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# THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF TURKIYE IN MALAYSIA

## Ottoman History in Malaysian Secondary History Textbooks (1989-2022)

*Ahmad Murad Merican<sup>1</sup>*  
*Tayfun Akgun<sup>2</sup>*

### **Abstract**

*This article explores the teaching of Ottoman history and the image of the Ottomans through a close and critical reading of Malaysian secondary history textbooks used between 1989 and 2022. It argues that Malaysian secondary history textbooks focus mainly on the political and military aspects of sixteenth-century Ottoman history. They do not, consciously or subconsciously, make detailed reference to political and socio-economic turning points in nineteenth-century Ottoman history. Sejarah Tingkatan 2 (History: Form 2), one of the history textbooks examined in the article, exceptionally discusses the impact of Ottoman pan-Islamism and Turkish nationalism on the political and religious thought of the Malays. Nonetheless, history textbooks published after the 2000s have not touched on these important issues. In history textbooks, the Ottoman Empire is regarded as one of the significant states of the Islamic world; therefore, Ottoman history is analyzed within the framework of Islamic history and Islamic civilization. The portrayal of Ottomans is positive and favourable. There are no distortions, biases, or stereotypes concerning Ottoman history in Malaysian secondary history textbooks.*

**Keywords:** Malaysia, Ottoman history, the image of the Ottomans, history textbooks, history education.

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## Introduction

The political, military, and intellectual relations between the Ottoman State and Muslim polities in the Malay world began in the early sixteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The Sultanate of Aceh was the first Malay state to appeal to the Ottomans for military assistance to prevent Portuguese activities in the Strait of Malacca in the sixteenth century. Ottomans responded positively to the Acehnese request.<sup>4</sup> However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was a long pause in Ottoman-Malay relations in general and Ottoman-Aceh relations in particular. The middle of the nineteenth century witnessed the re-establishment of relations between the two regions. The Sultanate of Aceh under increasing Dutch pressure re-established diplomatic and military relationships with its old and powerful ally, the Ottoman Empire.<sup>5</sup> The former asked for military and diplomatic help from the latter. However, the Ottomans could not completely meet the demands of Aceh because of their geopolitical realities, financial problems, and the pressure of Western powers.<sup>6</sup> At least, the diplomatic strategies of the Acehnese, specifically their emphasis on the idea of Pan-Islamic solidarity and historical ties established between the two powers, were influential in persuading some Ottoman statesmen to advocate the Acehnese cause.<sup>7</sup>

Like the Aceh Sultanate, the Sultanates of Riau and Jambi requested diplomatic and military help from the Ottoman Empire to deal with the Dutch pressure from the nineteenth century onwards.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth-Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," *The Journal of Southeast Asian History* 10/3, (1969): 395-414.

<sup>4</sup> İsmail Hakkı Göksoy, "Ottoman-Aceh Relations as documented in Turkish Sources," in *Mapping the Acehnese Past*, eds. R. M. Feener, P. Daly and A. Reid (Leiden: KITLV, 2011), 69-79.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Reid, "Nineteenth Century Pan-Islamism in Indonesia and Malaysia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no. 2 (1967): 267-283.

<sup>6</sup> İsmail Hakkı Göksoy, "Ottoman-Aceh Relations as documented in Turkish Sources," 92.

<sup>7</sup> İ. H. Kadı, A. C. S. Peacock and A. T. Gallop, "Writing History: The Acehnese Embassy to Istanbul, 1849-52," in *Mapping the Acehnese Past*, eds. R. M. Feener, P. Daly and A. Reid (Leiden, KITLV, 2011), 164.

<sup>8</sup> B. W. Andaya, "From Rum to Tokyo: The Search for Anticolonial Allies by the Rulers of Riau, 1899-1914," *Indonesia*, 24 (1977): 123-56 and Mehmet Özey,

The Ottomans could not correspond to the demands of Riau and Jambi. In addition to the Ottoman's intensive relationship with the Muslim states in Sumatra, they also had connections with Muslim states in the Malay Peninsula in the nineteenth century. Among the well-known examples of interactions between the Ottomans and the Malay Peninsula are the 1824 letter of Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Shah of Kedah (r. 1797-1843) to the Ottoman Empire and the visit of Sultan Abu Bakar of Johor (r. 1862-1895) to Istanbul in 1895.<sup>9</sup> In brief, there had been enduring and cordial connections between the Ottomans and Muslim polities of the Malay world from the sixteenth century onwards through envoys, dispatches, royal visits, and correspondences.

The friendly, long-standing, and vibrant relationships between the Ottomans and Muslim polities in the Malay world stimulate to be asked the following questions: How has Ottoman history been taught in Malaysian secondary schools? How much coverage have Malaysian secondary history textbooks given to Ottoman history? To what extent have they touched upon the relationship between Ottomans and Malays? Which facets of Ottoman history have they focused on? How were Ottomans portrayed in the textbooks? Have there been factual errors, misrepresentations, stereotypes, and biases in the education of Ottoman history in the textbooks?

There is a corpus of studies on the teaching of Ottoman history and the image of Ottomans in the different parts of the world in the existing literature.<sup>10</sup> However, the treatment of Ottoman history in

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"Notes on the Ottoman-Malay World Relations," in *Routledge Handbook of Islam in Southeast Asia*, ed. Khairuddin Aljunied, (London and New York: Routledge, 2022), 88-112.

<sup>9</sup> İsmail Hakkı Kadı, "The Ottomans and Southeast Asia Prior to the Hamidian Era: A Critique of Colonial Perceptions of Ottoman-Southeast Asian Interaction," in *From Anatolia to Aceh: Ottomans, Turks and Southeast Asia*, eds. A. C. S. Peacock and A. T. Gallop, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 155-159 and A. Rahman Tang Abdullah, "Sultan Abu Bakar's Foreign Guests and Travels Abroad, 1860s-1895: Fact and Fiction in Early Malay Historical Accounts," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 84, no.1 (2011): 11-12.

<sup>10</sup> For some examples of the literature, see Dino Mujadžević, "The Image of Ottomans in Croatian Historiography: Changing Narratives in Elementary School Textbooks in Croatia -1980s to 2000s," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 34, no.3 (2014): 293-302; Ahmet Alibašić, "Images of the Ottomans in History Textbooks in

Southeast Asian countries is an under-developed topic in both Malaysia and Turkey. Zaitun bte Sidin first analyzed the teaching of the history of Middle Eastern, Asian, and Western countries in Malaysian lower history textbooks used before 1989.<sup>11</sup> However, her study did not cover the teaching of Ottoman history in Malaysian secondary history textbooks. Alaeddin Tekin has examined how Ottoman history was taught in Indonesian history textbooks.<sup>12</sup> Tayfun Akgün has explored the perception of Ottoman Turks in the Malaysian history textbook used in 2017.<sup>13</sup> The scope of the present article is beyond one history textbook. It deals with the teaching of Ottoman history and the image of the Ottomans in Malaysian secondary textbooks utilized between 1989 and 2022. Thus, it attempts to significantly contribute to the existing literature by exploring the teaching of Ottoman history in Malaysia, which is a neglected issue.

The article provides the impetus for the teaching of not merely Ottoman history but also the history of other nations in history textbooks because they have a vital role in affecting and shaping the perceptions and attitudes of students toward foreign countries. The critical and comprehensive debate on how the history of foreign countries is treated in history textbooks hopefully paves the way for the unbiased, objective, and inclusive teaching of the histories of foreign countries.

