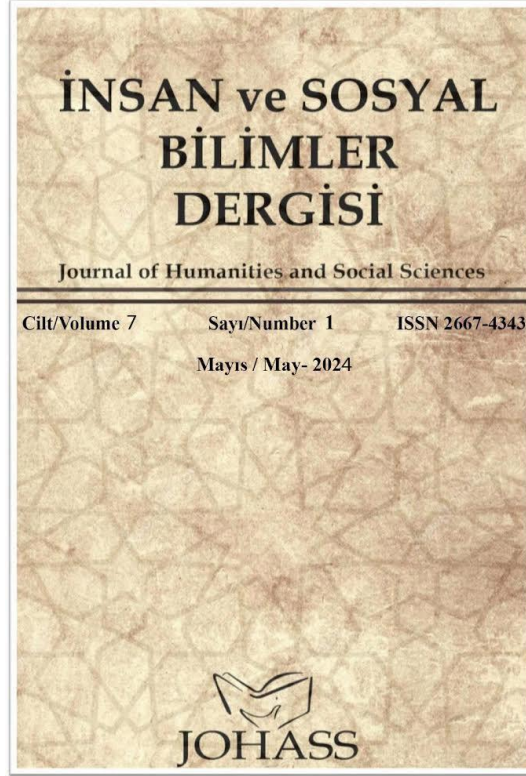


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**Comparison of 9th Grade History Textbooks Used in 2013 and 2023 in  
Terms of Women's History\***

*\*This study was presented as a paper at the IXth International History Education Symposium on September 6-8, 2023.*

**Meliha KÖSE<sup>1</sup>**

*Gazi University, Faculty of Education, Department of Turkish and Social Science Education  
Prof. Dr.*

*melihakose@gmail.com*

*Orcid ID: 0000-0001-9837-9087*

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## **Comparison of 9th Grade History Textbooks Used in 2013 and 2023 in Terms of Women's History\***

**Meliha KÖSE<sup>1</sup>**

*Gazi University, Faculty of Education, Department of Turkish and Social Science Education*

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### **Abstract**

As an extension of women's history and gender equality studies, the level of visibility of women in history textbooks and the reflection of their historical roles in textbooks has become an important area of research. The language, information, and visuals used in history textbooks are considered very important data tools for these studies. In this research, which has a qualitative approach, the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 were compared in terms of women's history. The aim of the research is to make a comparison of the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 in terms of women's history and to reveal the point reached regarding women's history. In line with this purpose, document analysis was preferred as the method. The 9th grade history textbooks were selected through the purposive sampling method. Content analysis was used to analyze the data. According to the findings of the study, history textbooks reveal a regression in terms of women's history. Most of the female names identified in the history textbooks taught in 2013 are not included in the history textbooks used in 2023. The visuals in the book are not sufficient in terms of women's history. It can be thought that the changing history programs have an impact on this outcome since textbooks are written within the framework of history programs. It can also be argued that not enough sensitivity has been shown to the inclusion of women's history in textbooks.

**Keywords:** History textbook, women's history, gender, textbook, women's roles

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<sup>1</sup> **Corresponding author:**

*Prof. Dr.*

*melihakose@gmail.com*

*Orcid ID: 0000-0001-9837-9087*

## **Introduction**

History is a social science that investigates all the activities of human communities, the developments they have experienced, and the events that have taken place between them by showing place and time in a cause-and-effect relationship based on documents and transferring them to the present day (Özçelik, 1993). Although this general definition includes the phrase “all the activities of human societies”, practically, traditional historiography was more concerned with political events, wars and political leaders. Due to this tendency of traditional historiography, groups such as women, slaves, merchants, children, and land workers were generally excluded from historiography. Social historians were the first to become interested in the history of these ordinary people, focusing on everyday life, sexuality, family, and social rituals (Birey et al., 2014; Çakır, 2011). The Annales School, which examines the whole of human activities with an interdisciplinary approach, also acted differently from the historical approach that centers political events and began to show interest in people outside of political history (Çarkçı, 2021). Despite these new approaches in historiography, women's history has not attracted enough attention and has continued to be neglected (Çakır, 2011).

Women's history began to come to the fore as a field in the 1970s. The initial aim of this field was to reach the past experiences of women who could not find a place in the traditional historiography and to make them visible. Women's history researchers who want to shed light on women's experiences in history have acted with an interdisciplinary approach by utilizing the social and human sciences such as sociology, anthropology and literature (Birey et al., 2014; Çakır, 2021). The belief that traditional historiography ignores women's experiences has formed the background of women's history studies (Purvis, 2004; Scheiner-Fisher, 2013). As an extension of women's history studies, research on how patriarchy and power relations were shaped in different historical periods has been carried out with a feminist approach (Çakır, 2021; Scheiner-Fisher, 2013). As a result of research in the field of women's history, a large corpus has emerged and significant progress has been made since the 1970s (Birey et al., 2014).

The extent to which women are included in history textbooks and which images and roles are attributed to the women in the textbooks have been brought to the agenda as a field of gender studies, and women's history research has begun to be carried out together with this field (DeWolf, 2021). Those working on women in history education have primarily made

efforts to include women's experiences in history programs and history textbooks because history textbooks, which maintain their power in education at a significant level, have a profound effect on students' attitudes (Nene, 2014). The information given or not given about the historical roles of women will induce students to build a certain impression about women. Through teaching history that excludes women, students will receive the message that women's stories, problems and concerns are unimportant for history (Crocco, 2008; Scheiner-Fisher, 2013). Therefore, it will only be possible to give accurate messages to students about the roles of women in history by including women's stories in history textbooks.

Primary studies within the framework of women's history and gender studies questioned the level of visibility of women and the language used in history textbooks (Brugar et al., 2014; Dilek, 2012; Foster, 2011; Kay, 2006; Schocker & Woysner, 2013). The problem of teaching women's history and integrating it into history textbooks has emerged as a result of the above discussions. Despite the efforts made to include women in history programs and the abundance and accessibility of resources in the field of women's history, it is quite difficult to say that history programs devote enough space for women (Apaolaza-Llorente et al., 2023; Brugar et al., 2014; Chiponda & Wassermann, 2011; Hahn, et al, 2007; Delaney, 1996; Fine-Meyer, 2012; Kay, 2006; Scheiner-Fisher, 2013). In this context, history programs and textbooks need to be improved in accordance with this purpose. A similar situation exists for Türkiye. History programs/history textbooks are quite inadequate in terms of including women (Akay Şahin & Açıkalın, 2023; Aydın, 2022; Can, 2009; Çelik, 2020; Demircioğlu, 2011; Köse, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c).

This study, which aims to compare the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 in the context of women's history, is significant in terms of revealing the level achieved in this field in the last decade by addressing the extent to which history textbooks cover women's history. During the analysis of the books, answers to the following problems were sought. The findings are presented within the framework of these problems:

- How do the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 differ in terms of the units they contain?
- Do the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 differ in terms of the female names they contain?
- Do the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 differ in terms of the images of women they contain?

- How does the information given about women differ in the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023?
- Have the 9th grade history textbooks made any progress in terms of covering women's history?

## **Method**

### **Model**

This study, which compares 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 in terms of women's history, is conducted with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research allows realistic and holistic observation of events and phenomena in their natural environments through methods such as observation, interview, and document analysis (Baltacı, 2019; Büyüköztürk et al., 2019; Karataş, 2015).

The method of the research is document analysis. In this method, data is obtained by analyzing written documents containing information about facts and events (Kıral, 2020). The conducting researcher decides which document to examine in line with the purpose. In this process, the originality of the documents should be checked, and methods such as understanding the documents, analyzing the needed data and using the data should be followed sequentially (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008).

