

**An Investigation into the Use of Ottoman-Era Cultural Heritage Sites  
in Amasya as Out-of-School Learning Environments in Religious  
Education**

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## **An Investigation into the Use of Ottoman-Era Cultural Heritage Sites in Amasya as Out-of-School Learning Environments in Religious Education**

### **Abstract**

This study investigates the extent to which Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites located in Amasya can be utilized as out-of-school learning environments in religious education. The study is grounded in contemporary educational paradigms that argue learning should not be confined solely to classroom-based activities and emphasize the pedagogical value of historical, cultural, and architectural spaces. These perspectives form the theoretical foundation of the research. Designed in alignment with the value-oriented educational philosophy and place-based learning strategies advocated by the Century of Türkiye Education Model, the study employs a qualitative research methodology, supported by document analysis, literature review, and on-site observations. Key historical structures in the city center of Amasya—such as the Sultan Bayezid II Mosque, the Şehzade Osman Çelebi Mausoleum, the Bayezid II Madrasa, the Bayezid Manuscript Library, the Mustafa Bey Bathhouse, and the Yalıboyu Houses—have been examined in detail in terms of their historical, architectural, and functional characteristics. The religious, moral, and cultural values embodied by each site have been analyzed both through their physical attributes and their historical contexts. By adopting an integrated framework that unites place-based and observation-based learning, the study investigates how these spaces can be systematically embedded into pedagogical practice and emphasizes the

pedagogical potential of religious architecture in enabling contextualized value transmission and holistic learning. It argues that methods such as field trips, observation-based learning, and interactive instruction can transform these heritage structures into dynamic teaching materials. Furthermore, the study underlines the compatibility of this approach with both the Century of Türkiye Education Model and the current Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge curriculum. The findings suggest that the cultural heritage elements examined possess a high potential for fostering students' historical consciousness, aesthetic perception, and internalization of religious values within tangible environments. However, to fully realize this potential, teachers must be equipped with place-based instructional competencies, curricula should allocate sufficient time and content for such activities, and collaborative efforts with relevant institutions (e.g., museums, local governments, foundations) should be established. Accordingly, the study contributes to the academic literature on religious education while also offering practical recommendations, demonstrating the educational potential of Amasya's cultural heritage.

**Keywords:** Religious Education, Turkish-Islamic Arts, Out-of-School Learning, Ottoman Period, Amasya.

### **Amasya'daki Osmanlı Dönemi Kültür Varlıklarının Din Öğretiminde Okul Dışı Öğrenme Ortamı Olarak Kullanım İmkânlarının İncelenmesi**

#### **Öz**

Bu çalışma, Amasya ilinde yer alan Osmanlı dönemi kültür varlıklarının din öğretiminde okul dışı öğrenme ortamı olarak ne ölçüde kullanılabileceğini araştırmak amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Gelişen eğitim paradigmaları çerçevesinde öğrenmenin yalnızca sınıf içi etkinliklerle sınırlı kalamayacağı, bilhassa tarihî, kültürel ve mimarî mekânların pedagojik birer öğrenme ortamı olarak değerlendirilmesi gerektiği yönündeki çağdaş yaklaşımlar bu araştırmanın çıkış noktasını oluşturmuştur. Çalışma, Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli'nin benimsediği değer merkezli eğitim anlayışına ve yerinde öğrenme stratejilerine de paralel bir şekilde tasarlanmıştır. Araştırma nitel yöntemle yapılandırılmış; doküman analizi, literatür taraması ve yerinde gözlem teknikleri ile desteklenmiştir. Amasya şehir merkezinde yer alan Sultan II. Bayezid Camii, Şehzade Osman Çelebi Türbesi, Sultan II. Bayezid Medresesi, Bayezid Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, Mustafa Bey Hamamı ve Yalıboyu Evleri gibi yapılar, tarihî, mimarî ve işlevsel nitelikleri bakımından detaylı şekilde incelenmiştir. Her bir yapının taşıdığı dinî, ahlakî ve kültürel değerler, hem fiziksel özellikleri hem de

tarihî arka planları çerçevesinde analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında “yerinde öğrenme yaklaşımı” esas alınarak, bu mekânların nasıl daha etkili kullanılabileceği pedagojik temellerle tartışılmış, ayrıca mekân-içerik bütünlüğü bağlamında dinî mimarinin öğrencilerde değer aktarımı ve bağlamsal öğrenme sağlamadaki potansiyeline dikkat çekilmiştir. Alan gezileri, gözlem temelli öğrenme ve etkileşimli anlatım gibi yöntemlerle bu yapıların birer öğretim materyaline dönüşebileceği savunulmuştur. Ayrıca, Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli ve mevcut Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi dersi programları ile bu yaklaşımın uyumu vurgulanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgulara göre, incelenen kültürel miras unsurlarının öğrencilerin tarihsel bilinç geliştirmeleri, estetik algı kazanmaları ve dinî değerleri somut ortamda içselleştirmeleri açısından yüksek düzeyde potansiyel taşıdığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Ancak bu potansiyelin hayata geçirilebilmesi için öğretmenlerin yerinde öğrenme tekniklerine hâkim olması, programlarda bu tür etkinliklere yeterli zaman ve içerik ayrılması, ilgili kurumlarla (müze müdürlükleri, yerel yönetimler, vakıflar vs.) iş birliğine gidilmesi gerektiği önerilmiştir. Bu bağlamda, çalışma hem teorik düzeyde din öğretimi literatürüne katkı sağlamakta hem de uygulayıcılar için somut öneriler sunarak Amasya’nın kültürel mirasını bir eğitim kaynağına dönüştürme imkânını gözler önüne sermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Din Eğitimi, Türk İslam Sanatları, Okul Dışı Öğrenme, Osmanlı Dönemi, Amasya.