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Bosnia and Herzegovina,” *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 17 (2007): 103-37; Ahmet Şimşek and Nigar M. Cengiz, “Rusya Tarih Ders Kitaplarında Türk-Osmanlı İmgesi [Images of Turk-Ottoman in Russian History Textbook],” *Turkish History Education Journal* 4(2), (2015): 225-258 and Ahmet Şimşek and Ee Young Cou, “Güney Kore Tarih Ders Kitaplarında Türk ve Osmanlı Algıları [Turkish and Ottoman Perceptions in South Korean History Textbooks],” *Bilgi* 89 (2019): 143-70.

<sup>11</sup> Zaitun bte Sidin, “The Treatment of Foreign Countries in Malaysian Lower Secondary History Textbooks,” Ph.D. thesis, the University of Iowa, 1987.

<sup>12</sup> Alaeddin Tekin, “Endonezya Lise Ders Kitaplarında Türk İmajı,” in *Dünyada Türk İmajı: Tarih Ders Kitaplarındaki Durum*, ed. Ahmet Şimşek (Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2018), 143-161.

<sup>13</sup> Tayfun Akgün “Malezya Lise Tarih Kitaplarında Türk İmgesi [Turkish Image in Malaysian Secondary History Textbooks],” in *Dünyada Türk İmajı: Tarih Ders Kitaplarındaki Durum*, ed. Ahmet Şimşek (Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2018), 391-404.



## Sources and Methodology

The major primary sources of this study are history textbooks used in Malaysian secondary schools between 1989 and 2022. These are: (1) Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid, Khoo Kay Kim, Muhd. Yusof bin Ibrahim and D. S. Ranjit Singh, *Sejarah Tingkatan 2* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1989); (2) Khasnor Johan, Mahayudin Haji Yahaya, Muzaffar Tate, Qasim Ahmad and Rohana Zubir, *Sejarah Peradabaan Dunia Tingkatan 4* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1991); (3) Nik Hassan Shuhaimi bin Nik Abdul Rahman, Muhd. Yusof bin Ibrahim, Muhammad Bukhari bin Ahmad and Rosnanaini binti Sulaiman, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2002); and (4) Mohd. bin Samsudin, Azharudin bin Mohamed Dali and Sharifah Afidah binti Syed Hamid, *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2016).

There are common traits of all history textbooks examined in the article. Firstly, they were published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (The National Language and Literary Agency) on behalf of Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (Ministry of Education Malaysia). Secondly, they have been written by a panel of authors appointed by Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. Their authors are predominantly well-known local historians such as Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid and Khoo Kay Kim. Finally, they have been compulsory teaching materials in Malaysian secondary schools between 1989 and 2002.

*Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, *Sejarah Peradabaan Dunia Tingkatan 4*, and *Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks* were written based on the principles of *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (KBSM, the Secondary School Integrated Curriculum). KBSM began to be implemented in 1989 when history became a compulsory subject in Malaysian secondary schools.<sup>14</sup> On the contrary, *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* merely follows the foundations of *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah* (KSSM, the Secondary School Standard Curriculum), which was implemented in 2017. It is still a contemporary history textbook in Malaysian secondary schools.

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<sup>14</sup> Sharipah Aini Jaafar and Arba'iyah Mohd. Noor, "Pelaksanaan Pengejaran dan Pembelajaran Sejarah di Sekolah-Sekolah di Malaysia, 1957-1989," *Sejarah* 35, no. 2 (2016): 45.

Data for this study is primarily obtained from the four Malaysian secondary history textbooks which allocate space to the subject of Ottoman history. In the textbooks, words, sentences, illustrations, and maps concerning the Ottoman Empire are studied in a descriptive, interpretative, and comprehensive manner. Relevant quotations and passages to Ottoman history are extracted from the textbooks to examine and demonstrate latent and manifest messages conveyed. Moreover, the accounts of the textbooks on Ottoman history are compared with known authoritative and scholarly studies to determine the accuracy of the narrative in the textbooks.

### **Ottoman History in the History Textbooks (1989-2020)**

#### ***Sejarah Tingkatan 2: Nineteenth-Century Ottoman History and Turkish Nationalism***

*Sejarah Tingkatan 2* (History: Form 2) was one of the history textbooks that had a chapter on Ottoman history. It was used between 1989 and the 2000s.<sup>15</sup> It consists of the political, administrative, and socio-economic aspects of Malaysian history from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. Ottoman history is covered in the thirteenth chapter of the textbook, entitled “Boisterous Winds From Outside” (*Angin Kencang Dari Luar*). The chapter provides relatively detailed information on the influences of Ottoman pan-Islamism and Turkish nationalism on the political and religious thought of the Malays in the twentieth century.

In the chapter, the terms *Empayar Turki* (the Turkish Empire) and *Empayar Uthmaniah* (the Ottoman Empire) refer interchangeably to the Ottomans. Additionally, the term *Turki* (Turkey) generally denotes the Ottoman Empire rather than the Republic of Turkey. When the textbook mentions various developments in the Republic of Turkey, it uses the term *Turki Muda* (Young Turks). The term *Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyyah* (the Ottoman-Turkish State), which appeared in the subsequent history textbooks, is not employed in *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*. In Malaysia,

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<sup>15</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid, Khoo Kay Kim, Muhd. Yusof bin Ibrahim and D. S. Ranjit Singh, *Sejarah Tingkatan 2* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1995). This study uses the ninth print of the book.

some scholars prefer to use the local term *kerajaan* (state) for Islamic states instead of the term empire (*empayar*). They consider that the term empire has a negative connotation. However, the authors of the textbook favoured employing the terms *Empayar Uthmaniyah* and *Empayar Turki*.

The chapter first touches on anti-colonial developments and the emergence of national spirit in Asian countries, including Malaysia, in the early twentieth century. It also mentions that anti-colonial and national developments in Japan and Turkey affected the Malay Peninsula.

The subsection of the chapter, “Turkish Influence (*Pengaruh Turki*)”, gives the following information on the image of the Ottoman sultans in the Islamic countries in general and Malaya in particular:

After Japan, the Turkish influence is more clearly visible in Malaya. The Sultan of Turkey was indeed considered the Caliph in the Islamic world. Therefore, Turkish leaders were highly respected. In our country, the influence might be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century. At that time, the Pan-Islamic movement was expanding its influence throughout all Islamic countries. They called on Muslims to unite under the shadow of the Turkish Empire, also known as the Ottoman Empire. The empire was established in 1300 by a Muslim warrior named Usman.<sup>16</sup>

The textbook emphasizes two important points. The first point is that Muslims in Islamic countries, including Malay Muslims, looked up to the Ottoman sultans as caliphs. The second point is that the impact of Pan-Islamism on the religious and political thought of Malays began in the late nineteenth century. While these two points are plausible, information about the establishment of the Ottoman Empire in 1300 was inaccurate. The general histories of the Ottoman Empire accept the year 1299 as the establishment of the empire. That year, however, is still contested.

The sub-section proceeds to how Pan-Islamism was introduced and influenced the political and intellectual spheres of the Malay

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<sup>16</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, 181-182.

Peninsula. It points out that Shaykh Haji Wan Ahmad bin Haji Wan Muhammad Zain (c. 1855-1908) had a vital role in the introduction of Pan-Islamist ideas in Malaya. He advocated the unification of Kelantan and Patani states against Siam with the support of the Ottoman Empire. However, his suggestion did not materialise. Moreover, the textbook mentions relations between Kelantan and Turkey in the 1980s. It possibly refers to the connection between the Islamic parties of the two countries, Refah and PAS.<sup>17</sup>

Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustafa al-Fatani was appointed to manage the Malay printing press, *al-Matba'ah al-Miriyyah al-Ka'inah*, in Makkah in 1885 during the reign of Abdul Hamid II (r. 1876-1909). The Ottoman Empire funded the press to publish religious texts in Malay. He also allocated space to Ottoman history in his famous book *Hadiqatul Azhar wal-Riahin* (1886). He viewed the Ottoman sultans as the rightful caliph. He firmly believed in the excellence of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>18</sup> Importantly, the textbook underlines the role of Shaykh Wan Ahmad disseminating Pan-Islamic ideas in Malaya.