### **Data Collection Tool**

This study based on document analysis does not require ethical permission. 9th grade history textbooks were primarily used for this study since it is the first level of high school education. However, it can be said that textbooks used at different levels of education need to be analyzed in a similar way. In the study, The 9th grade history textbooks taught in the 2013-2023 academic year were determined by purposive sampling method. Purposively selected small sample in qualitative research allows the researcher to focus on the subject in depth (Patton, 2002). Additionally, purposive sampling offers the opportunity to examine in detail the situations that provide rich information about the subject under investigation (Şahan & Uyangör, 2021; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). For this study, which aims to compare 9th grade history textbooks in detail in terms of women's history, purposive sampling method was preferred. Information about the textbooks used in the study is given in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*The Textbooks Analyzed*

No	Name of the Book	Year of Publication	Authors	Number of Pages	Publisher
1	History 9	2013	Okur, Y., Genç, İ., Özcan, T., Yurtbay, M. & Sever, A.	193	Ministry of Education (MoNE)
2	History 9	2021	Yüksel, E., Kapar, M., Bağcı, Ö., Bildik, F., Şahin, K., Şafak, L., Ardıç, M. & Yıldız, S	222	Ministry of Education (MoNE)

### **Collection of Data and Analysis**

The textbooks were analyzed using the content analysis method. In content analysis, the information contained in written and oral sources can be classified objectively and systematically, and inferences can be made by converting the data into numbers (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001). This method focuses on the actual meaning and the content of the printed materials such as textbooks. In the content analysis process, certain coding should be done on the text and categories should be determined (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan 2017). In this study, three categories were identified for content analysis of the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023. These are 1. Names of women in the textbooks 2. Visual images of women in the textbooks 3. Information about women in the texts in the textbooks. The comparison of the textbooks in terms of women's history was made in the light of the data obtained.

In order to ensure coding consistency during data analysis, an associate professor in the field of education was asked to code, apart from the researcher, and the coding comparison was made with this method. In coding consistency, different coders should code the same text in the same way or the same coder should code the text in the same way at two different times (Bilgin, 2014). Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula  $[(\text{Reliability} = \text{agreement} / (\text{agreement} + \text{disagreement}) \times 100)]$  was used to compare the two separate codings made by the researcher and an associate professor. As a result of the comparison, the agreement rate between the two codings was found to be 0.92. Direct quotations, visuals and sample data presented in the study provide the internal reliability of the study in accordance with the research that presenting the data with direct quotations with a descriptive approach is

considered one of the most important strategies to ensure the internal reliability of the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008).

## Findings

### Comparison of 9th Grade History Textbooks Taught in 2013 and 2023 in Terms of the Units They Contain

The first problem of the research is how the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 differ in terms of the units they contain. Thus, it was determined whether the books contain the same topics. The findings on how the books differ in terms of units are given in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Units in the 9th Grade History Textbooks in 2013 and 2023*

Unit Name	History 9 (2013)	History 9 (2023)
Unit 1	History Science	History and Time
Unit 2	The Birth of Civilization and the First Civilizations	Early Periods of Humanity
Unit 3	First Turkish States	World in the Middle Ages
Unit 4	Islamic History and Civilization (Until the 13th Century)	Turkish World in the Early and Middle Ages
Unit 5	Turkish-Islamic States (10th-13th Centuries)	The Birth of Islamic Civilization
Unit 6	History of Türkiye (11-13th Centuries)	Turks' Acceptance of Islam and the First Turkish Islamic States

According to Table 2, the 9th grade history textbooks taught in both 2013 and 2023 consist of 6 units. Although the names of the units in the 9th grade history textbook, which was prepared with a thematic approach and taught in 2023, partially differ, it can be said that 9th grade history textbook has nearly the same content as the textbook used in 2023. For example, the first unit of the 9th Grade history textbook taught in 2013 is “Historical Science”, and the first unit of the 9th Grade history textbook taught in 2023 is “History and Time”. When the content of the books is analyzed, it is observed that similar topics are covered in them. Similarly, Unit 2 titled “The Birth of Civilization and the First Civilizations” of the Grade 9 history textbook published in 2013 and Unit 2 titled “The Early Periods of Humanity” of the Grade 9 history textbook published in 2023 encapsule similar topics in terms of their content. It is also the case that some units have changed places in the books. In

the table, "Islamic History and Civilization (Until the 13th Century)" is given as the 4th Unit in the 9th Grade history textbook taught in 2013. In the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023 however, Islamic history topics are included in the 5th Unit titled "The Birth of Islamic Civilization." In general terms, although the topics are presented in different units, it can easily be observed with a wholistic view that both books cover the same topics and periods-

### **Comparison of 9th Grade History Textbooks Taught in 2013 and 2023 in Terms of the Female Names They Contain**

The second problem of the research is how the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 differ in terms of the names of women they contain. Details such as the historical roles and nationalities of the women whose names appear in the books are also reflected in the tables. To determine the nationality of the women, the state and period they lived in were taken into consideration. The findings are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

**Table 3**

*Women Names in History 9 textbooks taught in 2013*

No	Unit Name	Women Mentioned	Their Historical Roles	Their Nationality	Page Number
1	Unit 1: History Science	Ms. Bahriye (Hanım)	Halil İnalçık's mother	Turkish	19
2		Ms. Şevkiye (Hanım)	Halil İnalçık's wife	Turkish	20
3		Nefertiti	Queen of Egypt	Egypt	27
4	Unit 2: The Birth of Civilization and the First Civilizations	Princess Amytis	Wife of Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar and the one who caused the Hanging Gardens of Babylon to be built	Babylon	46
5	Unit 3: First Turkish States	Honorina	The Western Roman Emperor's sister and the cause of war	Rome	82
6		Aminah (Amine)	Hız. Muhammed's mother	Arab	106
7		Halima (Halime)	Hız. Muhammed's wet nurse	Arab	106
8		Khadija (Hatice)	Hız. Muhammed's wife	Arab	106
9		Mary (Meryem)	Mother of Jesus	Nazareth (Nasıra)	107
10		Aisha (Ayşe)	Hız. Muhammed's wife and her role in the Jamal Incident	Arab	119
11	Unit 5: Turkish-Islamic States (10th-13th Centuries)	Terken Khatun	Melikşah's wife and her role in the fights for the throne	Turkish	154
12		Fatma Bacı	Wife of Ahi Evran and leader of Bachıyan-ı Rum	Turkish	184
13	Unit 6: History of Türkiye (11-13th Centuries)	Gevher Nesibe	Daughter of Kılıçarslan II and the reason for the construction of Gevher Nesibe Hospital	Turkish	188



According to Table 3, a total of 13 women's names are included in the History 9 textbook taught in 2013. Among these women, Ms. Bahriye, Ms.Şevkiye, Terken Khatun, Fatma Bacı and Gevher Nesibe are Turkish. Amine, Khalime, Khadija and Aisha are Arabs, Nefertiti is Egyptian, Princess Amytis is Babylonian, Honoria is Roman and Mary is Nazarene. Ms. Bahriye, Ms. Şevkiye, Aminah, Halima, Khadija, Mary are included in history textbooks because they are relatives, wives or daughters of a man. In other words, 6 of the 13 women in the textbooks are included in the history textbooks only as relatives of men. Nefertiti appears in the book with the title of Queen. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were built for Princess Amytis and the Gevher Nesibe Hospital was built in the name of Gevher Nesibe. However, both Amytis and Gevher Nesibe do not play an active role in the making. Honoria, the sister of the Western Roman Emperor, is presented as a cause for war in the book. Aisha, who was personally involved in the Camel Incident, Terken Khatun, the wife of Melikşah, who was involved in the throne fights, and Fatma Bacı, the leader of the Bacıyan-ı Rum organization, are presented in the textbook with their active roles. According to Table 3, the unit containing the most female names is Unit 4 titled “Islamic History and Civilization (Until the 13th Century).”