## Introduction

Education is a multifaceted learning process that transcends formal curriculum content and accompanies the individual's lifelong developmental journey. In this respect, it constitutes a dynamic and continuous process shaped both within the boundaries of the school environment and through the broader spectrum of experiences encountered throughout life. This process encompasses cognitive development alongside affective, social, and cultural growth.<sup>1</sup> Learning, while aiming to foster the individual's development in affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains, also shapes their relationship with the broader social context. Especially in contemporary educational theories, it is

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<sup>1</sup> Behçet Oral – Taha Yazar, “Öğretmen Adaylarının Yaşam Boyu Öğrenmeye İlişkin Algılarının Çeşitli Değişkenlere Göre İncelenmesi”, *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 14/52 (2015), 1–11.

acknowledged that learning does not occur solely within the confines of the school; rather, it can take place in every setting where the individual interacts with their environment.<sup>2</sup> In this regard, education is no longer a limited activity confined within the four walls of a classroom; rather, it becomes a dynamic process that permeates every aspect of an individual's life. Accordingly, in disciplines such as religious education, which prioritize the transmission of values, the individual's direct engagement with historical, cultural, and social contexts significantly influences the quality of education. Religious education cannot be confined to the mere transmission of theoretical knowledge; it necessitates contextual learning environments where individuals can internalize values, live their faith, and establish meaningful connections with their spiritual heritage.<sup>3</sup> The transmission of values through historical continuity and lived experience, rather than relying exclusively on abstract exposition, deepens both the permanence and the meaning of learning.

Out-of-school learning activities are structured educational practices conducted beyond the physical boundaries of the school building, aligned with instructional goals, and designed to address students' individual interests, needs, and tendencies either during or outside of regular class hours. These activities aim to deepen students' understanding of course content, foster positive attitudes toward learning, and support their personal development. The process is carried out under the guidance of teachers and subject-matter experts, and it is implemented in a planned manner with parental consent and coordination with relevant institutions. Delivering formal education through experience-based approaches in out-of-school and informal learning environments offers students opportunities to explore, observe, conduct research, develop inquiry skills, and engage directly with real-life contexts. In this sense, out-of-school learning transforms the learning experience into one that is enjoyable, liberating, and multidimensional, thereby enhancing the retention of knowledge. Moreover, these activities, which integrate learning with everyday life, position students not as passive recipients but as active agents of the learning process. As a result, individuals cultivate awareness of nature, history, culture, and society while also developing a

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<sup>2</sup> Dale H. Schunk, *Öğrenme Teorileri: Eğitimsel Bir Bakışla*, çev. Muzaffer Şahin (Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, Eylül 2014), 1-25.

<sup>3</sup> Fatmanur Dikmen, "Ahlak, Değerler ve Eğitimi", *BEÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 1/2 (Ocak 2015), 167-174.

wide range of skills such as taking responsibility, aesthetic sensitivity, empathy, collaboration, chronological and spatial thinking, self-regulation, and environmental and financial consciousness.<sup>4</sup>

In this process, out-of-school learning environments emerge as unique tools, particularly within the context of religious education. Such environments enable students to engage with knowledge cognitively, while simultaneously fostering affective and social dimensions of learning. Historical structures such as mosques, madrasas, tombs, bathhouses, and religious complexes (külliyes) offer multidimensional learning experiences—not merely through their architectural and aesthetic value, but also through the cultural memory they embody, the layers of religious meaning they convey, and the historical continuity they represent.<sup>5</sup> These structures serve as high-value pedagogical environments, particularly as authentic learning spaces that support the practical and contextual nature of religious education.

The transformation that educational policies in Türkiye have undergone in recent years has provided a strategic framework for the integration of out-of-school learning environments into formal instructional processes.<sup>6</sup> In this context, the "Century of Türkiye Education Model" (Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli), developed as part of recent educational reforms, stands out as a new educational paradigm that holistically addresses the cognitive, affective, and social development of the individual. The model advocates a pedagogical approach that goes beyond content transmission and prioritizes students' engagement with their surroundings as well as with historical and cultural values. Accordingly, the 2024 Religious Culture and Ethics Curriculum aims to

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<sup>4</sup> Ahmet İlhan Şen, "Okul Dışı Öğrenme Nedir?", *Okul Dışı Öğrenme Ortamları*, ed. Ahmet İlhan Şen (Ankara: Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık, 2019), 2-21; Engin Demir – Filiz Çetin, "Öğretmenlerin Okul Dışı Öğrenme Faaliyetlerine Yönelik Tutumları", *Gazi Üniversitesi Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 42/2 (Ağustos 2022), 1443-1461; Ayşe Seyhan, "Öğretmen Adaylarına Göre Sosyal Bilgiler Dersinde Okul Dışı Öğrenmenin Etkililiği", *Turkish Journal of Educational Studies* 7/3 (Ekim 2020), 27-51.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmet Yaman – Recep Uçar, "Din Öğretiminde Okul Dışı Öğrenme Ortamlarının İmam Hatip Lisesi Müfredatındaki Kazanımların Gerçekleşme Düzeyine Etkisi (Hitabet Dersi Örneği)", *Marife Dini Araştırmalar Dergisi* 25/1 (Haziran 2025), 180-210; Ayşegül Bayrak – Mehmet Gürol, "Development of the Out-of-School Learning Environments Needs Analysis Scale", *International Journal on Lifelong Education and Leadership* 11/1 (Ocak 2025), 42-61.

<sup>6</sup> Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, *Okul Dışı Öğrenme Kılavuzu* (Ankara: Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Ortaöğretim Genel Müdürlüğü, 2019), 3-18.

provide a value-oriented education rooted in the search for meaning and encourages students to engage in place-based learning by directly observing religious, historical, and cultural sites in their environment.<sup>7</sup> This approach demonstrates that learning does not occur solely within the confines of the classroom; on the contrary, it becomes deeper and more enduring when enriched by experiential, lived, and spatial dimensions. The core philosophy of the curriculum—“enabling students to internalize religious and moral knowledge by starting from the reality they live in”—provides a scientific and pedagogical rationale for utilizing out-of-school learning environments as educational tools. Particularly in religious education, the “virtue–value–action” approach, developed with an emphasis on the unity of knowledge, emotion, and action, ensures that the learning process is not confined to theoretical knowledge alone; it also allows students to construct meaning by directly engaging with their cultural heritage. Therefore, evaluating Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites located in historically rich cities such as Amasya as effective out-of-school learning environments within the framework of this new model holds significant pedagogical and methodological value.