The textbook continues to cite more concrete examples of the relationship between the Malay Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>19</sup> The first instance is that Pahang attempted to obtain assistance from the Ottomans against the British colonial rule in the early 1890s but to no avail. The second instance is that Mehmet Kamil Bey significantly contributed to the rise of Pan-Islamism in Johore. However, the textbook does not give detailed information about Kamil Bey. He was an Ottoman consul-general in Batavia between 15 July 1897 and 16 July 1898. He made considerable efforts to develop Ottoman policy in the region. His activities are the establishment of Ottomans' close contacts with Hadhrami Muslims in the Malay world, the rise of anti-colonial feelings among the local Muslims, and the international Ottoman scholarship initiative for the children of local Muslims in Java.<sup>20</sup> While the role of Kamil Bey in

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<sup>17</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, 182.

<sup>18</sup> Mohammad Redzuan Othman, "Pan-Islamic Appeal and Political Patronage: The Malay Perspective and the Ottoman Response," *Sejarah* 4, no. 4 (1996): 99.

<sup>19</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, 182.

<sup>20</sup> Anthony Reid, "Nineteenth Century Pan-Islamism in Indonesia and Malaysia,"

the region is mentioned in the textbook, Sultan Abu Bakar's visit to Istanbul in 1895 is surprisingly excluded.<sup>21</sup>

After the discussion on the contacts between the Ottomans and Malay states in the Malay Peninsula, the chapter turns its attention to the impact of the Pan-Islamic movement on Malaya during the First World War. According to the textbook, "In the war [the First World War], the Sultan of Turkey was allied with Germany. His Majesty declared a jihad war against the Allied Powers, namely Britain, the United States, and France. This declaration affected Islamic countries, including our country. However, the British tried to block that influence by censoring news from abroad, especially those related to Turkey".<sup>22</sup>

The chapter also mentions the sepoy rebellion that took place in Singapore in February 1915. Kassim Ismail Mansur and Nur Alam Syah, staunch adherents of Pan-Islamism, supported the rebellion of the Muslim Indian soldiers in Singapore against the British. The British suppressed the mutiny and executed the leaders of the rebellion.<sup>23</sup> The textbook offers detailed information on the role of two Pan-Islamist followers who supported the Ottoman cause in the First World War.

The following parts of the chapter touch on the consequences of the First World War, the establishment of the Republic of Turkey by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), and the influence of Turkish nationalism on the Malay intellectuals. According to the chapter, the Western invasion of Anatolia led to the emergence of the Khilafat movement in India. The movement reached Singapore in 1922, but it was short-lived under the watchful eyes of the British.<sup>24</sup>

The chapter moves to the issues of Turkish nationalism and the abolition of the caliphate by Turkey: "In Turkey, the national spirit began to develop widely. This spirit was motivated by a group of Young Turks. They wanted to modernize the Turkish state as

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267-283.

<sup>21</sup> It must be said that the 1990s research on the relations between the two regions was not as comprehensive as recent studies. At the time, the authors probably were unable to access reliable sources.

<sup>22</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, 182.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 182-83.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

Western countries had done. Their leader was Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. In 1923, Turkey declared a republic and in 1924, the Khilafat system was dissolved".<sup>25</sup> Mustafa Kemal was not the leader of the Young Turks, yet he was impressed by the ideas of the Young Turks. The authors of the textbook possibly implied that Mustafa Kemal had been the leader of the Republic of Turkey.

The chapter states that the dissolution of the caliphate led educated Malays to take a negative stance towards Turkish nationalism because they believed that it had been against Islamic religion and law. Abdul Kadir Adabi was one of the Malay intellectuals who denounced the dissolution of the caliphate. However, educated Malays discussed various developments in Turkey in various local periodicals such as *Pengasoh*, *al-Ikhwan*, and *Saudara* as the textbook points out.<sup>26</sup> One also finds coverage of the Ottomans and the Balkans in Syed Shaikh al-Hady's *al-Imam* (1906-08). The chapter also underlines that Malays positively responded to some elements of Turkish nationalism. For instance, Malays might follow in the footsteps of the Turks who rescued their economy from the Jews and revived the national spirit. Finally, the authors of the textbook state that *Kaum Muda* in Malaya was impressed by the political and intellectual notions of the Republic of Turkey, particularly the independence of Turkey from Western powers. Like Turkey, *Kaum Muda* fought to gain the independence of Malaysia from the British and they established *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (Young Malay Union) for this purpose in 1938.<sup>27</sup>

There are several questions concerning Ottoman and Turkish history at the end of the chapter: What was the plan of the Pan-Islamic Movement? What was the greatest influence of this movement on Malaya? How did scholars in Malaya respond to the development of the national spirit led by a group of the Young Turks? These questions are analytical. They lead students to think and analyze the impacts of Ottomans on the Malay Peninsula. Local interests and concerns affect questions in the textbook.

There are three illustrations of the Ottoman Empire and the

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, 183.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 184.

Republic of Turkey in the textbook: (1) the colourful map of Turkey that indicates its geographical borders and its neighbouring countries like Syria, Iraq, and Greece, (2) the portrait of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), the founder of the Republic of Turkey and (3) Abdul Kadir bin Ahmad (Abdul Kadir Adabi).<sup>28</sup>



**Map 1:** Turkey



**Picture 1:** Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

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<sup>28</sup> Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Wahid et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*, 182-184.



**Picture 2:** Abdul Kadir Adabi

The history textbook does not have a bibliography. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the sources of the textbook on the histories of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. However, the part of Turkish influence on the Malay Peninsula is probably derived from the studies of Khoo Kay Kim, one of the authors of *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*. He touched upon the rebellion of Indian sepoy in colonial Singapore during the First World War in his doctoral thesis.<sup>29</sup> Possibly, the authors were aware of Anthony Milner's article entitled "The Impact of the Turkish Revolution on Malaya".<sup>30</sup> The authors discuss in detail the Turkish impacts on the political, intellectual, and social aspects of the Malay people despite the limited literature on the issue at that time. The students in Form 2 of the secondary schools learned about the political and intellectual connections between Turkey and Malaysia. The image of Ottomans is positive in the textbook, and there are no biases, stereotypes, or distortions in presenting Ottoman-Turkish history. The textbook contains a few factual errors in Ottoman history. However, the authors of the textbook have appropriated the subject objectively.

#### ***Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4: Sixteenth-Century Ottoman History***

The *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4* (History of World Civilisation: Form 4), published in 1991, is concerned with the

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<sup>29</sup> Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginnings of Political Extremism in Malaya, 1915-1935", Ph.D. thesis, University of Malaya, 1973.

<sup>30</sup> A. C. Milner, "The Impact of the Turkish Revolution in Malaya," *Archipel* 31 (1986): 117-30.



development of human history from pre-historic to modern times. It also gives coverage to the origin and evolution of the Islamic and Western civilizations.<sup>31</sup> The subject of Ottoman history is dealt with in the second chapter of the book, “Islam Changes Human Civilisation” (*Islam Mengubah Tamadun Manusia*), which covers important civilizational developments in the history of Muslims from the sixth to the sixteenth century.

