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**The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences (EPESS), 2014****Volume 1, Pages 372-375****ICEMST 2014: International Conference on Education in Mathematics, Science & Technology****THE LIFE AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS OF MEHMET TAHİR FROM  
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**ABSTRACT:** Mehmet Tahir from Bursa was Mustafa Kemal's teacher from Thessaloniki Military Junior High School. At the period he lived, he was called as "the greatest bibliography scholar of the Turks". Mr. Tahir was born in Bursa in 1861. He graduated from the Military Academy in 1883 with the rank of Infantry Lieutenant. He had worked in Skopje, Bitola and Thessaloniki Military Junior High Schools not only as a teacher but also a principal. He took place in Motherland and Liberty Association as one of the founders whose Thessaloniki department was opened by Mustafa Kemal in 1906. After participating in The Committee of Union and Progress between the years 1908 and 1911, he worked as a deputy in the National Assembly. After having retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel, He was brought to Topkapı Palace Library Management as the manager. He died in 1925 in İstanbul. He has got 25 masterpieces and the most famous masterpiece of him, "Osmanlı Müellifleri (Ottoman Authors)", has still been used at the Harvard University as one of the sources. He paid attention to the usage of maps in Geography courses. So, he brought French atlases to his classrooms. He was against rote learning in History and Geography courses. He used to teach a country's borders, regime and population first. He made his students draw the map first and he used to talk about old and existing relationships between countries then. He accepted Geography as the basis of the History. In his History courses, he requested his students to write some extra questions and give him back. By means of this he made himself become eager to search. He was in favor of the renewal and the purification of the language. In his Literature courses, he used to explain the terminologies first and then used to broaden all. He used to examine the text which was written by his students and ask for corrections according to the spelling rules. Then he himself used to do the corrections by looking at the papers. He was against rote learning (memorization), but he used to ask his students to memorize moral and national poems as well as proverbs. Mehmet Tahir was one of the founders Thessaloniki Department of the Motherland and Liberty Association which is secretly founded by Mustafa Kemal. Mustafa Kemal paid 500 Liras and bought some parts of Mehmet Tahir's books called "Ottoman Authors" and saved from the printing house while Mehmet Tahir was suffering from poverty in his last years, Mehmet Tahir's tombstone was built in 1935 by Atatürk.

**Key Words :** Mehmed Tahir from Bursa, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Ottoman Authors (OM)**His Life**

Mr. Mehmet Tahir's father is called Mr. Rıfat and his mother, whose name was Mrs. Rahime, was the daughter of Sir Necip from Bursa. Mehmet Tahir was born in Yerkapı district in Bursa on a Friday night on the 22nd of November, 1861 (Akçura, 1981 & Vahyi, 1335).

He started his education at Yerkapı school, which was located opposite to their house. Then he enrolled in the Military Middle School. While he was studying at the Military Middle School, he also had some religion courses from Harraçoğlu Moslem Theological School and learnt Arabic. After completing the Middle School as the top student, he started studying at the Military High School. He finished that school as the top student once again and joined the Army Military Academy (the Military of Affairs). Then finally, he graduated from the Army Military Academy as an infantry lieutenant (Aksüt, 1944 & Vahyi 1335 & Mehmed Fuad, 1329)

He started his teaching life as a geography teacher in Bitola. He gave lectures on history and oratory in the Military Middle School and the Military High School (Akün, 1992). He worked as a director at the Salonika Military Middle School. By that time, he was promoted to a major commander. However, he was suspended

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from his duty at the Salonika Military Middle School as a manager due to the reports published about him(Kepeciođu,nr.4519).

Mehmet Tahir was among one the founders of the Ottoman Liberty Association, which was founded in Salonika in 1906. His rank was the highest so that he was at the top among the members(Tunaya,1984&Unat,1960).We also know that he was a member of the Motherland and Liberty Association when Mustafa Kemal founded it in Salonika in 1906(Ülken,1992). Afterwards, Ottoman Liberty Association joined the Young Turks in Europe and renamed itself as the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress. In that era, Mr. Tahir raised to the rank of sheikh in the Malāmatiyya(Gölpınarlı,1992&Kara1992). He gained a strong political personality. Mehmet Tahir's power is such increased that the third President Celal Bayar registered to the Ottoman Committee of Union just because of the encouragements of him.

Mr. Tahir had always seen himself not only a politician but also a scientist, he became a deputy from Bursa after the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era. Just before the Assembly opened, he had temporarily been elected as the chief(Kutay,1961&Bayur,1952).

He took active roles in Chamber of Deputies that was created in 17th of December, 1908. He was nominated to give lectures to tell people about the goals of constitutionalism. He resigned being a deputy after the first part of Chamber of Deputies that ended at the end of 1911(Kabasakal,1981).

His ministration in Salonika Military Middle School Management was dismissed because of politic reasons. His degree was squadron leader when he was a deputy(Bleda,1979).

Then he served in court martial membership and verification officialism in İzmir. Tahir Bey had a big group of friends wherever he went and he wasn't expelled anywhere far because of these faithful friends of him. When he was a member of court martial for the second time, he was retired of being a lieutenant colonel. He was commissioned to research the libraries of İstanbul just before his retirement. During his duty, he investigated lots of manuscript and he made reports for every single library. After 1,5 years of this duty, he became the manager of Topkapı Palace Library(Akün,1992&Vahyi1335&Türk ve Dünya Ünlüleri Ansiklopedisi1983).

When Tahir Bey was on his duty in Alaşehir, his family came to İstanbul and rented a house. Following days brought his family financial difficulties. Ultimately, Tahir Bey borrowed a big amount of Money from government lending agency. He was unfortunately at the top of the list when the government lending agency announced the names of the debtors. Yet he still didn't change his principle of inviting his guests to his house every week.