Amasya, with its rich historical fabric, distinctive architecture, and Ottoman-era cultural heritage, is not merely a city but a locus of religious and cultural memory. It stands as one of the rare cities in Anatolia that embodies multiple historical layers. Particularly during the Ottoman period, Amasya emerged as an important administrative, scholarly, and cultural center. The city’s architectural heritage reflects aesthetic refinement while simultaneously serving as a vital medium for the intergenerational transmission of religious and moral values. Structures such as the Sultan Bayezid II Mosque, the Tomb of Prince Osman Çelebi, the Sultan Bayezid II Madrasa, the Bayezid Manuscript Library, the Mustafa Bey Bathhouse, and the Yalıboyu Houses were not merely places of worship, healthcare, or education; they also functioned as hubs where the intellectual and social life of the period was shaped.<sup>8</sup> When evaluated

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<sup>7</sup> Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi Öğretim Programı* (4, 5, 6, 7 ve 8. Sınıflar) (Ankara: Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2024), <https://mufredat.meb.gov.tr>; Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi Öğretim Programı* (9, 10, 11 ve 12. Sınıflar) (Ankara: Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2024), <https://mufredat.meb.gov.tr>.

<sup>8</sup> Ömer Said Türkmen, “Osmanlı Döneminde Amasya’da Vakıf ve Çevre İlişkisi”, *Amasya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 9/15 (Ocak 2024), 58-60.

within the framework of contemporary educational paradigms, these structures offer powerful contextual potentials that can open the door to meaningful learning experiences by enabling students to establish historical and cultural connections with the space.

However, studies focusing on the educational functionality of these historical structures remain quite limited. Although theoretical emphasis on out-of-school learning environments has been increasing both in the teaching of Religious Culture and Ethics and within broader educational policy, the scarcity of concrete implementation examples is notable. In particular, aspects such as pedagogical planning, content alignment, and the integration of learning outcomes/skills with structural features have yet to be adequately modeled. This gap creates a structural deficiency for both pre-service teachers and educational planners, posing a challenge to the sustainability of integrating historical and cultural heritage—especially in the context of religious education—into the learning process.

In this context, the question of how Ottoman-era structures in Amasya can be functionalized within educational settings emerges not merely as a matter of historical interest, but as a pedagogical necessity. Each of these structures serves as a natural learning laboratory where students can experience and internalize concepts such as history, religion, culture, and ethics directly in the field. This approach, which moves beyond the theoretical dimension of religious education and emphasizes practical and contextual learning, contributes to students' cognitive development while simultaneously fostering the construction of cultural identity and reinforcing their sense of belonging.

In disciplines such as religious education, which are deeply intertwined with historical, cultural, and aesthetic dimensions, historical structures such as mosques, lodges (*zaviyes*), madrasas, complexes (*külliyes*), tombs, and bathhouses offer profound and multilayered learning opportunities. In this respect, these structures are not merely aesthetic remnants of the past; they also serve as dynamic educational spaces that can directly influence students' construction of cultural identity, value systems, and acquisition of historical consciousness. However, the academic literature contains only a limited number of studies on how such spaces can be utilized within the context of out-of-

school learning<sup>9</sup> In particular, comprehensive and field-based pedagogical evaluations focusing on Amasya are virtually nonexistent. Building on this gap, the present study aims to assess the Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites in Amasya not merely as historical artifacts or touristic attractions, but as potential spaces for active learning processes. By conducting a multidimensional analysis of these structures in terms of their historical fabric, architectural functionality, and educational value, the study seeks to make visible the connection between these spaces and religious education. This analysis is not merely a theoretical proposition; it also serves as a concrete example for testing the practical applicability of the indigenous and national educational approach emphasized within the "Century of Türkiye Education Model." In doing so, the study aims to integrate local historical awareness with contemporary educational paradigms, ultimately enabling religious education to acquire a spatially integrated, affective, and experience-based dimension.

### 1. Subject and Problem

Amasya stands out as an ancient city where Anatolia's cultural and historical heritage is densely concentrated, having served as a strategic and symbolic center during the transition from the Seljuk to the Ottoman period. Particularly during the formative years of the Ottoman Empire, the fact that many princes received their education and administrative training in Amasya endowed the city with the identity of a "city of princes."<sup>10</sup> This historical depth has contributed to Amasya's emergence as both a political and administrative center and a cultural and educational hub. The city's madrasas, complexes (*külliyes*), and mosques served not merely as places of worship or shelter, but also as educational spaces where the intellectual, artistic, and moral understandings of the time flourished. This multifunctional character renders the historical structures of Amasya open to renewed educational evaluation even today. Accordingly, the instructional and value-transmitting roles these sites once fulfilled now serve as concrete examples that enhance the

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<sup>9</sup> Chris Taylor vd., "Out-of-School Learning: The Uneven Distribution of School Provision and Local Authority Support", *British Educational Research Journal* 36/6 (December 2010), 1017-1036; Hawrot, "Out-of-School Learning Assistance in Adolescence", *Educational Psychology* 38/4 (October 2018), 513-534.

<sup>10</sup> Selim Özcan, "Amasya'da Sancak Beyliği Yapan Şehzadeler Döneminde Amasya Şehri", *Amasya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 5 (Kasım 2015), 69-95.

functionality of out-of-school learning environments, particularly in the context of religious education.