The chapter refers to the Ottoman Empire as *Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*. Additionally, the Ottoman Empire is regarded as “one of the greatest Islamic empires”. It states that the Ottomans brought the last caliph of the Mamluk Sultanate, al-Mutawakkil III, to Istanbul. Hence, they inherited the caliphate institution from the Mamluks.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, Ottoman history is analyzed within the framework of Islamic civilization and history and the Ottoman Empire is viewed as one of the chains of Islamic states.

The subject of Ottoman history in the chapter starts with a brief reminder about the teaching of the impact of the Ottoman Empire on the society of the Malay world in *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*. The chapter then mentions that the Ottoman Empire survived for 600 years “from 1281 to 1924”. As stated earlier, it is generally accepted that the Ottoman Empire was established in 1299. The information in the textbook is not correct. The chapter then states the origin of the Ottoman State as follows: “Uthman bin Ertoghrul was the founder of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire. Uthman’s family initially lived in Anatolia like Bedouins. They were very active in fighting the Byzantine army and had a close relationship with the Seljuk state in Konya. Finally, they decided to settle in the north eastern part of Anatolia. Over time they became stronger with the support of new Turkic immigrants coming from Central Asia”.<sup>33</sup> The chapter stresses the lifestyle of the Ottomans in the thirteenth century and

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<sup>31</sup> Khasnor Johan, Mahayudin Haji Yahya, Muzaffer Tate, Qasim Ahmad and Rohana Zunir, *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4 Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1997). The study uses the seventh edition of the textbook, which is available to the researchers.

<sup>32</sup> Johan et al, *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4 Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah*, 54-56.

<sup>33</sup> Johan et al, *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4 Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah*, 54-56.

their relationship with the Anatolian Seljuks.

After mentioning the origin of the Ottoman Empire, the chapter enlists the positive attributes of the Ottomans. They are described as courageous, strong, religious, virtuous, and ambitious. According to the chapter, the Ottomans' spirit of jihad and their military capacity were the main factors for their success.<sup>34</sup> It does not refer to any negative characteristics of the Ottomans. In this regard, the image of the Ottomans is positive and favourable and there are no biases and prejudices against the Ottoman Turks.

The chapter states that there was a total of 37 Ottoman sultans. However, it is generally accepted that 36 Ottoman sultans came to power. The authors of the textbook possibly accepted Süleyman Çelebi as the Ottoman sultan because they refer to Suleiman the Magnificent (r. 1520-66) as Suleiman II. In the existing literature on Ottoman history and general histories of the Ottoman Empire, Süleyman Çelebi is not regarded as the Ottoman sultan. According to the textbook, Urkhan, Muhammad II, Abu al-Fatih and Suleiman the Magnificent are among the well-known Ottoman sultans.<sup>35</sup> It did not mention the names of the Ottoman sultans in the nineteenth century. It merely focuses on the sultans of the "golden age" of the Ottoman Empire.

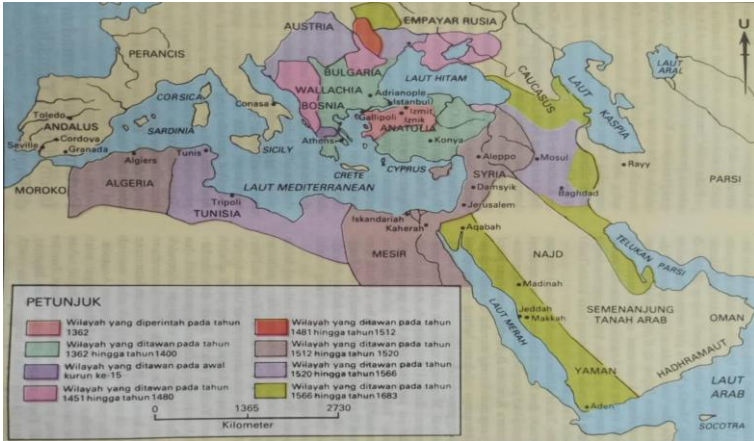
The issue of attributes of the Ottomans follows the territorial expansion of the Ottoman Empire in Anatolia and Europe between the fourteenth century and the sixteenth century. The textbook states that the Ottomans initially controlled Sakarya, Iznik, and Izmit ruled by the Byzantine Empire, and they subsequently turned their attention to Europe with the conquest of Gallipoli in 1356. They conquered Edirne, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Wallachia, and Southern Greece during the reigns of Murad I and Bayazid I. The military expansion of the Ottomans in the Balkans caused the Ottomans to have a close relationship with Christians in the Balkans. Some of them were converted to Islam; thus, the Ottomans played a vital role in the introduction of Islam in the Balkans according to the textbook. It also mentions that the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans led to the formation of a new military unit, Janissary (*Yeni Cheri*). The Turkish

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.,

term *Yeni Cheri*, is mentioned in the textbook. In the chapter, the sixteenth century is viewed as the “Golden Age of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire”.<sup>36</sup> This view is supported by the colourful map of the Ottoman Empire which indicates Ottoman expansion between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries and the territory of the Ottoman Empire (Map 2).



Map 2: The map of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup>

The textbook attaches importance to the military capacity and tactics of the Ottoman Empire as follows:

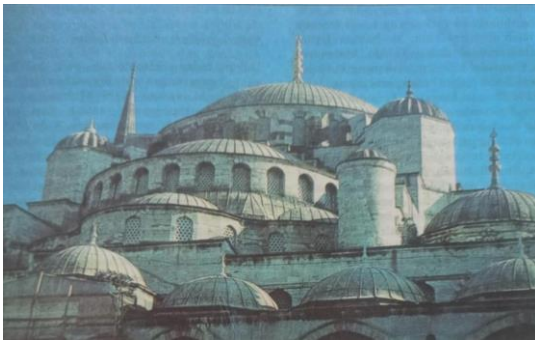
In addition to religious and moral factors, the great success of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire was also due to their efficiency and ability on the battlefield. They had sufficient weapons. Their navy is said to have as many as 3000 warships equipped with weapons. The Turkish army was indeed known for its bravery and high morale. They had leadership and efficiency in organizing war tactics and strategies according to the examples shown by Prophet Muhammad and the earliest Islamic leaders.

<sup>36</sup> Johan et al, *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4 Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah*, 56

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

Turkish military tactics and strategies were copied by Europeans who were then used again against the Turkish army when the Turkish government collapsed.<sup>38</sup>

The sub-section of the chapter, “The Contribution of the Islamic Civilisation to Human Civilisation” (*Sumbangan Tamadun Islam kepada Peradaban Manusia*), gives detailed coverage of how the Islamic civilization significantly contributed to world civilization in the fields of philosophy, arts, science, economics, and law. In the sub-section, there is a lack of intellectual and scientific contributions of the Ottomans to the Islamic civilization in various fields, specifically science, education, calligraphy, and architecture. The textbook merely emphasizes the role of the Ottoman army in the Islamic civilization. It claims that the Ottoman army represents the zenith of the Islamic military capacity. Europeans assimilated Ottoman-Turkish military strategies and technologies.<sup>39</sup> In the part of the chapter, “Islamic Art” (*Kesenian Islam*), there was a picture of the domes of the Blue Mosque (Picture 3). There exists sketchy information about the mosque under the picture: “View of the big and small domes of the Blue Mosque built by a Muslim architect, Mehmed Aga, in the seventeenth century in Istanbul, Turkey”.



**Picture 3:** The Domes of the Blue Mosque<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Johan et al, *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4 Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah*, 56.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>40</sup> Johan et al, *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4 Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah*, 67.