**Table 4***Women Names in History 9 Textbooks Taught in 2023*

No	Unit Name	Women Mentioned	Their Historical Roles	Their Nationality	Page Number
1	Unit 5: The Birth of Islamic Civilization	Aisha (Ayşe)	Hızret Muhammed's wife and her role in the Camel Incident	Arab	147
2		Isabella	Queen of Castile	Castilian	151
3	Unit 6: Turks' Acceptance of Islam and the First Turkish Islamic States	Terken Khatun	Melikşah's wife and her role in the fights for the throne	Turkish	196

According to Table 4, there are 3 women's names in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023. These are Aisha, Isabella and Terken Khatun. Among the women, Terken Khatun is Turkish, Aisha is Arab and Isabella is Castilian. Aisha plays an active role in the book as the wife of Muhammad and the perpetrator of the Camel Incident. Isabella is presented as the Queen of Castile with her activities in Spain. Terken Khatun is included in the history book with her role in the struggle for the throne.

When Table 3 and Table 4 are compared, it is seen that the number of women's names decreased considerably in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023. While 13 women's names are included in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013, only 3 women's names are included in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023.

Among these women, Aisha and Terken Khatun have similar roles in both textbooks. The main reason for the inclusion of these women in the textbooks is that they were both involved in political events. While Isabella was not mentioned in the 9th grade history textbook used in 2013, her activities are partially included in the 9th grade history textbook used in 2023. The names of Ms. Bahriye, Ms. Şevkiye, Nefertiti, Princess Amytis, Honoria, Aminah, Halime, Khadija, Mary and Gevher Nesibe are excluded from the 9th textbook taught in 2023. These women are the ones who are presented in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013, mostly as the wife, daughter or relative of a male leader.

### **Comparison of 9th Grade History Textbooks Taught in 2013 and 2023 in Terms of the Images of Women They Contain**

In this problem of the research, it is discussed whether the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 differ in terms of the images of women they contain. The findings are presented in Table 5 and Table 6.

**Table 5**

*Images of Female Figures in History 9 Textbooks Taught in 2013*

No	Unit Name	Image Name	Subject name	Group/single (one)	Page Number
1	Unit 1: History Science	The works of the Historical Society and Atatürk	The Importance Atatürk Attaches to History Education	Group	16
2		....	Historiography / Let's Think Section	Group	21
3	Unit 2: The Birth of Civilization and the First Civilizations	....	Egyptian Civilization (Interpret Section)	Group	50
4		Hindus bathing in the Ganges River, considered sacred according to Hinduism	Indian Civilization	Group	52
5		Social classes in medieval Europe / Bourgeoisie	Feudalism	Group	80
6		Social classes in	Feudalism	Group	80

7	Unit 3: First Turkish States	medieval Europe/ Peasants Turkish women in history	The Role of Women in Turkish Society (Interpret Section)	Group	89
8	Unit 6: History of Türkiye (11-13th Centuries)	Gevher Nesibe Hospital-Kayseri	Modern Hospital of the Era: Darüşşifa (Interpret Section)	...	188
9		A view from Kayseri Castle	Mongols in Anatolia (Interpret Section)	Group	192

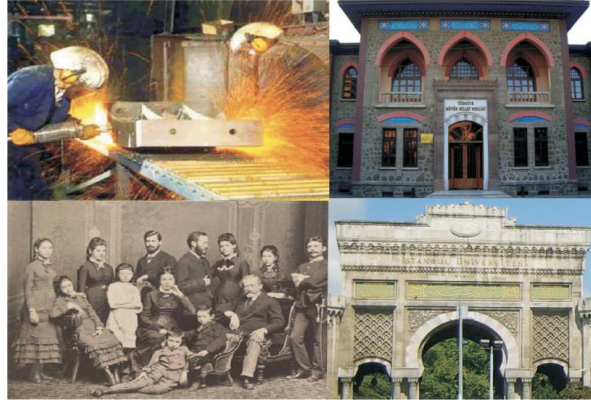
According to Table 5, there are 9 images containing female figures in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013. None of these images includes a sole female figure. As it can be understood from the image names in Table 5, these images provide visuals for the subject texts and do not directly draw attention to a female figure. The following image is an example of this situation:



**Image 1.** *The works of the Historical Society and Atatürk (Okur et al., 2013, p. 16).*

The visual shows the activities of the Historical Society. There is also a female historian in the image with low image quality. The visual used in the subject “The Importance Attached to History Education by Atatürk” is used to create visibility for the subject (Okur et al., 2013, p. 16). This is valid for almost all the visuals featuring women in the textbook.

The following image given at the beginning of the 2nd topic titled “Historiography” is a good example of using women images just to create visibility for the subject without aiming to give information about the women themselves.



**Image 2.** *Let's Think Section (Okur et al., 2013, p. 21).*

Students are asked to think about the image above by asking the following question: “Examine the visuals. Using visuals, tell us in which areas historiography might have improved?” (Okur et al., 2013, p. 21). This question focuses on the development areas of historiography. The image with female figures points to family history. The question is quite general. It does not directly offer an idea about women's history.

In Unit 3 titled “First Turkish States”, it is seen that the issue of women is emphasized through the visual used in the scope of “The Role of Women in Society in Turks (Interpretation Section)” (Okur et al., 2013, p.89). The following image was used regarding the subject:



**Image 2.** *Turkish Women in History (Okur et al., 2013, p.89)*

The purpose of using the image is to create a visual for the role of women in Turkish society. However, the image quality of the visual is quite low.

As can be seen from the examples, the images containing women in the 9th Grade history textbook taught in 2013 were not used to reveal women's history. It sheds little to no light on women's roles and experiences in history.

## **Table 6**

*Images of Female Figures in History 9 textbooks taught in 2023*

No	Unit Name	Image Name	Subject name	Group/single (one)	Page Number
1	Unit 1: History and Time	Image 1.4	What is the method of historical science?	Group	15
2		Image 2.3: Lifestyle of the first people (Illustration)	Lifestyle and Livelihoods of the First People	Group	30
3	Unit 2: Early Periods of Humanity	Image 2.18: Example of hieroglyphs on papyrus	The Beginning of Written Culture	Group	37
4		Image 2.25 : Living environment of the nomads	People and Migration	Group	43
5		Image 2.27: Oil painting titled "Flight of the Prisoners" depicting Jewish immigration	People and Migration	Group	45
6	Unit 3: The World in the Middle Ages	Image 3.16: Statue of justice representing the Laws of Justinian	Laws are Evolving	Single/one	84
7	Unit 4: Turkish World in the Early and Middle Ages	Image 4.9: Uyghur State flag	Source of Legitimacy of Power in Turkish States	Group	98
8		Image 4.19: Migration	Migrations of Turks from the Motherland	Group	108
9		Image 4.30: Empress of China	First Turkish States and Their Neighbors	Single/one	121
10	Unit 5: The Birth of Islamic Civilization	Image 5.5: Hijra/Migration (Leon Belly)	Islam is Spreading	Group	136
11		Image 5.9: Kaaba (Mecca)	Conquest of Mecca (630)	Group	140
12	Unit 6: Turks' Acceptance of Islam and the First Turkish Islamic States	Image 6.12	July 15 Democracy and National Unity Day /Reading Text	Group	188
13		Image 6.13	July 15 Democracy and National Unity Day /Reading Text	Group	189
14		Image 6.27: A tile from the Great Seljuk Period	Culture and Civilization in the Great Seljuk Empire	Group	203

According to Table 6, the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023 contains 14 visual female figures. The two images belong to a single/one female figure. One of them is the below image named “The statue of justice representing the Laws of Justinian” is included in the 3rd Unit titled “The World in the Middle Ages”.



