a change in the concept of the event and in the method of criticism and composition.

On the basis of this evidence, the article distinguishes between two levels:

Word transfer: the movement of a linguistic sign between two fields.

Conceptual translation: the change and reconfiguration of the meaning, function, and historical relations of a concept when it enters another field.

This distinction is also consistent with Riecken's analysis of the relationship modernity/modernité/ḥadātha, which examines modernity in the history of its globalization and as a process of translation (Riecken, 2019b).

Table 6. From Lexical Transfer to Conceptual Translation: Indicators for Detecting Changes in Conceptual Structure

Level	Concept status	Expected evidence	Expected evidence	Analytical result
Lexical transfer	The word enters a new field	The word enters a new field	Presence of the word or a new linguistic equivalent	Purely linguistic transfer
Denotational transfer	The meaning of the word changes	The meaning of the word changes	Difference in definition or use	Change in denotation
Functional transfer	The concept is employed for a new problem	The concept is employed for a new problem	Change in the problem for which the concept is used	Conceptual translation

Relational transfer	The relation of the concept to adjacent concepts changes	The relation of the concept to adjacent concepts changes	Change in relation to turāth, the West, colonialism, the state, reform, etc.	Reconfiguration of the conceptual network
Temporal transfer	The position of the concept in a new temporal regime changes	The position of the concept in a new temporal regime changes	Change in the relation among past/present/future or "lateness"	Temporal reconstruction
Historical-political transfer	The concept acquires meaning within a different political horizon	The concept acquires meaning within a different political horizon	Change in the concept's relation to colonialism, power, and political projects	Conceptual reconstruction

8.10. From Conceptual Translation to Conceptual Reconstruction

The ninth finding, derived from the intertextual comparison of the three works, shows that conceptual translation alone is insufficient to explain conceptual transformation. In a new context, the concept does not merely change its denotation; its relation to adjacent concepts, historical experience, temporal structure, and political objectives may also change. In *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, Laroui states: "The historian's question is not transferred mechanically from one period to another or from one society to another," and then says: "The question must be particularized, and in this particularization lies the true craft of the historian" (Laroui, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, p. 24).

These two propositions are fundamental to the analytical model of the study: the historical question, as a product of a specific position, cannot be transferred mechanically. In *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, critical consciousness is likewise described as an "opening onto the possible" (Laroui, *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, p. 254). Through the juxtaposition of this evidence, the article proposes the concept of conceptual reconstruction as an analytical step beyond translation; that is, the reconfiguration of the concept's relationship with the network of concepts, historical experience, temporality, and political objectives of the destination context.

Conceptual reconstruction, therefore, does not mean the invention of a new and independent theory in Laroui's name. It is a term proposed by the present study to explain the operation inferred from bringing together different levels of his works. This limitation is necessary because it prevents an analytical category from being transformed into an inaccurate claim concerning the author's explicit intention.

8.11. Historicism and Ideological Critique: Two Components of a Single Mechanism

The next integrative finding is that historicism and ideological critique cannot be regarded as two completely independent stages. Historicism reveals the historical conditions of the production of meaning; ideological critique examines which part of these conditions has been removed, concealed, or naturalized in the process of reception and reproduction. This relationship can be observed in three key pieces of evidence: the temporal and spatial limitation of method in *Mafhum al-Tarikh*; the transformation of the discourse of a particular group into "the whole West" in *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*; and the necessity of "particularizing the question" in *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*.

On this basis, the article reconstructs a four-level interpretive structure:

Historicization of the concept and determination of its conditions of production;

Revelation of the historical and social position of the receiver;

Ideological critique of the process of eliminating, naturalizing, or distorting historical relations;

Reconstruction of the concept in the historical context of the destination.

This structure shows that historicism is the starting point of analysis but not its endpoint. If historicism is limited merely to describing contexts, its critical capacity remains incomplete; likewise, ideological critique without historical reconstruction of the concept may be reduced to value judgment. The conjunction of the two provides the theoretical foundation necessary for understanding conceptual translation.

7.12. Final Integrative Finding: Translatability Arises from Historicity

The juxtaposition of the findings derived from Laroui's three principal works shows that the historicity of modernity is not merely a historical attribute of the object under study, but the condition of possibility for understanding and circulating it conceptually. Within this framework, when the concept of modernity is separated from the historical context of its production, it becomes exposed to abstraction, naturalization, and universalization; by contrast, historicizing the concept makes it possible to reveal the conditions of production, the structure of temporality, and the historical position of reception. Historicism is therefore treated

in this article not merely as a description of the past, but as a critical operation that returns the concept to its historical and epistemic relations.