In the Exercise and Activity part (*Latihan dan Aktiviti*) at the end of the chapter, one of the discussion topics is associated with the subject of the Ottoman Empire: “The Ottoman-Turkish Empire was the longest reigning Islamic empire or government. To your view, why could the government last until 600 years?”<sup>41</sup> This question encourages students of Form 4 to examine Ottoman history. It is prepared for the improvement of the cognitive and analytical thinking of the students.

It is difficult to ascertain the reference sources of the textbooks for Ottoman history. Based on the bibliography of the textbook, the authors may have benefitted from the following books: F. Beers Burton, *World History* (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1988); H. A. Davies, *An Outline History of the World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964); *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. IV, art. Turks. Leiden: Brill, 1934; Hamka, *Sejarah Umat Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1985); William McNeil, *A World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967) and Weech W. N. *Sejarah Dunia Jilid 1*, translated by Abdul Karim Abdullah dan Hamidah Shamsuddin, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1981).<sup>42</sup>

In a nutshell, the *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4* gives two-page coverage to the subject of the history of the Ottoman-Turkish state (*Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*). It is the same as that of the Umayyads and Abbasids. The main focus of the textbook is on the political and military aspects of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century which is viewed as the “golden age of the Ottoman Empire”. There are some omissions in the teaching of the political history of the Ottomans. For instance, the textbook does not mention the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul and Ottoman history between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, there is an absence of information on the socio-economic and intellectual aspects of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans are more positively

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>42</sup> The authors benefitted from the part of Ottoman history in world histories as well as encyclopaedic information rather than any standard and specific studies on the Ottoman history of their time such as *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1973) by the prominent Turkish scholar Halil Inalcik and *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) by Norman Itzkowitz.

portrayed in the textbook like *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*. There are also no biases or prejudices against the Ottomans. There are two main actual errors. The authors of the textbook state that the Ottoman Empire was established in 1281 and there were 37 Ottoman sultans.

***Sejarah Tingkatan 4: A Comprehensive History of Sixteenth-Century Ottoman History***

*Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks* was a compulsory history textbook used in Form 4 of Malaysian secondary schools between 2002 and 2017.<sup>43</sup> It covers Ottoman history in its sixth chapter, “The Formation of the Islamic States and Their Contributions” (*Pembentukan Kerajaan Islam dan Sumbangannya*), which focuses on the histories of the Umayyads, Abbasids, and Ottomans and their role in the growth of the Islamic civilization. Ottoman history is analyzed under three sub-sections: (1) The Establishment of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire (*Pembentukan Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*); (2) The Contribution of the Ottoman Empire (*Sumbangan Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*); and (3) The Factors in the Spread of Islam in Europe (*Faktor Penyebaran Islam ke Eropah*). They concentrate on the foundation and role of the Ottoman Empire (*Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*), as well as its scientific and intellectual contributions to Islamic civilization. The section on Ottoman history contains six pages between pages 158 and 163. It devotes more space to the Ottoman Empire compared to the Umayyads (five pages) and the Abbasids (three pages). Numerically, 18.75% of the chapter is related to the subject of Ottoman history.

The starting point of the section, “The Establishment of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire”, is the appearance of various small states in the Middle East as a result of the Mongol conquest of the Abbasids in 1258. The Seljuks are regarded as one of the most significant states in the thirteenth century. The section continues to emphasise the establishment and growth of the Ottoman state and its relations with the Seljuks:

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<sup>43</sup> Nik Hassan Shuhaimi bin Nik Abdul Rahman, Muhd. Yusof bin Ibrahim, Muhammad Bukhari bin Ahmad and Rosnanaini binti Sulaiman, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2017).

The Ottoman State began as one of the principalities situated in Western Anatolia (today Turkey). Despite being under the influence of the Seljuks, the Anatolian principalities of Seljuks were more independent in terms of government and administration. Although this principality [the Ottoman State] was one of the small principalities in the Western Anatolian region, it managed to dominate the other principalities and eventually became the kingdom.<sup>44</sup>

There are two shortcomings in the above-mentioned quotation. The first is the lack of fundamental distinction between the Great Seljuks and the Anatolian Seljuks. The second is the neglect of the political, socio-economic, and religious aspects of Anatolia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries such as the Mongol occupation of Anatolia, the role of the Mamluks in Anatolia, and the socio-economic and religious revolts that emerged in thirteenth-century Anatolia. All these developments directly or indirectly affected the foundation of the Ottoman Empire. They lead students to understand the context in which the Ottoman Empire was founded and the political, socio-economic, and religious conditions of the Islamic world after the Mongol attacks and the Crusaders.

The section presents information on the origin of the Ottoman state, its geographical location, the founder of the state, and the first battles of Osman Bey as follows:

The word Ottoman comes from the name of the founder of this state, namely Osman bin Ertugrul bin Suleyman Shah who came from the Kayı tribe. In the early periods, Osman Bey was the *emir* or the Seljuk governor in the Western Anatolia region. This region was the border with the Byzantine Empire known as Eastern Rome. Therefore, the region under Ottoman rule was more threatened than other regions. In 1301, Osman succeeded in defeating a Byzantine army. In addition to motivating the veterans, this victory united the leaders

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<sup>44</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 158.

of the community under Osman's leadership for new conquests.<sup>45</sup>

This passage offers a more comprehensive account of the origin of the Ottomans compared to those in *Sejarah Tingkatan 2* and *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4*. Although the authors of the textbook were aware of the importance and results of the Battle of Bapheus between the Ottomans and Byzantines in 1301, they did not specify the name and place of the war. As a consequence of the war, Osman Bey proved himself as one of the most powerful and charismatic rulers in the region.<sup>46</sup>

In the section, the origin of the Ottoman Empire follows a sketch of early Ottoman expansion in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries with special reference to the military activities of early Ottoman sultans. The reigns of Osman I and Orhan were mentioned as follows: "Osman began to conquer the area around Anatolia and later made the city of Bursa the capital of the country. Osman passed away in 1326 and the expansion of power was continued by his son Orhan I and the subsequent Ottoman government".<sup>47</sup> The section then focuses on Ottoman expansion in Anatolia and the Balkans in the fourteenth century: "Between 1336 and 1354, Orhan succeeded in conquering Marmara, the Aegean, Ankara and Gallipoli regions. During the reigns of Murad I and Bayazid I, the Ottoman state also controlled the Southern Balkan, Northern Bulgaria, Sofia, Thessaloniki, Kosovo, Northern Albania, and Wallachia regions".<sup>48</sup>

Finally, the section briefly deals with the reigns of Sultan Mehmed II and Sulaiman I. It mentions the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453 and the reign of Sultan Mehmed marked the beginning of the Ottoman Empire (*empayar Uthmaniyah*). However, the death of Sulaiman I resulted in the decline of the Ottoman Empire even though the empire ended in the early twentieth century.

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<sup>45</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 158-159.

<sup>46</sup> Halil Inalcik, "Osman Ghazi's Siege of Nicaea and the Battle of Bapheus," in *The Ottoman Emirate (1300-1389)*, ed. Elizabeth Zachariadou (Rethymnon: Crete University Press, 1993), 77-98.

<sup>47</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 159.

<sup>48</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 159.



According to the section, weak sultans, the collapse of tax collection, rebellions, and uncontrollable population growth resulted in the decline of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>49</sup> The authors of the textbook seem to have adhered to the paradigm of the Ottoman decline, which persisted in the literature of the 2000s on Ottoman studies.