**Image 3.16.** (Yüksel et al., 2021, s.84).

This image is used to create a visual for the “Laws of Justinian” described in the text. It is not a real image of a woman. Although it is a sole female figure, it does not shed light on the history of women.

The other visual containing a single female figure is the following Image 4.30, titled “Empress of China” in Unit 4:



**Image 4. 30.** (Yüksel et al., 2021, s.121)

This image is given within the topic on the policies of the Empress of China. It is only used to visualize the expression “Empress of China” in the subject text. It has a partially functional characteristic as it is related to the subject text. It partially serves the purpose of spotlighting women in history as students can form an opinion about the Empress of China through this image.

The other 12 images in the book are used to visualize the subject matter. They are not directly related to women's history. The following image can be presented as an example for this situation:



**Image 5. 5.** Hijret/Migration (Leon Belly) (Yüksel et al., 2021, p.136).

The visual above is given in the subject titled “Islam is spreading.” The function of this image is to provide visuality to the “Hijrah” event mentioned in the subject. It is seen in this image that women migrated along with men. However, the purpose of using this image is not to give any information about the women's experiences in the past.

In most of images examined, the female figures in the group are hardly recognizable due to the low image quality of the visuals. Additionally, these images do not convey strong messages to students about women's history. Therefore, it can easily be said that the images of women in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023 are not used for functional purposes in terms of teaching women's history.

### **Comparison of the Information Provided About Women in 9th Grade History Textbooks Taught in 2013 and 2023**

Another problem of the research is how the information given about women differs in the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023. In 9th grade history textbooks, knowledge about women is included in the political history related to men. A few women also mentioned in the textbooks as wives and mothers of men. There is quite limited information about women's roles in the topics that deal with social, cultural and economic life. In consideration of the findings, information about women in the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 is collected under headings of women in politics and government, women in social, cultural and economic life and women as relatives of leaders.

#### **Women in Politics and Government**

The 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013 includes little information about the role and power of women in government in the past.

Within the topic of “Hittites (1700 BC - 700 BC)” in the 2nd Unit titled “The Birth of Civilization and the First Civilizations”, the roles of the queens called “Tavananna” in government are explained with the following sentences: “...The most authorized person after the king in the government was queen called "Tavananna. Tavananna presided at religious ceremonies and ruled the country when the king went to war” (Okur et al., 2013, p.56).

The 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023 also included information about the influence and power of Tavananna in government. In the 2nd Unit of the book titled “Early Periods of Humanity”, the following information is given about “Anatolian Civilizations”: “The Hittites constituted a council named Pankus. The queen called Tavananna among the

Hittites, had a say in the administration” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.42). In the textbook, similar information is repeated under the topic “From Tribe to State” as follows: “In the Hittites, there was a council named Pankus (pankush) together with the king. The king consulted this assembly on his decisions. The queen called Tavananna was also effective in government” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.49).

In the 3rd Unit titled “The First Turkish States”, some information is given about the role of khatun in the Turkish state government within the subject of “The First Turkish States Established in Central Asia.” The following information is included in the “Let's Interpret” section titled “The Role of Women in Turks in Society”:

In Turkish societies, khan and khatun have common responsibilities in state administration. Moreover, ordinances cannot be put into effect without the signature of the khatun and the khan. In addition, the khatun is definitely present with the khan in the reception of ambassadors, feasts, kengesh, congresses, worship and rituals, war and peace assemblies. In Turkish states, women are the helpers of their husbands not only in the house, but also in the field, in the market and even in state affairs, and they are at the forefront especially in social activities (Okur et al., 13, p.56).

Considering the above information, the following question is asked under the heading “Let's Answer”: “According to the above text, evaluate the position of women in society in ancient Turks and compare them with today.” Thus, it is aimed for students to think about the position of women in society in Turks.

The 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023 also includes information that sheds light on the political positions of the Khatuns. However, the issue is not discussed in terms of the position of women in society, but under the title of “Material and Fundamental Sources of Power.” The following information provided in the 4th Unit titled “Turkish World in the Early and Middle Ages” can be given as an example of this situation:

General Assembly (toy) in the Turkish state organization; It was the highest organization that made general decisions on political, cultural, legal and economic issues and formed the basis of state administration. The General assembly, which consisted of the khan, members of the dynasty, khatun, chief advisor (aygucı), and rulers of tribes (bey), usually met three times a year to discuss state affairs (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.100)

In the “Do You Know” section, the following information is given: “Women had a say in the Turkish states. Among them were those who directed the policy of the state and those who administered the state as regents. Khatuns, who had separate palaces and orders, sometimes accepted ambassadors” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.100).

In the text of the subject, the “Understanding of Power and Management According to Turkish Inscriptions” is included and the high position of the khatun together with the khan is pointed out with the following sentences:

In the inscriptions, it is seen that the source of sovereignty in the first Turkish states was of divine origin. The following statements can be given as an example of this situation; “the Turkish Bilge Khan, who was in heaven like a god (Figure 4.15), I sat down at this time, the God who raised my father the



khagan and my mother the khatun, the God who gave the state so that the name of the Turkish nation would not be destroyed” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.105).

There is also information about women's political roles in the history textbooks. The following information about Aisha is given within the subject of “Ali Period (656 - 661)” under the Unit 4 “Islamic History and Civilization (Until the 13th Century)”:

After Hazrat Ali became caliph, those who claimed that he did not punish Hazrat Uthman's (Osman) murderers opposed Ali's caliphate. Hazrat Ali, on the other hand, wanted to achieve complete justice. In a period of turmoil that still continues, he wanted the murderers to be punished after the events calmed down so that innocent people would not be harmed. In particular, Muawiya, Aisha, Talha and Zubayr wanted the criminals to be caught as soon as possible, no matter what. This situation caused the parties to fight (Okur et al., 2013, p.119).

After the above information, the “Camel Incident (656)” which caused divisions in the Islamic World and took place around Aisha is described as follows:

Hazrat Ali could not convince those who opposed him. Hazrat Aisha, Talha and Zubayr took action with the forces they had gathered from Iraq. Thereupon, the forces of the two sides faced each other in Kufa. Hazrat Ali won the battle. In the battle, Talha and Zubayr were martyred. This war is known as the "Camel Incident" in Islamic history since the fiercest battles of the war took place around the camel ridden by Hazrat Aisha, who participated in the war. After the war, Aisha was sent to Medina. After this event, the center of the state was moved from Medina to Kufa. (Okur et al., 2013, p.119).

Aisha is also included in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023, through the Camel Incident. The following information given about “The First Divisions in the Islamic World” in the 5th Unit headed “The Birth of Islamic Civilization” is also related to the “Camel Incident”:

The Prophet's wife, Aisha and those around her, wanted Uthman's murderers to be found and punished as soon as possible and the for Muslims to be saved from the chaos they were in. Some of the companions formed a force by taking sides with Hazrat Aisha. Hazrat Ali went to Kufa with the force that he formed, following Hazrat Aisha and her army. In the meetings held here, an agreement was reached to find Hazrat Osman's killers. In particular, both sides have decided not to engage in a war without attacking the other sides. However, those responsible for the murder of Hz.Osman realized that they would be punished and started the war by attacking unexpectedly. Although Ali and Aisha tried to stop the war, they did not succeed. Ali's supporters prevailed in the fight, and Aisha was sent to Medina after the war. However, Hz. Ali did not return to Medina and made Kufa the center of the state. This war was called the "Cemel (Camel) Incident" in Islamic history because it took place around Hz. Aisha's camel (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.147).