His health problems were one of the problems that he had to deal with except for his financial difficulties. "Oymacılık ve Bursalı Oymacı Fahri" was one of his last scripts. While second and third volumes of "Osmanlı Müellifleri" was being pressed, Tahir Bey was sick. He wrote a letter to his friend Mehmet Ali Avni and told about his worries and asked for help. Mehmet Ali Avni provided the Money that he needed and got books from press. Mustafa Kemal bought some of the books for 500 liras in cash against goods(Aksüt,1944&Ergin,1937&.

In his last times, it has been detected that Tahir Bey had underdeveloped intelligence and he died in 28th of October, 1925 in Zeynep Kamil Hospital. The following day, he was buried in Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi islamic monastery. It was rueful that his death wasn't announced by any newspaper except for Cumhuriyet(Akün,1992).

## **Scientific Methods**

### ***His Researcher Characteristics***

His father and then Haririzade effected scientific activities of Tahir Bey(Gölpınarlı,1992). He researched sufis that lived in Bitola, poets and scientists and investigated gravestones. He asked for information by letter many times. His first literary work "Türklerin Ulum ve Fünuna Hizmetleri" was published in 1897. He used to consider important to outstanding people(Bursalı Mehmed Tahir 1327).

He published his writings in some journals like Sırat-ı Müstakim, Sebilürreşad and Türk Yurdu. Most of his writings were about bibliography. Around same period, he published the second volume of "Osmanlı

Müellifleri”(Bursalı Mehmed Tahir1975) . Tahir Bey is the second most-known bibliography and biography investigator of the last period of the Ottoman Empire after Mehmet Süreyya Bey.

Tahir Bey thought bibliography and biography complete each other. He believed that bibliography is a science that shows cultural level of a society(Bursalı Mehmed Tahir,1325). He travelled to the libraries of Bitola, Kosovo, Salonica, Aydın, İzmir, Manisa, Konya, Bursa and İstanbul. He dedicated his life to remind writers who were forgotten. In the period that he lived, he was honored to be praised as “the best book introduction scientist of Turks”, “the only book introduction expert”. He played an important role of opening “İshakiye Library” in Bitola, “Ulucami Library” in Bursa and “Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi İslamic Monastery Library” in Üsküdar(Beyatlı,1973).

### ***The Importance of Sufism in His Scientific Life***

Mr. Rifat, who was a member of naqshbandi tariqa, had a major role in his personal development. Because of the religious conversations that were done during his childhood at his home, he inclined to sufism and got a crush on Muhyiddin İbnü'l-Arabi. When he was a student at the military college, Haririzade who was the writer of Tıbyanü Vesaili'l Hakaik became his mentor. When Haririzade passed away, he obeyed Muhammed Nuru'l-Arabi. When he was at monastery, he arranged religious conversations at Friday nights. During the death of his Sheikh, he had become one of the well-known figures of Melamilik tariqa in this region. He concentrated on scientific activities in time and this situation hindered his religious conversations(Gölpınarlı,1992&Hasan Taib Efendi,1323&Gövsa,tarihsiz).

### ***The Methods That He Used In Teaching***

Although Geography was generally taught through memorization at that time, Mr. Tahir made it interesting with the methods that he followed. He gave great importance to the map that comprised a basis for Geography and every kind of Geographic information. He made his students bring a lot of French atlas to the class and provided a basis for the students to make use of them(Vahyi,1335).

Mr. Tahir strongly objected to having students memorize book sentences. In his opinion, teaching Geography and History wasn't composed of making students memorize information and making their memory into an index which includes the names of cities, rivers, mountains and gulfs. He didn't want all of the cities in the book. Furthermore, he found it unnecessary to learn the population of the cities that he wanted. First, he taught the borders of a state, its regime and general population. Especially at that time, it was enough to tell the strength that he had with a nice map. Also, with the help of the map, it was enough to tell under what reasons the strength formed. However, having a student draw the map on the board wasn't enough for him. He told the old and new relationships of the states that he analyzed with other states. He accepted Geography as the basis of History. This Geography and History teacher who dedicated himself to such a conscientious duty didn't confine himself to the new Geography and History. He was in intense research activities in order to know the old History and Geography of Turks and to compare them with the new ones.

When he had extra time in history lessons, he accepted his students' questions in a written form. For the questions that he couldn't answer at that time, he carried out a method in order to make a research about the questions and answer them. This method was suitable in order to give students a sense of curiosity and force himself to non-stop researches(Vahyi,1335&Develioğlu1988).

Mr.Tahir supported innovation and simplification of Turkish. He had some desires:

He wanted his book that is written in Istanbul to be read in Kashgar. Turkish should experience improvement within its own nature. Our literature should be based on logical, scientific and professional principles. Also, our literature should show the lives of Anatolian people. A Turkish person who has some education should find consolation in literature wherever s/he is(Tanpınar,1988).

Within the frame of new methods that he followed in literature lessons, he explained the concept that he taught and developed it with questions. Then, he analyzed the answers of the students one by one. When he noticed spelling and grammar mistakes, he crossed them out with a red pen and gave them back to his students. Therefore, he forced his students to correct their mistakes. Then, Mr. Tahir made the necessary corrections on the 2nd papers that his students gave. In this way, not only the teacher, but also the students made an effort in

one method. As mentioned earlier, Mr. Tahir didn't support memorization. However, he made his students memorize poems that are about moral and the country. Especially, he made them memorize the proverbs(Vahyi,1335).

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