In contemporary approaches to religious education, there is a strong scientific consensus that learning should not be confined solely to in-class activities. In this regard, historical sites and cultural heritage structures offer students opportunities for contextual learning while also creating a multidimensional educational atmosphere in terms of history, identity, and values education. However, current religious education curricula lack sufficient practical and locally focused academic studies that systematically explore how such out-of-school learning environments can be effectively utilized. Within this framework, the subject of the present study is to conduct a multidimensional analysis of the potential for utilizing selected Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites in Amasya as out-of-school learning environments in the context of religious education. This investigation aims to contribute to the field of educational sciences while simultaneously advancing cultural heritage awareness, supporting the transmission of religious sensibilities, and enriching the pedagogy of local history. Accordingly, the central research problem of this study is as follows: To what extent can Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites in Amasya be utilized as out-of-school learning environments for religious education, and how can these sites be integrated into educational processes? This problem presents a multilayered structure that encompasses both the physical presence of historical buildings and components such as pedagogical content development, field trips, spatial-content alignment, and the achievement of student learning outcomes and skills.

## **2. Purpose and Significance**

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites in Amasya as out-of-school learning environments within the context of religious education and to examine their pedagogical potential through a multidimensional approach that incorporates educational, historical, and architectural perspectives. The research seeks to move religious education beyond its traditional classroom-based framework toward a new learning paradigm that is student-centered and grounded in local history and spatial context. In this regard, and in alignment with the core principles emphasized by the Century of Türkiye Education Model—such as “holistic education,” “value transmission,” and “constructing a pedagogical framework from a national and

indigenous perspective”—out-of-school learning environments are reconsidered through an instructional approach structured specifically around cultural heritage sites. The model's objective of cultivating individuals capable of viewing the world from a “civilizational perspective” brings to the forefront the relevance of employing historical and architectural sites within religious and cultural educational contexts.

In various studies conducted on the significance of out-of-school learning environments in the context of religious education,<sup>11</sup> It is emphasized in various studies on the significance of out-of-school learning environments in religious education that learning experiences taking place within historical and cultural settings tend to be more enduring and profound at both cognitive and affective levels. Structures such as mosques, madrasas, tombs, and religious complexes are not merely historical artifacts; they are also rich contextual spaces where religious experience is embodied and value education can be effectively transmitted. The originality of this study lies not only in its reference to general theories of out-of-school learning, but also in its in-depth analysis of a specific context where a regional historical basin (Amasya), a particular historical period (the Ottoman era), and a distinct educational field (religious education) intersect. In the existing literature, out-of-school learning environments are generally associated with science or social studies education, while religious education remains a relatively underexplored domain in this regard.<sup>12</sup> However, it has been observed that studies conducting systematic analyses specifically within the field of religious education and through concrete spatial examples are exceedingly limited. Moreover, this research offers theoretical contributions while simultaneously drawing attention through its practical orientation by proposing concrete recommendations for pre-service teachers, curriculum developers, and educational administrators.

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<sup>11</sup> Ekrem Serin, *İlköğretim İkinci Kademe Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Derslerinde Gezi-Gözlem ve İnceleme Yönteminin Uygulanma Durumu (Şanlıurfa Örneği)* (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2003); Gülfer Temur, *İnceleme ve Çalışma Gezilerinin İlköğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersinin Amaçlarını Gerçekleştirmesine Katkısı* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2007); Rahime Çelik – Sare Evcimik, “Okul-Cami Buluşması Projesi Üzerine Nitel Bir Araştırma”, *Diyanet İlmî Dergi* 57 (Mart 2021), 460-461.

<sup>12</sup> Hakan Saraç, “Türkiye’de Okul Dışı Öğrenme Ortamlarına İlişkin Yapılan Araştırmalar: İçerik Analizi Çalışması”, *Eğitim Kuram ve Uygulama Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3/2 (2017), 60-81.

The implementation model to be presented at the conclusion of the study will be structured to contribute to the reimagining of religious education along the axes of local history, space, and values.

### 3. Method

This research is structured based on a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research offers a flexible, interpretive, and multilayered approach aimed at deeply understanding the meanings that individuals and groups construct within social, cultural, and pedagogical contexts.<sup>13</sup> In this context, the study is based on a multifaceted research strategy that integrates literature review, document analysis, and observation techniques.

#### 3.1. Research Method

The research employs the case study method and adopts a holistic single-case design. A case study enables the in-depth investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real-life context. In a holistic single-case design, the unit of analysis is limited to a single entity—such as an individual, a school, an institution, or a program—and this case is examined comprehensively through a holistic approach.<sup>14</sup> In this study, the case refers to the potential use of Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites located in Amasya as out-of-school learning environments in the context of religious education. The primary rationale for employing the case study method is that it allows for the evaluation of these structures within their historical and pedagogical contexts. Accordingly, the unit of analysis on which the research is focused is the city center of Amasya.

#### 3.2. Data Collection Process

In this research, the data collection process is structured in accordance with the qualitative research approach, based on a multi-source data strategy. The process consists of four main phases: literature review, document analysis, field visits and on-site observations, and validity verification through expert consultation.

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<sup>13</sup> Muhammet Özden – Ahmet Saban, “Nitel Araştırmalarda Paradigma ve Teorik Temeller”, *Eğitimde Nitel Araştırma Desenleri*, ed. Ahmet Saban ve Ali Ersoy (Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık, 2017), 1-29.

<sup>14</sup> Berrak Aytaçlı, “Durum Çalışmasına Ayrıntılı Bir Bakış”, *Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi* 3/1 (Haziran 2012), 7; Münevver Subaşı – Kübra Okumuş, “Bir Araştırma Yöntemi Olarak Durum Çalışması”, *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 2/2 (Haziran 2017), 419-426.

**3.2.1. Literature Review:** In the first phase of the research, national and international studies were systematically examined on topics such as out-of-school learning, the educational use of cultural heritage, environmental learning environments, and the pedagogical function of architectural structures. In addition, Religious Culture and Ethics course curricula were analyzed to identify and categorize cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning outcomes that could be associated with out-of-school learning activities. This analysis served as a criterion for evaluating the pedagogical suitability of the selected structures.