Apart from Aisha, one of the political figures and female leaders that we encounter in history textbooks is Queen Isabella (the Queen of Castile). In the 9th grade history textbook of 2013, under the heading “The State of Bani Ahmar (1232–1492)”, the following information is given about Isabella: “Catholic-Christian unity was achieved in Spain as a result of the marriage of the king of Aragon with the queen of Castile. Christians who captured Granada in 1492 destroyed many artifacts of Islamic culture and civilization. Thus, 750 years of Islamic rule in Spain came to an end” (Okur et al., 2013, p.125)

In the 9th grade history textbook used in 2023, information about Isabella is given in the 5th unit under the title “The Spread of Islam in Europe” with the following sentences: “In 1469, Queen Isabella of Castile married King Ferdinand of Aragon, and 10 years later, the two kingdoms were united. The kingdoms, which became stronger, took action to put an end

to the Muslim presence in the region and destroyed the Bani Ahmar State in 1492” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.151).

Another woman who appears in Turkish-Islamic history in the textbook and who influenced the state administration with her activities is Terken Khatun. Information about Terken Khatun is given as follows in the 5th Unit titled “Turkish-Islamic States (10–13th Centuries)” within the subject “Great Seljuk State (1040–1157)”:

The fact that Malikshah's wife, Karakhanid princess Terken Khatun, wanted to appoint her four-year-old son Mahmut as crown prince caused a rift between Nizam al-Mulk and Sultan Malikshah because Nizam al-Mulk opposed Terken Khatun's desire. First, the death of Nizamülmülk and then the death of Melikşah became an opportunity for Terken Khatun. Concealing the death of the shah, Terken Khatun distributed the state treasury to the soldiers, hoping that they would put her son Mahmut on the throne. She had an edict read on behalf of his four-year-old son, Mahmud, and proclaimed him Sultan. This prompted her rivals (Okur et al., 2013, p. 154).

In addition to this information, the following question with an exclamation mark (!) is included in the text: “What are the activities of Terken Khatun that affected Seljuk history?” This question provides for the students to find out the negative impact of Terken Khatun on the Seljuk administration.

Terken Khatun is also found a place in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023. In the subject “The Fall of the Great Seljuk State” in the 6th Unit titled “Turks' Acceptance of Islam and the First Turkish-Islamic States,” the following information is given about Terken Khatun and her influence on the throne fights:

When Sultan Malikshah died at the age of 38, he left behind a vast empire that stretched from Kashgar to the Sea of Marmara, from the Caucasus to Yemen and Aden. Immediately after the death of Malikshah, the struggle for the throne began. His wife, Terken Khatun, received the approval of the caliph and had a sermon read in Baghdad on behalf of her 4-year-old son in 1092. Malikshah's other son, Berkyaruk, who was supported by the followers of Nizam al-Mulk, ascended the throne by winning the struggle with his brother. However, in order to gain the throne, Terken Khatun first made Berkyaruk's uncle Ismail Yakuti and then his uncle Tutus rebel against the administration (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 196).

In the 4th unit of the 9th grade history textbook used in 2023, under the title “Material and Fundamental Sources of Power,” Mete Khan's letter to the Chinese empress is included. In a part of his letter, Mete Khan gives information to the empress about the first period of his life (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 97). Through this information, which is not directly related to women's history, at least it can be obtained that the Chinese Empress corresponded with Mete Khan and existed in history as a political authority.

In the same textbook and in the same unit, under the title “The First Turkish States and Their Neighbors,” different information about the policies followed by the Chinese empress against the Turks is also included. The following information is given in the book:

From time to time, the Turks benefited from the agricultural products and tools of the Chinese. For example, the Kök Turk ruler Kapgan Khan once received 1250 tons of seed wheat and 3000 agricultural tools from China as a taxes. The Kök Turks planted the seed wheat they bought from China in the same year, but none of this wheat grew. Because the Chinese empress, who could not accept paying taxes to

Kapgan Khan (Figure 4.30), gave this wheat to the Kök Turks by cooking it. In addition, the value of gold and silver given as gifts is very low. Kapgan Khan, who understood the truth, made a great raid on China after 698. Until 703, raids were made on the northern provinces of China. Chinese armies of three hundred and four hundred thousand people were defeated by Turkish armies of forty-fifty thousand people (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 121).

It is not possible to find their names in the information given about the Chinese empresses. However, it is noticed that empresses have an important place in Chinese administration, and they are engaged in active politics.

In Unit 1, titled “The Science of History,” in the “Let's Interpret” column named “History Hidden Under the Waters” within the subject of “Fields of Science Benefited by History,” the contribution of archeology to history is emphasized, and the following information is also included:

...Another ship that sank in Uluburun, near Kaş, in 1300 has been described as one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century. Glass ingots of various colors, ivory, gold medallions, and silver bracelets belonging to the Canaanite civilization, and the only known gold seal of the Egyptian Queen Nefertiti, were unearthed from this shipwreck (Okur et al., 2013, p. 27).

From the above sentences, which emphasize the importance of archeology, the name of the Egyptian Queen Nefertiti and the information that her only known gold seal are obtained. The fact that Nefertiti was the Queen of Egypt points to her political identity. However, it seems difficult to directly relate this information to the political role of women.

As a result, both textbooks emphasize the role of tavananna and khatuns in state administration and discuss Hazrat Aisha, Terken Khatun and Isabella as political figures. In this context, information provided in the textbooks is not different. Apart from this, the activities of the Chinese Empire are included in the textbook taught in 2023. Therefore, it can be said that there has not been a significant change in the information provided in the textbooks about women's political roles.

### **Women as a Means of Establishing Kinship Ties and Strengthening the State**

Texts presented within the 9th grade history textbook used in 2013, mentions that there are women who took part in active politics through political marriages. One of them is included in Unit 3 titled “First Turkish States” in the subject of “Asian Hun State (Great Hun State)” with the following sentences:

Ki-ok followed his father's path and wanted to continue the state and order, which he had inherited. During his period, political and commercial relations with China were tried to be developed. Ki-ok married a Chinese princess to establish kinship with the Chinese" (Okur et al., 2013, p.76).

According to these sentences, the Chinese Princess, whose name is not given, is a means of developing political and commercial relations with China.

In the 9th grade history textbook used in 2023, the section describing Hun-Chinese policies and defined as the “Sample Text” explains the different consequences of political marriages with Chinese princesses as follows:

The Chinese emperors introduced many agents into the Hun country, especially in the entourage of Chinese princesses whom they sent as wives to the Hun kagans during times of peace. These agents created hostility between the Hun lords and their communities through various intrigues. He also made the Huns accustomed to comfort and pleasure by sending luxury goods to the Hun country through trade. This situation weakened the warrior skills of the Turks (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.100).

Honoria, in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013, is a woman who can be mentioned in the relationship between marriage and politics, even if the marriage does not take place. The following information in the textbook reveals this situation in the section titles as “European Hun State”:

Attila, who completely neutralized the Eastern Roman Empire, focused on Western Rome. He looked for various reasons to go to Western Rome. Attila saw the marriage proposal of Honaria, the sister of the Western Roman emperor, as an opportunity. Accepting Honoria's offer, Attila asked for half of the Roman lands as a dowry, and when this request was not accepted, he decided to go on the Gallic Expedition (Okur et al., 2013, p.76).

According to the information in the 9th grade history textbook used in 2013, the marriage between Çaka Bey's daughter and Kılıç Arslan, who was the ruler of the Seljuk State of Turkey, also had a political character. Information on this subject is given under the title “The Establishment Period of the Turkish Seljuk State” in the 6th Unit titled “History of Turkey (11–13th Centuries)”:

When Kılıç Arslan became ruler, he put the state affairs in order. He put pressure on Byzantium. He married the daughter of Çaka Bey, who founded the state in Izmir. Byzantium was disturbed by Çaka Bey's successes. The Byzantine Emperor, who did not want Çaka Bey to become stronger for his own state, caused a rift between Kılıç Arslan I and Çaka Bey. He eliminated Kılıç Arslan I and Çaka Bey (Okur et al., 2013, p.171).