At the same level, ideological critique and the analysis of temporality are not two independent and separate components. Ideological critique shows how eliminating the historical context and social position of the production of meaning can present a particular historical form as natural and general; the analysis of temporality, in turn, reveals that this universalization often occurs by placing different historical experiences within a single linear and hierarchical time. From this perspective, the concept of “lateness” is not a neutral chronological fact, but the result of a form of historical and comparative organization that can transform difference among contexts into distance from a dominant standard.

On the basis of these two levels, the article argues that the transfer of modernity cannot be explained by the transfer of a word or even by preserving the concept's initial meaning. When the concept enters a different historical context, not only its denotation and function but also its relations with adjacent concepts, temporality, historical experience, and political horizon may change. Accordingly, the article makes an analytical distinction between “conceptual translation” and “conceptual reconstruction.” Conceptual translation refers to the transformation of the meaning and function of the concept in a new context; conceptual reconstruction is the stage at which this transformation is accompanied by a reconfiguration of the network of historical and conceptual relations of the concept.

From this set of findings, a limited but distinctive theoretical conclusion can be drawn: the capacity of modernity to circulate does not arise from its ahistoricity, but from its historicity. The more the historical conditions of production, temporality, position of reception, and conceptual network of the destination context are reconstructed in the process of transfer, the more translation moves away from formal transfer and acquires capacity for conceptual reconfiguration. Therefore, the fundamental unit of analysis in this study is not “the concept in the source” and “the concept in the destination” as two fixed units, but the changing relationship among concept, history, time, context, and power.

On this basis, the article's principal contribution is not the presentation of a causal model or universal law concerning the circulation of modernity, but the proposal of an interpretive framework for identifying and explaining the conditions under which a historical concept undergoes translation and reconfiguration in the process of transfer across asymmetrical contexts.

8.13. Analytical Conditions of Conceptual Reconstruction

Based on the intertextual comparison of Laroui's three principal works, conceptual reconstruction can be regarded as an analytical process in which conceptual change is not limited to lexical displacement or change in denotation. To

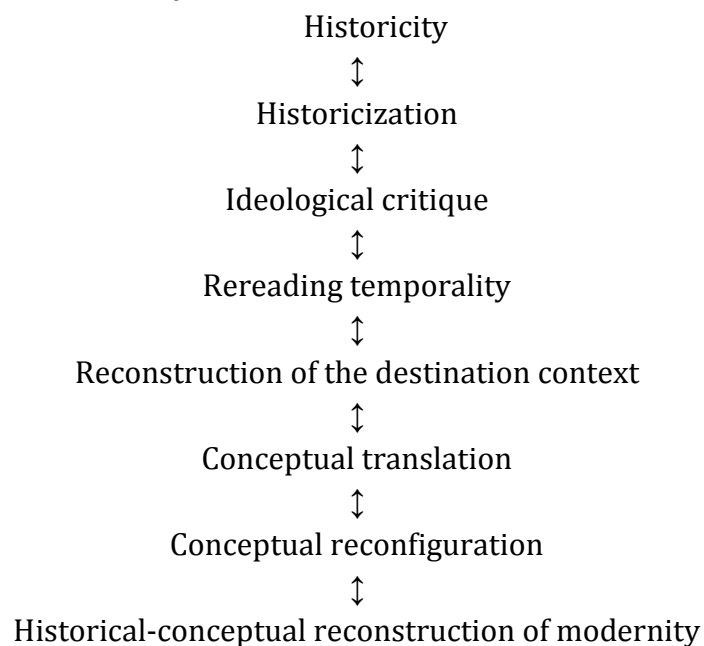
identify conceptual reconstruction, at least four dimensions must be considered simultaneously: the historical conditions of the concept's production, its structure of temporality, the position and conditions of reception, and the network of related concepts in the destination context. The significance of these four dimensions is that they transform the concept from an isolated linguistic unit into a relational position.

Within this framework, a change in the word or even an increase in the use of a term in destination discourse does not in itself indicate conceptual reconstruction. Reconstruction can be claimed only when the entry of the concept into a new context is accompanied by a discernible change in its historical, temporal, or conceptual relations. On this basis, conceptual translation can be regarded as the first level of conceptual transformation and conceptual reconstruction as the deeper level of its networked reorganization. This distinction enables the article to establish a clear difference between the "movement of a concept" and the "change in the semantic and historical structure of the concept."