**3.2.2. Document Analysis:** Archaeological reports, art history texts, museum catalogs, academic articles, and graduate theses related to Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites in Amasya were reviewed to compile historical, architectural, and functional information about the selected structures. Accordingly, various types of buildings were identified, including lodges (*zaviyes*), tombs/cemeteries, madrasas, mosques, bathhouses, and caravanserais.

**Field Visits and On-Site Observation:** Research trips were conducted to verify in the field the findings obtained through document analysis and to directly observe the educational potential of the selected structures.<sup>15</sup> Field visits were conducted to verify in situ the findings obtained through document analysis and to directly assess the educational potential of the selected structures. This method, frequently employed in art history research, enabled each building to be evaluated holistically in terms of its architectural form, symbolic significance, spatial characteristics, and surrounding environment. During the site visits, qualitative data collection techniques were employed by the researchers; detailed observation notes were taken, original photographs were captured, and spatial analyses were conducted. The fieldwork was carried out between July 20–22, 2025.

**3.2.3. Expert Opinions and Validity Verification:** All data collected were reviewed by two experts from the fields of religious education and art history in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings. The extent to which the selected structures could be associated with the skills outlined in the Religious Culture and Ethics curriculum, their applicability within the instructional process, and their potential

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<sup>15</sup> Lokman Tay, "Sanat Tarihi Yazımında Bilimsel Araştırma Teknikleri", *İdil* 61 (Eylül 2019), 1176.

contribution to out-of-school learning were reassessed in light of expert feedback and restructured with well-grounded justifications.

This multilayered data collection process has reinforced both the interdisciplinary nature and the practice-oriented framework of the research. In the findings section, each structure is introduced in terms of its location, date of construction, material characteristics, architectural details, and current condition. These elements are then connected to possible activities that can be implemented within the Religious Culture and Ethics course, thereby transforming them into concrete learning opportunities.

### **3.3. Scope and Limitations**

The scope of this study is limited to architectural structures from the Ottoman period located within the city center of Amasya; structures from the Seljuk period, the Republican era, or contemporary times have been excluded from the analysis. Similarly, buildings situated in districts outside Amasya's city center or in other provinces have also been excluded from the study. The sample was determined based on specific criteria, including architectural authenticity, religious and cultural functionality, educational potential, state of preservation, accessibility, and relevance to the national curriculum. The selected structures, identified in accordance with these criteria, are as follows: the Sultan Bayezid II Mosque, the Tomb of Prince Osman Çelebi, the Sultan Bayezid II Madrasa, the Bayezid Manuscript Library, the Mustafa Bey Bathhouse, and the Yaliboyu Houses.

### **3.4. Evaluation Criteria**

In the study, three main criteria were used to determine the potential of the selected structures to serve as out-of-school learning environments in religious education:

**3.4.1. Educational Criteria:** Qualities that can contribute to students' cognitive, affective, and social learning; structured learning opportunities guided by the teacher; and pedagogical potential grounded in active participation and observation.

**3.4.2. Historical and Cultural Criteria:** The structure's origin in the Ottoman period and its inclusion of content related to the religious, artistic, and social fabric of that era.

**3.4.3. Architectural and Spatial Criteria:** The physical integrity of the structure, aesthetic elements, symbolic values, and its potential to offer experiential engagement for students.

Within this framework, the research methodology has been designed in a manner that is both aligned with the academic literature and capable of accessing field-based data through an applied structure. This methodological integrity aims to provide theoretical insights while at the same time generating concrete, practice-oriented implications for the field.

#### **4. Selected Ottoman-Era Cultural Heritage Sites in Amasya**

Ottoman-era cultural heritage assets should be regarded not merely as historical remnants, but also as pedagogically valuable, multidimensional learning environments. These structures—through their religious, social, artistic, and architectural functions—serve as unique spaces that enable individuals to establish a connection with the past and sustain historical consciousness. When evaluated specifically within the context of religious education, structures such as mosques, madrasas, tombs, and *imarets* not only help concretize instructional content but also offer a rich atmosphere conducive to values education. In this regard, the Sultan Bayezid II Complex, one of the most significant külliyes of the Ottoman classical period, stands out as a key center for both religious education and cultural transmission. The selected Ottoman-era cultural heritage sites in Amasya, which will be examined in detail below, possess significant potential for out-of-school religious education due to both their architectural composition and their historical functions.

##### **4.1. Mosque (Sultan Bayezid II Mosque)**

Located in the center of Amasya along the banks of the Yeşilırmak River, the Sultan Bayezid II Mosque is one of the finest examples reflecting the architectural and cultural heritage of the early classical period of the Ottoman Empire. The mosque's construction inscription bears the date Rajab 891 AH (July 1486 CE). This inscription, written in *thuluth* script by the renowned calligrapher Ali b. Mezîd, possesses significant aesthetic and epigraphic value.<sup>16</sup> The mosque functions as a place of worship while

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<sup>16</sup> Semavi Eyice, "Beyazıt II Camii ve Külliyesi", *Diyanet İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 6. cilt (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1992), 40-42; Muzaffer Doğanbaş, *Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi* (Amasya: Amasya Valiliği Yayınları, 2013), 54; Hüseyin Hüsameddin, *Amasya Tarihi*, haz. Ali Yılmaz ve Bekir Koç, 2. cilt (İstanbul: Çorum Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2007), 133-135.

at the same time serving as the central structure of a larger *külliye* (religious and social complex). Surrounding the mosque are various waqf-funded structures such as a madrasa, *imaret* (soup kitchen), *tabhane* (guesthouse), *dariüşşifa* (hospital), *mektep*, and *sıbyan mektebi* (elementary schools). These buildings were integrated through charitable endowments to fulfill social, cultural, and educational functions. The green spaces established around the mosque and maintained by waqfs served as areas for rest and communal interaction, fostering social engagement.<sup>17</sup>



**Figure 1:** Sultan Bayezid II Mosque (Exterior View)

The mosque was constructed in the zaviye-type plan with an inverted “T” layout, a typology characteristic of early classical Ottoman architecture. This plan expands with lateral arms aligned along the east-west axis. The entire structure is built using finely cut stone. It is covered by two large domes mounted on octagonal drums along the north-south axis, while the side sections are each capped with three smaller domes. Transitions to the domes are achieved through pendentives, and the lateral chambers are accessed through arched openings known as

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<sup>17</sup> Ömer Sait Türkmen, “Osmanlı Döneminde Amasya’da Vakıf ve Çevre İlişkisi,” *Amasya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 9/15 (Ocak 2024), 58-91; Serin, *Amasya Türk-İslam Mimarisinde Yazı-Mekân İlişkisi*, 121.