The authors of *Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks* endeavours to summarize six hundred years within merely one page. This led them to leave out some important political and military developments between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as the Battle of Ankara in 1402, the Ottoman battles against Crusaders in Kosovo and Nicopolis, and important happenings during the reign of Sulaiman I. Furthermore, the authors have probably deliberately focused solely on the achievements of the Ottoman Empire in the classical period and have not touched on any issues after the 17th century. For instance, the timetable, which shows the names and reigns of Ottoman sultans, gives priority to Ottoman sultans from the thirteenth to late sixteenth centuries (Picture 4). Furthermore, the names of the Ottoman sultans in the 17th and 20th centuries were not included in the timetable. The authors preferred to pay attention to positive issues rather than negative ones in the teaching of Ottoman history.

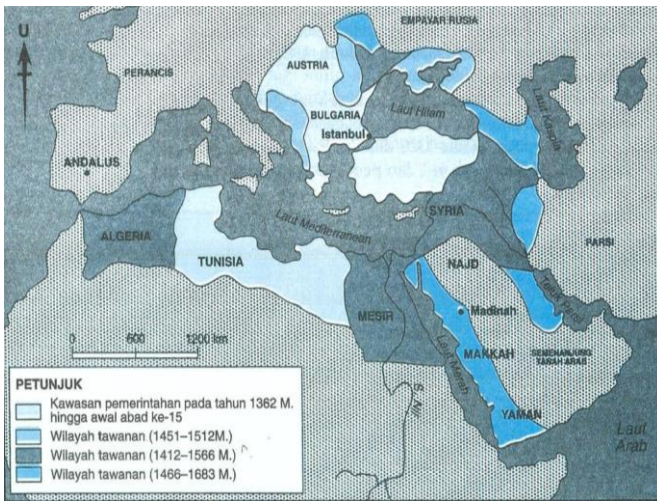
Jangka Masa (Tahun)	1280 – 1326	1326 – 1362	1362–1389	1389 – 1402	1413 – 1421	1421 – 1444
Pemerintahan	Uthman Ertughrul	Orhan I	Murad I	Bayezid I	Mehmed I	Murad II
1444 – 1446; 1451–1481	1481 – 1512	1512 – 1520	1520 – 1666	1566 – 1574	1574 – 1595	1595 – 1603
Mehmed II (Fatih)	Bayezid II	Selim	Suleiman I (Kanuni)	Selim II	Murad III	Mehmed III

**Picture 4:** Ottoman Sultans<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 159.

At the end of the sub-section, (*Pembentukan Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*), there is a map that indicates the places dominated by the Ottoman Empire in the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries and the years of conquest (Map 3). The map allows students to imagine the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. However, there are three fundamental errors in the map. Firstly, the dates, which should be given as 1512-1566 and 1566-1683, are given as 1412-1566, and 1466-1683. Secondly, modern state names or geographical names are used in some places instead of state names (such as Safavids) contemporary to the Ottoman state. Finally, the map is heavily used in tones of blue when compared to the colourful and clear maps of the Ottoman Empire in *Sejarah Tingkatan 2* and *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4* (Map 1 and 2).



**Map 3:** The map of the Ottoman State<sup>51</sup>

The second section of the chapter, “The Contributions of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire” (*Sumbangan Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*), looks at the political, legal, economic, intellectual, and scientific contributions of the Ottoman state to Islamic civilization.

<sup>51</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 160.

The Ottoman Empire is regarded as an exceptional and enduring Islamic state which lasted “for nearly six hundred years in such a large region”. In addition, according to the section, the Ottomans significantly contributed to the development of the Islamic civilization and created an empire that represented the unity of Muslims. Istanbul was the capital of the Muslim world and Sultan Selim I was considered “the protector of Muslims in the Muslim world”. The authors of the textbook elevate the Ottoman Empire to the zenith of the Islamic states and analyze Ottoman history within the Islamic civilization and through the Islamic vocabulary.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, they do not mention Abdul Hamid II, who used the power of the caliphate against Western powers in the nineteenth-century Muslim world and established cordial and vibrant relations with the Muslim polities in the Malay world. Presumably, they confined themselves to the narrative of the Ottoman classical period.

As for the various contributions of the Ottoman Empire to the Islamic civilization, the section first discusses three important contributions of the Ottoman in the legal context: (1) a legal system that protects and maintains the life, property, and honour of each subject regardless of their race and religion during the era of Suleyman, the Lawgiver; (2) The contribution of the Ottomans to the management and organization of Islamic law; and (3) Duties such as *Qadi* and *Mufti* to be made part of the Islamic religious administration centre and fatwas issued during the Ottoman period are still in use.<sup>53</sup>

In the economic field, the Ottomans took control of international trade in the East-West axis and established the Istanbul-based Islamic World Trade Union using the geo-political position of Istanbul. This information was an accurate determination for the 16th century, yet the centre of international trade after this century moved to the Atlantic and Indian oceans to the advantage of Western powers.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 160-161.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 161.



**Picture 5:** The Margin Note<sup>55</sup>

The scientific and intellectual contributions of the Ottomans to Islamic civilization received special attention and were illustrated with examples. The section refers to the developed Ottoman *madrasah* system, the tradition of writing encyclopaedia, and the widespread libraries in the Ottoman Empire. In the margin note, it was explained to the student that encyclopaedic works of Ottoman scholars, Molla Fenari (d. 1431), Molla Lütfi (d. 1495), and Kâtip Çelebi (1609-1658) (Picture 5).

The section finally deals with Ottoman architecture. The most prominent architect of Ottoman architecture, Mimar Sinan, is explained in the margin note (Picture 5). In this note, however, there is a factual error: “Mimar Sinan's most famous work of art is the Sultan Ahmad Mosque (Blue Mosque) in Istanbul”. The architect of Sultan Ahmad Mosque is not Mimar Sinan, but Sedefkar Mehmed Aga.<sup>56</sup> There is no information on the construction date of the mosque and its position and significance in both Ottoman and Islamic architecture. As has been remembered, the picture of the Blue Mosque in *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4* (Picture 4) provides correct information about the architect of the mosque and its

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> John Freely, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Southampton and Boston: WIT Press, 2011), 329.

construction date. Unlike the view of the domes of the Blue Mosque in *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4*, an unclear and blue-toned picture of the mosque from a wide perspective was added to the book (Picture 6); thus, the image of the Ottoman mosque was clarified in the students' memory.



**Picture 6:** Sultan Ahmad Mosque<sup>57</sup>

After the contribution of the Ottomans to Islamic civilization, their role in the spread of Islam in Europe is the final topic of the section on Ottoman history. This part is broader, more comprehensive, and more academic. The authors benefit from the findings of Halil İnalcık's *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* and the four-volume encyclopaedia, entitled *The Great Ottoman Turkish Civilization*, edited by the Turkish historian Kemal Çiçek. These reference sources lead the history textbook to present not only a positive image of the Ottomans but also a Turkish approach to Ottoman history. Hence, the portrayal of the Ottomans is positive and there are no biases and stereotypes concerning Ottomans in the textbook.

In the textbook, the reasons for the spread of Islam in the Balkans and Europe are given as follows: (1) The key factor in the spread of Islam to Europe in the time of Umayyads and Ottomans was the high moral values and beliefs among Muslims; (2) The Spirit of Gazi (*Semangat Ghazi*) in the Ottoman army allowed both the

<sup>57</sup> Rahman et al, *Sejarah Tingkatan 4*, 161.

spread of Islam and the Ottoman conquests in Europe; (3) Ottoman military system, Janissaries, modern military equipment and powerful Ottoman navy played a vital role in the spread of Islam in the Balkans and Europe; (4) political instability in Europe, fights and disputes in the throne of the Byzantine state; (5) problems among the churches in the Balkans: abuse of power, internal turmoil and economic difficulties; (6) The social and religious policies of the Ottoman state: 'istimalet policy' (when a place is conquered, it is asked that the people who live there should be obeyed and subject to the state and never plundered) and that the Orthodox church is patronized by the Ottoman; and (7) Turkish migrations to the Balkans and tolerable teachings of Sufis.