In Laroui's works, this distinction can be observed in the connection among the concept of history, the mode of historiography, the critique of ideological discourse, and the encounter with the West. Thus, modernity in the Arab context does not merely encounter a new linguistic equivalent; rather, it is situated within different relations among history, colonialism, *turāth*, time, the West, and historical consciousness. From this perspective, conceptual reconstruction is not a direct consequence of translation, but the outcome of reconfiguring the concept's relationship with the historical and conceptual structure of the destination context.

8.14. Final Model of the Findings

The outcome of the analysis takes the form of a relational-interpretive model:



The final model of the study is an interpretive and relational framework showing how historicity, historicization, ideological critique, temporality, reconstruction of the destination context, conceptual translation, and conceptual reconfiguration are connected. These elements should not be understood as fixed and unidirectional stages; each can intervene in the reinterpretation of the others. For example, reconstructing the destination context can alter the researcher's understanding of the historical meaning of the concept in the source context, while temporal analysis can simultaneously reconfigure the interpretation of the conditions of production and the conditions of reception. The present model is therefore neither a causal model nor a template for empirical generalization, but a tool for tracing the conceptual and historical relations through which a concept changes as it circulates among asymmetrical contexts.

Table 7. Final Analytical Model: Conditions and Consequences of Conceptual Reconstruction of Modernity

Component	Analytical function	Central question	Implication
Historicity	Revealing the concept's dependence on history	Where and under what conditions was the concept formed?	Prevention of transhistoricalization
Historicization	Returning the concept to its conditions of production	What historical problem gave the concept its meaning?	Revival of the production context
Temporality	Analyzing different temporal regimes	Within what temporal structure does the concept operate?	Critique of the concept of lateness
Ideological critique	Revealing contextual elimination/naturalization	How does the particular appear general?	Exposure of universalization
Destination context	Analyzing conditions of reception	In what new field has the concept entered?	Identification of historical difference
Conceptual translation	Explaining change in meaning and function	How has the concept changed in the destination?	Resignification
Conceptual reconfiguration	Analyzing change in the relational network	How have the concept's relations with adjacent concepts changed?	Reconstruction of the concept

Result	Relational synthesis	How does the concept change in circulation?	Historical-conceptual model of modernity
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9. Conclusion

The present study, with the aim of historically and conceptually reconstructing the mechanism of translation and resignification of modernity in Abdallah Laroui's thought, examined the relationship among historicism, ideological critique, and the circulation of concepts in the three works *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, and *Mafhum al-Tarikh*. The central research question focused on how a historical concept, in the process of transfer from a Western to an Arab non-Western context, is reconstructed within a new network of history, time, experience, and power without being reduced to a fixed and transhistorical model. The findings showed that the answer cannot be sought in a linear relationship between "source" and "destination" or in the simple "acceptance" versus "rejection" dichotomy of modernity; rather, it must be situated within a recursive relationship among the historicity of the concept, the temporality of contexts, ideological critique, and conceptual reconfiguration.

The first fundamental conclusion is that modernity, in this reconstruction, is not a fixed and transferable historical object, but a concept whose intelligibility depends on the historical conditions of its emergence, its accompanying conceptual structures, and the manner of its reception. From this perspective, history is not merely the background of modernity but part of its conceptual structure. In *Mafhum al-Tarikh*, history appears as a process for reconstructing knowledge of the past; in *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, this logic is practically manifested in dealing with documents, narrative, and periodization; and in *al-Ideology al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, attention is given to the political and ideological consequences of the rupture between concept and historical context. Thus, the three works together make it possible to analyze historicity not as a secondary property but as a condition for understanding the concept.

The second conclusion concerns historicism. According to the present analysis, historicism in Laroui's thought should not be treated merely as a philosophical position concerning the importance of the past; it should be understood as a critical method for preventing concepts from becoming transhistorical. Such an approach simultaneously criticizes two errors: first, placing different societies within one linear and identical time, which ultimately turns historical difference into "lateness"; second, transforming historical difference into essential and unchangeable difference. Within this framework, historicism does not eliminate the

possibility of comparison; it changes the conditions of comparison: comparison must occur within specific histories, different temporal positions, and relations of power, rather than on the basis of a predetermined historical center. This conclusion is consistent with Riecken's reading of the relationship among history, temporality, and the critique of centrism in Laroui's works (Riecken, 2015, 2016).

The third conclusion returns to ideological critique. The analysis of the three works showed that ideology in the framework under study is not limited to the content of a political belief; it can emerge in the process by which a concept is separated from the historical conditions and the position in which meaning is produced. When a particular historical experience is detached from its context and presented as natural, general, and transhistorical, historical difference is erased and the transformation of a particular form into a general criterion becomes possible. From this perspective, ideological critique and historicism are not two separate operations: historicism reveals the context, while ideological critique interrogates how that context is concealed or naturalized. This connection constitutes one of the article's most important interpretive achievements.