*arslangöğsü* (lion's chest arches).<sup>18</sup> The last congregation portico (*son cemaat mahalli*), located on the northern side of the mosque, consists of five bays supported by marble columns. Each bay is covered with an octagonal dome. The spandrels of the arches in this section feature inscriptions in Arabic and Persian on ceramic tiles. The main entrance portal (*taçkapı*) includes a muqarnas-decorated niche framed within a tripartite border and is adorned with bichromatic marble. The inscription above the entrance arch records the completion date of the mosque. The main door (*cümle kapısı*) is richly decorated using *kündekârî* and carving techniques, showcasing intricate geometric wood craftsmanship.<sup>19</sup>

The mosque's two minarets, positioned at the northeastern and northwestern corners, reflect distinct aesthetic approaches. The minaret on the eastern façade is constructed with alternating bands of red and white stone, while the one on the western façade is adorned with red stone inlays arranged in a zigzag pattern. The balconies (*şerefe*) of both minarets feature *muqarnas* moldings, showcasing the refined elegance of Ottoman stone craftsmanship.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mehtap Gülşen Serin, *Amasya Türk-İslam Mimarisinde Yazı-Mekân İlişkisi* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2023), 121.

<sup>19</sup> Eyice, "Beyazıt II Camii ve Külliyesi," 40-42; Mustafa Tanrıverdi, *Amasya'daki Sultan II. Bayezid Külliyesi'nin Mimari Özellikleri* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2003), 22-25; Abdulkadir Dünder, "Bir Belgeye Göre Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi", Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi 44/2 (Ağustos 2003), 131-172.

<sup>20</sup> Serin, *Amasya Türk-İslam Mimarisinde Yazı-Mekân İlişkisi*, 122; Mustafa Aydın, *Samsun ve Amasya'da Bulunan Selçuklu ve Osmanlı Dönemine Ait Bazı Camilerin Ahşap Kapılarının Malzeme ve Yapım Tekniği Bakımından İncelenmesi* (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Gazi Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, 2023), 21-22.



Figure 2: Sultan Bayezid II Mosque (Interior View)

The prayer hall (*harim*) is covered by two large domes supported by arches resting on massive piers. The *mihrab* features modest marble craftsmanship and is distinguished by its *muqarnas*-decorated crown section. In the upper row of windows on the qibla wall, inscriptions written on tile panels are present. Inside the space, examples of *revzen-i menkûş* (ornamented stained-glass windows) can be found. The *minbar* is constructed from stone and marble, with its conical cap adorned with *kalem işi* (painted decoration); the overall ornamentation remains understated. The *müezzin mahfili* (muezzin's gallery) is supported by black marble columns. Additionally, the mosque's interior features tile panels inscribed in white *thuluth* script on a cobalt blue background, offering distinctive examples of the integration of calligraphy with architecture. Painted decorations in blue and red tones, along with inscriptions bearing the names of the *Çar-yâr-ı Güzîn* (the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs), imbue the space with a mystical and artistic ambiance.

It has been identified that the mosque contains three *mihrabs*. In addition to the main *mihrab* in the prayer hall, there are two others located on the eastern and western sides of the *last congregation area* (*son cemaat*

yeri). Each of these is semicircular in plan and constructed from finely cut stone, with dimensions of 445 cm in height, 155 cm in width, and 70 cm in depth. Their tympana feature cartouches with *penç* motifs, as well as *rumi*, *lotus*, and *saadet düğümü* (knot of felicity) motifs, all framed by borders decorated with *zencerek* (interlacing chain) patterns.<sup>21</sup>

The decorative program of the structure is enriched with striking examples on both the exterior and interior. The inner surfaces of the five domes in the *last congregation portico* (*son cemaat mahalli*) are adorned with *kalem işi* (painted ornamentation) in dominant shades of blue and red. In the same section, the spandrels of the window arches feature Arabic and Persian calligraphy inscribed on a tiled background, reflecting the harmony between ornamental decoration and the art of calligraphy. Additionally, the *mihrabiye* niches on the eastern and western walls draw attention with their stone craftsmanship and inscriptive ornamentation. The tympana of these niches are decorated with red and white *penç* motifs on a light blue background, further embellished with classical Ottoman motifs such as *rumi*, *lotus*, *bud*, and *saadet düğümü* (knot of felicity). The *mihrabs* are framed with *zencerek* (interlaced chain) borders and defined by moldings (*silme*).

The main *mihrab* in the prayer hall is constructed from marble, marked by an emphasis on simplicity. Nevertheless, with its *muqarnas* crown and overall composition, it reflects the refined aesthetics of classical Ottoman architecture. The *minbar* is also made of stone and marble, featuring *kalem işi* decoration only on its conical cap, while the body remains plain. The use of rosette and floral medallion (*gölbezek*) motifs in certain areas complements this simplicity. The mosque's *main portal* (*taşkapı*) was crafted using the *kündekârî* technique and adorned with interlocking geometric motifs. The brass bands and bosses on the door wings are distinctive examples of Ottoman woodwork. The inscriptive panels above the door and within the window openings were prepared using wood carving techniques, representing a synthesis of calligraphy and ornamental art. The inscriptions in white *thuluth* script on a cobalt blue background exemplify a high level of artistic and typographic sophistication. The presence of *revzen-i menkûş* (ornamented stained-glass