The definitions of concepts such as Gazi spirit and Janissary were given to the students in the form of margin notes. While the first concept is described as a Muslim hero who aimed to disseminate Islam, the Janissaries are described as “an elite infantry group in the Ottoman military system”. Another margin note provides statistical information about the Muslim population in the sixteenth-century Balkans: “The census conducted by the Ottoman state in the 1530s was almost 19% Muslim in the Balkans. A total of 45% of Muslims in the Balkans were living in city centres such as Bosnia. Further, Sofia and Edirne had 66% and 82% Muslim population respectively”.

The subject of Ottoman history ended with four questions and activities pertaining directly to the Ottoman Empire: How was the Ottoman Empire established? State the factors that caused the Ottoman Empire to disseminate Islamic teachings. What does the Janissary mean? Explain the administrative system of the Ottoman Empire. The student might easily find answers to some questions in the book such as the meaning of the term Janissary which was explained to students in the margin note. Other questions foster students to think analytically.

### ***Sejarah Tingkatan 1: Sketchy Ottoman History***

The year 2017 has witnessed the implementation of a new curriculum entitled *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah* (KSSM, the Secondary School Standard Curriculum) instead of *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (KBSM, the Secondary School Integrated Curriculum). KSSM has introduced significant shifts in

the teaching, coverage, and themes of history in Malaysian secondary schools, and it has also subsequently affected the teaching of Ottoman history. The first important change is that Ottoman history started to be taught in Form 1 of secondary schools instead of Form 4. There is no coverage of the diplomatic and intellectual relations between the Ottoman Empire and Muslim kingdoms in the Malay world in the history textbook of Form 2. Ottoman history gets coverage in the history textbook of Form 1. However, Ottoman history is still being covered in the textbook about human history and Islamic civilization. The second change is that new history textbooks do not cover the subject in detail. It means that the new curriculum fosters student-centred learning rather than textbook-centred learning in history education.

*Sejarah Tingkatan 1* (History: Form 1) is a new and contemporary history textbook that gives space to Ottoman history. Its eighth chapter, “Islamic Civilization and Its Contribution” (*Tamadun Islam dan Sumbangannya*), offers information on Ottoman history. The coverage of the history of the Ottoman Empire (*Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah*) in the new textbook is quite limited compared to the coverage of Ottoman history in the previous history textbooks. Only one page is allocated to the subject. It briefly focuses on three issues: (1) The Ottoman-Turkish State was centred in Anatolia; (2) The further development of Islam had also extended to the Balkan region, Eastern Europe, the borders of Russia, and around the Black Sea, in addition to maintaining power in Western Asia; and (3) The influence of the Ottoman Turks also reached the Malay world (Picture 7).<sup>58</sup> The subject of Ottoman history is supported by the map in colour which indicates the spread of Islam from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to the Ottoman Empire. The map demonstrates that Islam spread to Europe during the era of the Ottoman Empire (Map 4). Compared to the maps in the history textbook examined previously, the map in the new textbook is based on the theme of the spread of Islam in the Middle East, Asia, North Africa, Central Asia, and Europe rather than the particular map of the territory of the Ottoman Empire.

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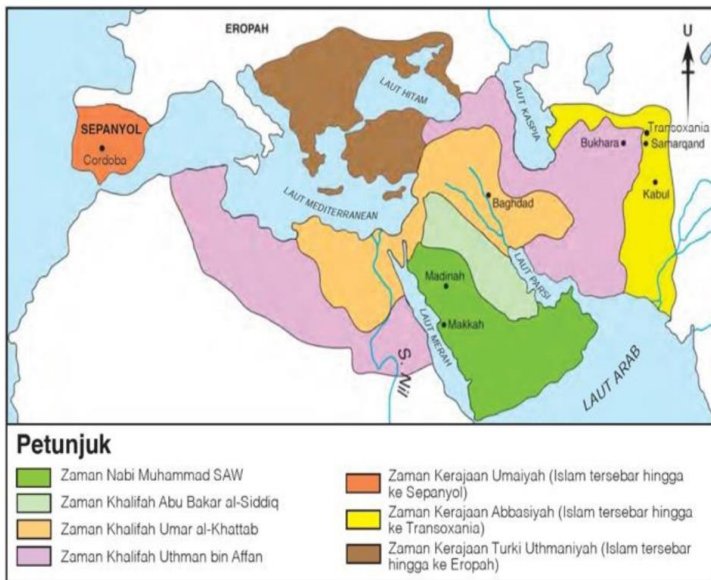
<sup>58</sup> Mohd bin Samsudin, Azharudin bin Mohamed Dali and Sharifah Afidah binti Syed Hamid, *Sejarah Tingkatan 1 Buku Teks*, 168.



**Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah**

- Kerajaan Turki Uthmaniyah berpusat di Anatolia.
- Perkembangan Islam seterusnya juga telah meluas hingga ke rantau Balkan, Eropah Timur, sempadan Rusia dan sekitar Laut Hitam, di samping mengekalkan kekuasaan di Asia Barat.
- Pengaruh Turki Uthmaniyah juga telah sampai ke Alam Melayu.

**Picture 7:** The Ottoman Empire.



**Map 4:** The map of the spread of Islam

On page 168, the chapter provides a QR code that gives additional information on the subject of Islamic states including the Ottoman Empire:



The Ottoman-Turkish Empire was founded by Uthman bin Ertughrul bin Sulaiman Shah. This kingdom reached its peak when Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih succeeded in taking control of Constantinople in 1453 AD. The Ottoman Empire...was the largest Islamic empire that ruled from 680 H/1281 AD until 1342 H/1924 AD. This kingdom survived for about six centuries until it collapsed after the outbreak of the First World War.

The Ottoman-Turkish Empire successfully expanded its empire and the influence of Islamic Civilization in Eastern Europe. Among its famous rulers are Sultan Murad I, Sultan Murad II, Sultan Bayazid I, Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih, Sultan Selim I, and Sultan Sulaiman Qanuni. The Ottoman government placed great emphasis on military matters by establishing a military force trained in the ins and outs of war known as Janissaries.

Its leaders also had authority, personal strength, and high morals, to the point of being able to bring the Ottomans to a high level. The empire extended to North Africa in the southwest, Persia in the east, and several conquered areas such as Egypt, the Balkans, and Syria. In general, the Ottoman-Turkish Empire had more territories in Europe compared to those in Asia.

In the textbook, Ottoman history from the thirteenth to the early twentieth century was summarized. Like the previous textbooks, *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* concentrates mainly on the military achievements of sixteenth-century Ottoman history, as well as the expansion of the Ottoman Empire to the Balkans, Europe, and North Africa. Furthermore, like other textbooks examined in the study, *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* emphasizes the prolonged rule of the Ottoman Empire from the 1280s to the 1920s, its influential sultans like Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih, Sultan Selim I, and Sultan Sulaiman II, and the military power of the Ottoman Empire. *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* omits

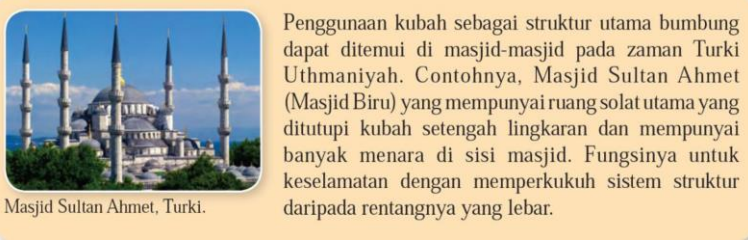
the history of the Ottoman Empire between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries. Furthermore, in the following sub-section of the textbook, “The Presence of Intellectual Activity Centres” (*Kewujudan Pusat Kegiatan Intelektual*), there is no information on how the Ottoman scholars contributed to the Islamic civilization.<sup>59</sup> In brief, *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* is primarily concerned with the political, military, and territorial aspects of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century.