The fourth conclusion concerns the relationship between the West and modernity. On the basis of the research evidence, the West in Laroui's intellectual system is neither a fixed model nor a homogeneous cultural Other, but a historical position that itself must be analyzed within the historical process. From this perspective, the critique of Eurocentrism does not mean denying Europe's historical experience; it means criticizing the transformation of that experience into the exclusive and natural criterion of general history. This distinction allows the article to distance itself from a dichotomy in which one side is imitation of the West and the other its total rejection. Consequently, the object of analysis shifts to the conditions under which modern concepts were formed and subsequently employed in other contexts. This conclusion aligns with Riecken's critique of centrism and relational difference and with the existing literature on "Provincializing Europe" (Riecken, 2016; Chakrabarty, 2008; Dietze, 2008).

The fifth conclusion moves the relationship between tradition and modernity from a value opposition to a historical relation. In this reading, *turāth* is neither a frozen repository for the stabilization of identity nor an inherent obstacle to modernization; it is a historical object of knowledge and critique. In this sense, the problem of becoming modern is not the elimination of the past, but a change in the mode of relating to it: from sacralization and essentialism to historicization and critical rereading. This conclusion is also compatible with the article's emphasis on the distinction between "authenticity" and "particularity" in Hassanzadeh's study (Hassanzadeh, 2024).

Nevertheless, the article's most important theoretical contribution lies in the distinction between conceptual translation and conceptual reconstruction. In the analytical meaning employed by the article, conceptual translation refers to a change in the meaning and function of the concept when it enters a new historical-linguistic context; conceptual reconstruction goes a step further and also includes the reconfiguration of the concept's relationship with adjacent concepts, historical experience, temporality, and the political objectives of the destination context. On the basis of the evidence in *Mujmal Tarikh al-Maghrib*, even the historical question cannot be transferred mechanically from one context to another; the question must be "particularized" in accordance with the historical position. Therefore, changing a word or even the diffusion of a concept in public discourse does not, by itself, amount to conceptual reconstruction.

Within this framework, the relationship modernity/modernité/ḥadātha must likewise be understood beyond linguistic equivalence. Riecken's study has already shown that the globalization of modernity can be examined as a process of translation and in connection with the politics of historicity (Riecken, 2019b). The present finding extends this argument at a more limited level and shows that, for translation to occur as an epistemic process, the history of the concept's production, temporality, the position of reception, and the conceptual relations of the destination context must enter the analysis simultaneously. Thus, conceptual translation is not a secondary stage after the production of the concept, but part of the history of the concept's movement and reconstruction itself; a result that is also consistent with recent studies on travelling concepts and the translational turn (Ifversen, 2024; Serteser Baştuğ, 2025; Zwischenberger, 2025).

From this set of findings, the study's central theoretical proposition follows: modernity in Laroui's thought is a historical concept that acquires the capacity to circulate among contexts not by eliminating history, but through reconsideration of the history of production, temporality, conditions of reception, and relations of power; historicism makes the historicization of the concept possible, ideological critique reveals the process of naturalization and universalization of a particular historical experience, and conceptual translation, in the analytical sense of this study, makes possible the reformulation of the concept in a different historical field.

This proposition should not be treated as an explicit theory formulated by Laroui using these exact terms; rather, it results from combining and reconstructing evidence from the three works. Accordingly, the contribution of the study is not the discovery of "conceptual translation" as an unknown concept in the literature on Laroui, but the explanation of the structural relationship among historiciza-

tion, ideological critique, temporality, and conceptual reconfiguration. This limitation is important because it allows the article to preserve its independent theoretical contribution while avoiding over-attribution to the primary text.

10. Limitations and Research Suggestions

This study is a theoretical-interpretive reconstruction of a specific intellectual corpus, and its results should be interpreted within these limits. Restricting the corpus to Laroui's three principal works means that the study cannot cover all of his intellectual developments across different periods. Therefore, the present findings cannot be treated as a comprehensive description of all of Laroui's works and stages of intellectual development.

On this basis, future studies may follow three principal directions. First, the corpus of Laroui's works could be expanded and a diachronic study undertaken to examine the transformation of the concepts of history, modernity, *turāth*, and the West across different stages of his intellectual project. Second, the present framework could be compared with the intellectual projects of other thinkers in the Arab world and in other non-Western contexts in order to assess its scope and comparability. Third, the study could move from the level of theoretical texts to the level of the social reception and use of concepts, particularly by examining the historical trajectories of *ḥadātha/modernité/modernity* in universities, the media, politics, and social institutions.

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