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<sup>21</sup> Serin, *Amasya Türk-İslam Mimarisinde Yazı-Mekân İlişkisi*, 30, 121; Zeynep Kemaloğlu, "Geometrik Tezyînatlı Amasya Camii Mihrapları", *Akra Kültür Sanat ve Edebiyat Dergisi* 12/32 (Ocak 2024), 100-101.

windows) in various parts of the interior allows light to filter into the space, creating an aesthetically refined atmosphere. These decorations are visual in form while simultaneously serving a functional purpose. *Kalem işi* ornamentation is found in many areas of the mosque, particularly on arch surfaces, spandrels, and window surrounds. Notably, the calligraphic inscriptions on ceramic tile backgrounds are significant both for their artistic merit and their transmission of religious messages.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4.2. Tomb (Tomb of Prince Osman Çelebi)



Figure 3: Tomb of Prince Osman Çelebi

Located in the city center of Amasya, the Tomb of Prince Osman Çelebi is positioned to the southeast of the mosque as part of the Sultan Bayezid II Complex. According to the inscription above the entrance door, the tomb was constructed in 919 AH (1513 CE).<sup>23</sup> Over time, the structure has been affected by various natural disasters, most notably suffering significant damage during the major earthquake of 1939. It was subsequently subjected to comprehensive restorations carried out by the

<sup>22</sup> Neslihan Korkmaz, *Amasya Camilerinde Ahşap Bindirme Tavan* (Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2011), 13; Tuğba Kıvılcım, *Amasya Camilerindeki Minberler (Cumhuriyet Dönemine Kadar)* (Samsun: Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2023), 62-68.

<sup>23</sup> İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Tokat: Niksar, Turhal, Zile ve Amasya Vilayet, Kaza ve Nahiyelerindeki Kitabeler* (Ankara: 1927), 138; Muzaffer Doğanbaş, *Amasya Türbeleri* (Amasya: Amasya Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2018), 83.

General Directorate of Foundations in 1952 and 1971. The tomb is a square-planned structure covered by both an inner and outer dome and constructed using the *almaşık* (alternating) masonry technique. Its interior dimensions are approximately 495 × 500 cm, while the external dimensions reach 690 cm. A wooden portico measuring 435 × 355 cm is attached to the northern façade of the tomb, offering a simple yet meaningful architectural transition. The structure rests on a flat platform, and its main walls are built with finely cut stone reinforced by three horizontal rows of brick bonding. The façades, approximately 450 cm high, are finished with two tiers of *kirpi saçak* (sawtooth cornices). The dome rests on a two-tiered drum made of both brick and cut stone, providing the building with enhanced structural integrity. Covered in lead, the dome has a tripartite body and is crowned with a metallic finial featuring a crescent-and-star motif at its apex. The façade design of the tomb is well-balanced: on the east, west, and south sides, each section features a pair of Windows: one with a flat stone lintel measuring 67 × 108 cm, and a semi-circular arched one above measuring 52 × 170 cm—allowing natural light to illuminate the interior space. The entrance on the north façade is a depressed arch composed of alternating black and white stones, measuring 92 × 194 cm. Above the entrance, there is a rectangular inscription panel measuring 112 × 42 cm, containing a four-line Arabic text inscribed in *celi sülüs* script on marble. The interior of the tomb is arranged with a minimalist aesthetic. The walls are plastered and painted in a soft yellow color. Illumination is provided through a two-tiered window system installed on three sides of the structure. The *mihrab*, located on the southern wall and measuring 72 × 207 cm, is notable for its plain design and eight-tiered *kavsara* (semi-dome niche) structure. On the north wall, adjacent to the entrance door, there are two niches measuring 90 × 125 cm, which have been fitted with wooden covers and repurposed as storage cabinets. The floor of the structure is paved with hexagonal stone tiles, providing both an aesthetically pleasing and durable surface. The most significant element of the tomb is the *sarcophagus* it houses. This sarcophagus belongs to Prince Osman, the son of Sultan Bayezid II, who passed away at a young age. It

is highly likely that the construction of the tomb was intended to preserve and honor his memory.<sup>24</sup>

### 4.3. Madrasa (Sultan Bayezid II Madrasa)



**Figure 4:** Sultan Bayezid II Madrasa

The Sultan Bayezid II Madrasa is one of the most significant educational structures of early classical Ottoman architecture. The patron of the building was Sultan Bayezid II, who lived between 1448 and 1512 and reigned as Ottoman sultan from 1481 to 1512. The madrasa was commissioned by his son, Prince Ahmed, who was serving as the governor of Amasya at the time, under the order of the sultan. The foundation of the structure was laid in 886 AH (1481 CE), and after approximately five years of construction, it was completed and opened for use in 891 AH (1486 CE). The architect of the madrasa is identified in historical sources as Hayreddin, a prominent architect of the period. As a component of the Sultan Bayezid II Complex, the madrasa is situated at the southwestern corner of the külliye, aligned along a north-south axis. In the literature, it

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<sup>24</sup> Zeynep Kübra Ketil, *Amasya Türbeleri* (Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2019), 59–61; Ayşegül Şen, *Amasya Şehir Merkezindeki Dini Ziyaret Yerleri* (Çorum: Hitit Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2019), 71–72; İsrail Mutlu, *Amasya'da Osmanlı Devri Anıtları* (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 2022), 40–42.

is occasionally referred to as the “Sultaniye Madrasa” or “Meydan Madrasa.”<sup>25</sup>

The educational function of the madrasa holds a distinguished place within the Ottoman scholarly tradition. According to records in the endowment charter (*vakfiye*), this structure was among the madrasas where a *müderris* (professor) was employed with a daily wage of fifty *akçe*. The first *müderris* of the madrasa was Cemâlîzâde Zenbilli Ali Efendi, a prominent figure in the Ottoman scholarly class and a native of Amasya. The names of nineteen *müderris* who served until 1004 AH (1596 CE) are known. All of these individuals also served as *muftis* of Amasya. This indicates that the madrasa functioned as an educational institution while at the same time serving as a scholarly center where the city's religious elite were trained.<sup>26</sup>