Based on these sentences, it can be thought that Kılıç Arslan married Çaka Bey's daughter in order to increase his power against Byzantium.

In Unit 5 of the 9th grade history textbook used in 2013, the institution of “Atabeylik” is explained under the subject of “Culture and Civilization.” In the “Let's Interpret” section, brief information about Atabey Şemsettin İldeniz is given. Based on this information, it is understood that Azerbaijani Atabey Şemsettin İldeniz married Tuğrul's widow. But the name of this woman is not mentioned (Okur et al., 2013, p. 156). In the “Let us answer” section, the benefits and harms of Atabeylik are questioned through Şemsettin İldeniz. However, it is also possible to consider Şemsettin İldeniz's marriage with Tuğrul's widow from a political perspective.

Based on the above information, it can be seen that women are presented in history textbooks as means of establishing kinship ties and strengthening the state. The history textbook used in 2013 covered this topic more extensively. The history textbook taught in

2023 focuses only on the negative consequences of marriages with Chinese princesses for political purposes.

### **Women in Social, Cultural and Economic Life**

The 9th grade history textbooks used in 2013 and 2023 include certain information about the position and value of women in society in different civilizations and Turks. There is a “let's interpret” section with the title “The Role of Women in Society in the Turks” within the subject of the Asian Hun State (Great Hun State) in the 9th grade history textbook used in 2013. This section provides the following information in detail:

Information about the Turks before Islam goes back to 4000 BC. According to this information, women have the ability to ride horses, use weapons, and fight. Turks have valued and glorified women throughout their history. In Dede Korkut Stories and Kutadgu Bilig, Turkish women are mentioned with respect. In Ziya Gökalp's work titled “The Fundamentals of Turkism,” the position of Turkish women in the period before the adoption of Islam is given in detail. According to the information in this work, the maternal and paternal lineages were kept equal to each other in terms of value by the ancient Turks. In the family, the property is completely shared. Mother and father have an equal right to the custody of children. In Turkish societies, khan and khatun have common responsibilities in state administration. In fact, decrees in the nature of laws can not be put into effect without the signature of the khatun and the khan. In addition, the khatun is always present with the khan at the reception of ambassadors, feasts, kengeş, general assembly (kurultay), worship and rituals, war and peace meetings. In Turkish states, a woman helps her husband not only at home but also in the field, in the market, and even in state affairs, and is especially at the forefront of social activities (Okur et al., 2013, p. 89).

With the information given above, in the “Let's Answer” section, the question is asked: “According to the above text, evaluate the position of women in society in ancient Turks and compare it with today.” With this, students are expected to question the position of Turkish women in society from past to present.

The position and value of women in pre-Islamic Arab society is also one of the topics emphasized in 9th grade history textbooks. In the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013, in Unit 1 titled as “Science of History”, the following information is given under the section “Let's Interpret”: “...Tribes consisted of families of the same origin. The man had a say in the family. Polygamy was common among men. Girls were unimportant, and women could not benefit from inheritance rights” (Okur et al., 2013, p. 32).

In the same textbook, in the unit titled as “Islamic History and Civilization (Until the 13th Century)”, the following information in the subject “Arabian Peninsula” reveals the value of women:

Before Islam, Arabs lived in tribes. Chiefs, called sheikhs, were the leaders of the tribes. Tribes consisted of families from the same root. The man had a say in the family. Polygamy was observed in men. Girls were not valued, and women could not benefit from the right of inheritance (Okur et al., 2013, p. 105).

The 9th grade history textbook used in 2023 also contains the information about the low status of women and girls in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula. This subject is covered in Unit 5, titled as “The Birth of Islam.” The information provided is as follows:

In pre-Islamic Arabia, people were divided into three social classes: free people, slaves and mawalis. The free people, the main element of the tribe, had all rights. Slaves and concubines (female slaves), who did not have any rights, could be bought and sold, inherited, and employed in daily labor. If a slave was freed, he or she would belong to the class called mawali. ..In pre-Islamic Arabia, adoption was common, and the adopted child could benefit from inheritance. A man could marry many women and divorce his wives easily. A woman was accepted into the family only after she had a child. Women, who were deprived of most of their human rights, could not receive a share of the inheritance. Only women and daughters of prominent people in the tribe were privileged (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 133).

In addition to the above information, the following paragraph is presented in the “Did you know” column on the same page:

The reason why the pre-Islamic period is called the “Period of Ignorance” is not that people were illiterate. The prevalence of Bedouinism: The pre-Islamic period of Arab society was called the Period of Ignorance due to reasons such as people's backwardness in terms of civilization, their ignorance and heedlessness, their worship of idols, and their bad attitudes towards women (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 133).

In the “Farewell Sermon/Khutbah Wada” given at the end of the subject, the Prophet Hz. Muhammad warns Muslims to improve the situation of women in society with the following words:

O people! I recommend that you respect the rights of women and fear Allah in this regard. You have taken women as a trust of Allah, and you made their honor halal for yourselves by Allah's command. You have a right over women, and women have a right over you (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.142).

After Islam, it is seen that non-Arab women along with men, were valued less society during the period when the “Mawali” policy was implemented. In the “Let's Interpret” section titled as “Mevali Politics,” the below information is included:

During the Umayyad period... it was conveyed that Arabs did not walk with the mawali on the road, did not sit at the same table with them, separated their mosques, held the professions of the mawali in contempt, and avoided giving their daughters to the men of the mawali. In addition, until the last years of the Umayyad Dynasty, the caliphate of family members whose mothers were not Arabs was not viewed positively (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 150).

In 9th grade history textbooks, there is also information about the social roles of women as well as the value and position of women in society. The 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013 includes extensive information about the roles of Turkmen women, especially within the subject of “Akhism/Ahilik.” This information is given in the following sentences under the topic “Establishment Period of the Turkish Seljuk State” in the “History of Turkey (11–13th Centuries)” unit: “In the Akhi/Ahi community, where science, art, and morality were given great importance, women also had an important place in social and economic life” (Okur et al., 2013, p. 184). The following information is included in the “Let's Interpret” section named “Be Careful with Your Spouse, Work, and Food”:

In addition to the Ahi organization established in Kayseri during the Seljuk period, Turkmen women under the leadership of Fatma Bacı, who was Ahi Evran's wife, also organized among themselves and established a women's organization. They called this organization Bacyan-ı Rum (Anatolian Sisters).

Members of the Bacıyan-ı Rum organization mostly produced tent making, felt making, embroidery, knitting, rug and carpet weaving, and silk and cotton thread production. Anatolian women in the Bacıyan-ı Rum organization used to fight alongside their husbands in defense of the homeland against the enemy when necessary. This organization not only contributed to the adoption of helpfulness, hospitality, and honesty among women but also accelerated the spread of the Turkish language, Turkish culture, and understanding of Islam among women. They also would take orphans and lonely young girls under their protection and be responsible for their education and housing. In addition, they would take care of lonely old women and help those who were in financial difficulties. Anatolian women, the Bacıyan-ı Rum organization, as it was known at the time, used to make the women adopt the principles of "Be careful about your spouse, your job, and your food!" (Okur et al., 2013, p. 184).

In the "Let's Answer" section, the subject is discussed with the question, "According to the text above, evaluate the characteristics of Turkmen women and their role in society." From the text, it is understood that the Bacıyan-ı Rum organization contributed to the economy through tent making, felt making, embroidery, knitting, rug and carpet weaving, and silk and cotton thread production.