The main sources of the textbook for Ottoman history are general studies on Islamic civilization and Islamic history: Hamka’s *Sejarah Umat Islam* (Selangor: PTS Publishing House, 2016), Osman Bakar’s *Tamadun Islam dan Tamadun Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya, 2012), Mahayudin Hj. Yahya and Ahmad Jelani Halimi’s *Sejarah Islam* (Selangor: Fajar Bakti, 1994), Esa Khalid’s *Konsep Tamadun Islam: Sains dan Teknologi* (Skudai: Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2001) and Wan Abdul Rahman Latif’s *Sejarah Perkembangan Tamadun Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2001). Unlike sources of *Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks*, there is a lack of references related directly to academic studies on Ottoman history in *Sejarah Tingkatan 1*.

In the sub-section of the chapter, “The Contributions of the Islamic Civilisation in the Field of Architecture” (*Sumbangan Tamadun Islam dalam Bidang Seni Bina*), like previous history textbooks, the picture of Sultan Ahmad Mosque is added with the following information: “The use of the dome as the main structure of the roof can be found in mosques during the Ottoman-Turkish period. For example, the Sultan Ahmet Mosque (Blue Mosque) has the main prayer room covered by a semi-circular dome and has many minarets on the side of the mosque. Its function is for safety by strengthening the structural system from its wide range” (Picture 8). The textbook focuses mainly on the architectural aspects of the Sultan Ahmad Mosque rather than the construction date and architect of the mosque as in the previous textbook.

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<sup>59</sup> Samsudin et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 1 Buku Teks*, 179-181.



**Picture 8:** Sultan Ahmet Mosque, Turkey<sup>60</sup>

The subject of Ottoman history in the textbook ends with the question of where the capital of the Ottoman Empire was.<sup>61</sup> Ironically, the textbook does not give any information about the capital of the Ottoman Empire.

The *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* offers quite limited coverage of Ottoman history in the new curriculum. The main topics of Ottoman history are the genesis and evolution of the Ottoman State, its role in the spread of Islam in Europe, as well as the interactions between the Ottoman Empire and Malay polities in the Malay world.<sup>62</sup> The portrayal of the Ottomans is largely neutral. There is an apparent absence of biases, stereotypes, and prejudices.

### Concluding Remarks

Ottoman history gets considerable coverage in the history textbooks used in Malaysian secondary schools between 1989 and 2022. While the *Sejarah Tingkatan 2* (1989) exceptionally focuses on the topic of the impact of Ottoman Pan-Islamism and Turkish nationalism over the intellectual and political spheres of the Malay Peninsula in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4*, *Sejarah Tingkatan Empat Buku Teks*, and *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* are primarily concerned with the genesis of the Ottoman Empire, its wars and military affairs, as well as its intellectual and architectural contributions to the Islamic

<sup>60</sup> Samsudin et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 1 Buku Teks*, 185.

<sup>61</sup> Samsudin et al., *Sejarah Tingkatan 1 Buku Teks*, 187.

<sup>62</sup> It is hoped that the decorated Malay letters to Ottoman sultans in history will be used in the teaching of the history of Ottoman-Malay world relations.

civilization. In all history textbooks, Ottoman history is taught to students through the following categories: Ottoman politics, military, individuals (especially prominent Ottoman sultans of the sixteenth century and a few Ottoman scholars), religion, and architecture (specifically Sultan Ahmad Mosque mentioned in three history textbooks). There is a dearth of information on the economic, societal, and educational aspects of the Ottoman Empire in all textbooks. Sixteenth-century Ottoman history is given more attention in the textbooks, except for *Sejarah Tingkatan 2*. Ottoman history between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries is largely absent.

Ottoman history is analyzed within the Islamic civilization and Islamic history. It is regarded as the most powerful and longest Islamic empire in all textbooks. The history of the Ottoman Empire is taught along with the histories of the Umayyads and Abbasids. In this regard, the Ottomans are seen as the continuation of Islamic states or caliphates. More specifically, in the *Sejarah Tingkatan 4 Buku Teks*, the Ottoman army was viewed as the “Islamic army”; the Ottoman state as “the Islamic State”, Istanbul as “the management centre of the Muslim world”, and Ottomans as “the protector of Muslims”. *Sejarah Tingkatan 1* emphasises the role of the Ottomans in the spread of Islam in the Balkans and Europe. In brief, Ottoman history is discussed within the framework of Islamic civilization and Islamic history.

In the textbooks, the Ottomans are portrayed positively and favourably. For instance, the *Sejarah Peradaban Dunia Tingkatan 4* views the Ottomans as courageous, strong, religious, virtuous, and ambitious for jihad against the Christian Byzantine Empire. There are no biases, stereotypes, or prejudices about Ottoman history in all the textbooks examined in this study. The positive image of the Ottoman Empire and the lack of biases and stereotypes concerning the Ottomans are closely tied to the friendly relations between the Ottomans and Malays in history. History textbooks are written in Malaysia by a panel of professional historians. An objective portrayal of the subject is expected. There are, however, some factual errors and deficiencies in the textbooks.

Finally, we can conclude that the history textbooks of Malaysian secondary schools provide space for Ottoman history. On

a related note, comparative studies on the subject among Southeast Asian countries would be useful, especially in Indonesia, and Thailand. On the other side of the coin, how do Turkish history textbooks cover Southeast Asia in general, Malaysia, and the Malay Archipelago in particular? Such studies would certainly be revealing of past relationships.

## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

### CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	
ء	ب	پ	پ	ز	ز	ز	ز	گ	—	g	g	g
ب	ب	ب	ب	ژ	—	—	ř	ل	l	l	l	l
پ	پ	پ	پ	ژ	—	zh	j	م	m	m	m	m
ت	ت	ت	ت	س	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n	n
ث	—	—	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ş	ه	h	h	h <sup>1</sup>	h <sup>1</sup>
ث	th	th	th	ص	ş	ş	ş	و	w	v/u	v	v/u
ج	j	j	c	ض	ḏ	ḏ	ž	ی	y	y	y	y
چ	—	ch	çh	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah	—	—	-a <sup>2</sup>
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al <sup>3</sup>	—	—	—
خ	kh	kh	kh	ع	‘	‘	‘	—	—	—	—	—
د	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğh	—	—	—	—	—
ڈ	—	—	d	ف	f	f	f	—	—	—	—	—
ذ	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	q	—	—	—	—	—
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	—	—	—	—	—

<sup>1</sup> – when not final

<sup>2</sup> – at in construct state

<sup>3</sup> – (article) al - or l-

### VOWELS

	Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	—
	و	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iy (final form i)	iy (final form i)
	و	uww (final form ū)	uvv
	و	uvv (for Persian)	uvv
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	ev
	ی	ai or ay	ey
Short	ا	a	a or e
	ا	u	u or ū
	ا	i	o or ö
	ا	i	i

### URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. جھ jh گھ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

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