The subject of Bacıyan-ı Rum was not included in the history 9 textbooks used in 2023. However, in Turkish society, women's warrior roles are emphasized. The following information about the "Nomadic Army" is presented as a "Sample Text" in the 3rd Unit titled as "The World in the Middle Ages":

Rather than being a scattered crowd, the nomadic army had a structure in which everyone knew what to do and when to do it and helped each other. The army is a people on its feet, a nation on the march. In these armies, women also participated in the war when necessary (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 82).

Women's warrior roles are mentioned again in Unit 4, titled as "The Turkish World in the Early and Middle Ages." The following information is included in the subject of "Military Culture in Turks":

Since everyone who held a gun in Turkish society was considered a soldier, there were not mercenaries in the armies of the first Turkish states, except the Caspian State. In the permanent Turkish army, men and women, young and old, were in a position to fight at any time (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 110).

In the same unit, the "Report of the Chinese Ambassador" given in the "Let's Interpret" section provides the following information about Uyghur women:

According to the report of Wang Yen-te, the Chinese ambassador who went to Turfan Uyghurs between 981-984... Women wore some kind of hat on their heads. In their customs, most of them rode horses and shot arrows. They used to fill tubes made of silver and brass with water. They would squirt water by pressing these tubes or they would play sports by throwing water at each other (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.99).

However, based on the given text, the following question is asked: "What could be the impact of women on social life in the Uyghur State?"

The topic of "Laws Are Born" in the 2nd Unit titled "Early Periods of Humanity" of the 9th grade history textbook used in 2023 sheds light on certain law practices regarding women in history. The following information about the laws of the Hittites reveals the legal status of women: "In the Hittite Laws; family-related issues such as marriage, divorce, wedding, and engagement are included. While divorce was a right given only to men in the Asia Minor tribes, this right was also granted to women in the Hittite" (Yüksel et al., 2023,

p.58). In “Ten Commandments of the Jews,” there is the following article: “You shall honor your father and your mother” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.59). According to this article, mother and father are equated in terms of respect.

Few examples relating to the family and criminal laws in the Genghis Code are given under the topic “Laws Are Developing.” There is the following article in the Genghis Code that points to the status of women in society: “The degree of the children is determined by the degree of their mothers” (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 85).

Although it is very insufficient, the 9th grade history textbooks used in 2013 and 2023 contain certain information about the social and cultural life of women in history. In the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013, women in the Roman Civilization are mentioned in the “Let's Interpret” column titled “A Day of the Roman.” The following information is provided about the daily lives of women:

...When the children of the house came home from school, they would either eat something light or immediately play in the gardens of their villas. The lady of the house, on the other hand, would put on a long-lasting make-up after breakfast and then go to her friends (Okur et al., 2013, p.66).

The following information is included in the “Let's Learn” section within the unit of “First Turkish States”: “In Bulgaria, men, not women, cried over the dead. After Bulgarians became Muslims, they changed their funeral customs.”(Okur et al., 2013, p.92). According to the information given, mourners were men, not women, in Bulgaria.

In the 9th grade history textbook used in 2023, the following information about the lives of nomadic women is given in the “Let's Interpret” column titled “The Migration of Tribes to the Plateau”:

... Migration was carried out by double-humped camels or four-wheeled, covered carts pulled by oxen. These carts were like real houses where women spun wool, sewed, gave birth, and breastfed their children. Migrating to the plateaus would become a real entertainment. Beautiful dresses were worn, and cheerful songs were sung along the way (Yüksel et al., 2023, p.107).

Some information given in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013 indirectly sheds light on the cultural lives of women. For example, the memory of a Kyrgyz woman named Cumagül is included in the subject of “Calendars Used by Turks” (Okur et al., 2013, p.14). The main purpose of this text is to draw attention to the “Turkish Calendar with twelve Animals” rather than the story of women. However, presenting the subject through the memory of a woman is a positive approach for women's history.

Similarly, in the “let's interpret” section of the topic, which deals with the use of ethnography by history science, the following memory of Kınalı (hennaed) Hasan, who participated in the Gallipoli War, is described: Kınalı Hasan's commander asks him why he applied henna to his hair. In order to get the answer of this question, Hasan writes a letter to his mother. This tradition is about patriotism. In the “Let's Answer” section on the subject, the



patriotism among Turks is discussed (Okur et al., 2013, p. 29). However, it is possible to get an idea about the cultural practices of mothers through Hasan's correspondence with his mother.

Darüşşifas (hospitals) are mentioned in the topics, which deal with the architectural structures of the Turkish Seljuks. The name “Gevher Nesibe” can be found in the following information about Darüşşifas: “Darüşşifas are architectural works known today as hospitals. Kayseri Gevher Nesibe Hospital was the largest hospital of that period. Next to the hospital, there was also a school providing medical education” (Okur et al., 2013, p. 188). Apart from this, the name Gevher Nesibe, who is the sister of the Seljuk sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev I, is also mentioned in the image named “Gevher Nesibe Hospital-Kayseri” (Okur et al., 2013, p. 189). Although this text focuses on the architectural works inherited from the Turkish Seljuks, using the Gevher Nesibe Hospital image as an example is meaningful in the context of women's history.

In the 9th grade history book used in 2023, it is stated that men were on average 170 cm tall and women were 157 cm tall, and the average lifespan varied between 29 and 30 years in the Çayönü community, one of the folks living in the Mediterranean (Yüksel et al., 2023, p. 33). With this information, it is possible to put forward an idea about the physical characteristics of Çayönü women who lived in Anatolia in the early periods of humanity.

Apart from the above information, the goddess “Cybele,” who is not a real identity but is included as a feminine figure in the history textbook, offers clues about the view of women in the cultural sense. The following information is given about “Cybele” within the subject “Phrygians (800 BC–676 BC)”:

Cybele is the fertility goddess of the Phrygians, who were engaged in farming. The Phrygians accepted Cybele as the mother goddess. According to Phrygian belief, every autumn, Cybele encourages her lover Attis to die, and with the death of Attis, nature also dies. When Attis is resurrected in the spring, he meets Cybele. With the meeting of Cybele and Attis, nature comes alive (Okur et al., 2013, p.58).

Both textbooks contain information about the social position of women in Turkish society and Jahiliyyah Arab society. The strong position of women in Turkish society and the low social position of women in the Jahiliyyah Arabs are emphasized. The textbooks include similar information in this regard. Apart from these, there is also indirect and very limited information on the social and cultural life of women under different topics. However, the indirect information provided in the textbooks does not primarily aim to shed light on the history of women.

## **Women as Relatives of Political Leaders**

There are women appear in 9th grade history textbooks with the reason that they are wives, mothers, or daughters of powerful political and religious leaders. In the “Birth and Spread of Islam,”” which is the 4th unit of the 9th grade history textbook used in 2013, the names of Hz. Muhammad's mother “Aminah” and his wet nurse “Halimah” are mentioned (Okur et al., 2013, p.106). In addition, the following information is given about his wife, Khadija:

Hz.Muhammad, as before, was famous for his trustworthiness, integrity, and honesty in his youth. He was never seen lying. A Meccan merchant named Khadijah heard of Muhammad's fame and gave him the responsibility of the trade caravans. When Hz. Muhammad was 25 years old, he married Khadijah. They had six children, two boys and four girls (Okur et al., 2013, p.106).

Khadija was a wealthy woman who owned trade caravans. But she finds a place in the textbook primarily because she was the wife of Muhammad. Within the subject of “Muslims' Activities in Mecca,” Khadijah's support for Hz.Muhammad, after the revelation came to the Prophet, is explained in the following sentences:

Hz.Muhammad, who was very worried and excited, came to his house and told his wife Khadija what he had experienced. Later, the two of them went together to see Waraka, who was the son of Hatice's uncle and an important scholar in Mecca. After listening to Muhammad, Waraka said, “Good news, O Muhammad! You are the last prophet informed by Jesus, son of Mary. “The angel sent to you is Gabriel, who also came to Moses.” (Okur et al., 2013, p.106).

Another sentence in the book that emphasizes Khadijah's support is as follows: “In the tenth year of the prophethood, Hz.Muhammad's uncle Abu Talip and his wife Khadija, who were his two great moral supports, passed away” (Okur et al., 2013, p.106). The names of Aminah, Halimah and Khadijah's and information about these people were not included in the history textbook used in 2023.

In the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023, there is also certain information about women on topics that are not directly related to women. Some of this information is included in the subject of Babylon. Under the title “Babylonians (Amurru) (2100 BC–539 BC),” the following information is given in the “Let's Learn” section titled as “Hanging Gardens of Babylon”:

According to a legend, “the Hanging Gardens of Babylon” were built by King Nebuchadnezzar, the founder of the 2nd Babylonian State. Nebuchadnezzar married a princess named Amytis. Amytis, who came from a mountainous and green country, could not get used to the different geographical structure and climate of Mesopotamia. Nebuchadnezzar decided to build a replica of her hometown and built artificial mountains and lush gardens with flowing water because he wanted to please his homesick wife... (Okur et al., 2013, p.106).

It is understood that Amytis takes place in the history textbook since she was the wife of Nebuchadnezzar.

As can be understood from the quotes given above, only the history textbook taught in 2013 includes information about women as relatives of political leaders. These women were not mentioned in the textbook used in 2023, and their names were removed from the book.

## **Results and Discussion**

Despite the significant research on women's historical experiences, textbooks have not developed sufficiently in the context of women's history. Today, according to studies addressing the problem of gender in history teaching, women are almost absent in history textbooks (Can, 2009; Demircioğlu, 2011). Despite the changing approaches in the field of history teaching, the way women are presented in history textbooks are not changed in comparison to the past (Köse, 2015; Nene, 2014). Women still appear in inactive roles in history textbooks.

In this study, 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 were compared in the context of women's history. Additionally, it was examined how the visibility levels of women in history textbooks have changed during the last ten years.

According to the findings of the study, even though the titles and order of the units in the textbooks changed, the 9th grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 cover similar topics. Therefore, it was possible to coherently compare the two books in relation to women's history.

In the first problem of the research, the women's names covered by both textbooks have been examined. In the 9th-grade history textbook taught in 2013, a total of 13 women's names were identified. Six of these are included in the textbook as relatives of men, and they do not have active roles.

Princess Amytis, for whom the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were built, and Gevher Nesibe, for whom a hospital was built, are also presented with a passive role in the history textbook. Honoria, the sister of the Western Roman Emperor, Aisha with her role in the Camel Incident, Terken Khatun, the wife of Melikshah who was involved in the struggle for the throne, and Fatma Bacı, the leader of the Bacıyan-ı Rum organization, are partially portrayed in political roles in the textbook. In the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023, three women's names were identified. Aisha and Terken Khatun could find a place in relation to political history. Likewise, Queen Isabella of Castile, a political figure, is one of the women mentioned in the 2023 textbook. Consequently, it appears that the number of female names in the 2023 textbook has significantly decreased compared to the 2013 textbook.

The women featured in the textbooks are entirely associated with political roles. In history textbooks that predominantly emphasize political history, it is quite challenging for women outside of the political sphere to find a place for themselves. In particular, the

suitability of traditional chronological history and concepts to men's experiences and the tendency of history programs to focus on military, political, and economic history make it difficult to reveal the contributions of women outside these areas (Apaolaza-Llorente et al., 2023; Scheiner-Fisher, 2013; Tetreault, 1986). Apart from this, it will not always be easy for students to remember women like Nefertiti, Amytis, and Gevher Nesibe, who occasionally find a place for themselves in books with just a sentence.

In the 9th-grade history textbook taught in 2013, there were 9 visual representations of female figures. However, in the book taught in 2023, there are 14 visuals featuring female figures. Among the images in the 2023 9th-grade history textbook, two of them depict only a single female figure. One of them is a visual representation of the "Statue of Justice" symbolizing "Justinian's Code," and the other is a miniature titled "Chinese Empress." In the 9th-grade history textbook taught in 2013, the image of the "Gevher Nesibe Darüşşifası" leads to the name Gevher Nesibe. However, in the book taught in 2023, visuals featuring women do not include any specific names. In both books, images featuring women are not functional for women's history. These images are used to visualize the subject matter rather than provide information on women's history. Additionally, due to their low image quality, identifying figures from these images is challenging. It is possible to say that the images used in the books do not contribute to women's history. Former studies related to women's images also supports the conclusion that visuals in history textbooks are not functionally used for women's history and are inadequate (Köse, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c; Nene, 2014).

The information about women in the 9th-grade history textbooks taught in 2013 and 2023 appears to be quite similar. Both books provide information about emphasizing the power of Hittite queens with the title Tavananna and the power of Khatuns in the Turkish government. The low social status of women in the Arab world and political events related to Aisha and Terken Khatun are also included in both books. The 9th grade history textbook taught in 2013 and the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023 also have some differences in terms of certain information they provide regarding women. For example, in the 9th grade history textbook taught in 2023, there is no mention of Aminah, Khadijæ, and Princess Amytis unlike the textbook studied in 2013. Both books provide information about the status of women in social and cultural life. However, this information is quite limited, as it is sometimes given in one sentence. For instance, when discussing Çayönü, the average heights of both men and women are mentioned in a single sentence. In general, it can be said that both books largely present women in similar roles within related topics. However, the details about women differ slightly between these two books.

It is also observed that the images attributed to women in the textbooks have not changed from the past to the present. In a study conducted by Köse (2004), women are mostly portrayed in history textbooks with images such as “the inspiration of art, an agent, a ruler, a sacred being, a relative of a famous person, a means of establishing kinship ties and strengthening the state, a being who needs to be protected and who has suffered injustice, a woman for whom works of art are made.” According to the findings of this study, these images still persist unchanged in history textbooks. Akay Şahin & Açıklım (2023), also state that women appear mostly as relatives of men in history textbooks. And women are not represented in history textbooks as they deserve.

As a result, it can easily be advocated that the 9th-grade history textbook has not made any progress in terms of content and visuals related to women’s history in the last decade. Furthermore, in the 9th-grade history textbook taught in 2023, there is a regression in terms of the included names of women. The images used do not serve any purpose related to teaching women’s history. Therefore, despite the wealth of information about women’s experiences and roles in the past presented by women’s history studies, it would be accurate to say that women are gradually disappearing from history textbooks. It is not easy to claim that students will learn significant information about the historical roles of women, especially in the history textbook taught in 2023. In such a case, teachers should be expected to draw attention to the women history. In this regard, history teachers' awareness of women's history is important. The teachers themselves must be engaged and instructed in women’s history (Apaolaza-Llorente et al., 2023). In the study conducted by Aktaş (2020), teachers' opinions were taken about the history programs used in 2018. According to teachers, simplifying the curriculum and emphasizing thinking skills is a positive approach. However, the thematic structure and complexity of the curriculum are problems. In these findings, it is noticeable that the teachers did not express any opinion about the inclusion of women's history in the curriculum or textbook. Therefore, it does not seem possible to think that history teachers have high awareness on the inclusion of women's history in textbooks.

### **Recommendations**

It is possible to offer the following recommendations based on the findings. Women’s history-related gains should be added to history curricula. Authors of textbooks should be sensitive to including women’s historical experiences and roles in the textbook. Information about women in history textbooks should be provided with a constructivist approach. The

images and information used in the book should be selected to shed light on women's history and actively employed with teaching techniques. Representational and quality images commonly used for male historical figures can be extended to include female characters as well.

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