The structure, designed in the form of an independent madrasa with a symmetrical U-shaped plan, features an open courtyard surrounded by arcades (*revaks*). The student cells are arranged along the eastern, western, and southern façades, comprising a total of 18 rooms. The windows, doors, and fireplaces in the cells were designed in a systematic order; corner rooms have four windows each, while the others have two. However, wall niches commonly found in classical Ottoman madrasas are almost entirely absent in this structure. At the center of the southern façade lies the square-planned classroom (*dershane*), flanked by small adjoining rooms. The classroom features a total of six window openings and niches on both sides of the entrance. The *mihrab* niche is located on the southern wall. As for the roofing, the classroom, cells, and classroom portico are covered with domes, while the arcades are topped with cross

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<sup>25</sup> Merve Filiz, *Osmanlı Mimarlığında II. Bayezid Dönemi Medreselerinin Yeri ve Önemi: Amasya, Edirne, İstanbul Örnekleri* (İstanbul: Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2015), 26; Uzunçarşılı, *Tokat: Niksar, Turhal, Zile ve Amasya Kitabeleri*, 138; Hüseyin Hüsameddin, *Amasya Tarihi*, sad. Ali Yılmaz ve Mehmet Akkuş, 1. cilt (Ankara: Amasya Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1986), 104; Yekta Demiralp, *Erken Osmanlı Medreseleri (1300–1500)* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1999), 141.

<sup>26</sup> Hoca Sâdeddin Efendi, *Tâcü't-Tevârih*, haz. İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, 4. cilt (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992), 218; Adnan Gürbüz, *Toprak Vakıf İlişkileri Çerçevesinde XVI. Yüzyılda Amasya Sancağı* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 1993), 208; Cahid Baltacı, *XV–XVI. Yüzyıllarda Osmanlı Medreseleri* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2005), 488, 766–767; Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, II. Bayezid Vakfiyesi, Defter No: 2113, Sayfa No: 32, Sıra No: 179.

vaults. The domes rest on octagonal drums, with transitions achieved through *pendentives*. At the center of the courtyard is a circular pool.<sup>27</sup>

On the southern, eastern, and western façades of the building, a two-tiered window arrangement is observed. The lower level features rectangular windows with iron grilles, while the upper level contains pointed-arch windows fitted with plaster *revzen* (latticed windows). Each student cell is equipped with a single upper-level *revzen*, except for the rooms in the southeastern and southwestern corners, which contain two *revzen* windows—one on each of two adjacent walls. In the classroom (*dershane*), there are two window openings on the eastern and western façades at the upper level, and three on the southern façade. On the northern courtyard wall, there are a total of eight rectangular windows with iron grilles—two to the right and two to the left of the entrance door, and two more in each of the lateral arcades.<sup>28</sup>

On three façades of the madrasa, the lower level features rectangular windows with iron grilles, while the upper level is equipped with pointed-arch windows fitted with plaster *revzen*. Each student room contains one *revzen*, while the corner cells have two. The classroom (*dershane*) contains three windows on the south façade and two each on the east and west façades. On the northern façade, where the entrance is located, there are a total of eight windows. The entrance *eyvan* on the north is covered with a barrel vault, and the arcades are connected by polygonal columns and round arches. Today, the structure serves as a manuscript and public library, and the interior has been rearranged accordingly. Some of the cell walls have been removed, and workspaces have been added to the arcades. The classroom arcade has been emphasized by covering it with a dome. Entry to the interior is through a door with a depressed arch. Inside the square-planned, domed classroom, pointed arches, bookshelves, and adapted window recesses are visible. The *mihrab* niche is plain. The library houses manuscript collections and study desks, while at the center of the courtyard there is a simple stone fountain.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Gediz Urak, *Amasya'nın Türk Devri Şehir Dokusu ve Yapılarının Analiz ve Değerlendirilmesi* (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi, 1994), 355; Gözde Bırsel Varol, XIX. ve XX. Yüzyıla İntikal Eden Amasya Medreseleri (Amasya: Amasya Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2019), 111–114; Filiz, II. Bayezid Dönemi Medreselerinin Yeri ve Önemi, 27–28.

<sup>28</sup> Dündar, "Bir Belgeye Göre Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi," 151; Doğanbaş, Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi, 33; Mutlu, Amasya'da Osmanlı Devri Anıtları, 31–36.

<sup>29</sup> Filiz, II. Bayezid Dönemi Medreselerinin Yeri ve Önemi, 28–29.

The decorative elements of the structure are limited exclusively to the classroom (*dershane*) area. At the center of the dome covering the classroom arcade, there is a *kalem işi* (painted) *şemse* motif rendered in shades of red and green on a white background. The entrance door's depressed arch is constructed with alternating red and white stones. Inside the space, the central part of the dome, its base, drum, pendentives, and the surroundings of the plaster *revzen* windows are all adorned with *kalem işi* ornamentation. The compositions, painted in tones of blue and red on a white ground, are dominated by *rumi*, *palmette*, and geometric motifs.<sup>30</sup>

#### 4.4. Library (Bayezid Manuscript Library)



Figure 5: Bayezid Manuscript Library

Since the Seljuk period, Amasya has stood out as a center of knowledge and spiritual learning, and during the Ottoman era, it evolved into a distinguished cultural basin—particularly as the city where imperial princes received their education. During this time, scholars and *müderris* (professors) who came to Amasya to educate future members of the Ottoman dynasty not only brought with them their extensive knowledge but also contributed valuable manuscript works to the city. In addition, they produced original compositions and translations within the flourishing intellectual climate of Amasya. Fatih Sultan Mehmed, the father of Sultan Bayezid II, placed great importance on science and

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<sup>30</sup> Filiz, II. Bayezid Dönemi Medreselerinin Yeri ve Önemi, 29-30.

learning. Accordingly, he ensured that his son Bayezid received a high-quality education from an early age. At the age of seven, Prince Bayezid was appointed governor of Amasya under the supervision of Hadım Ali Pasha. There, he received a comprehensive education from the leading scholars of the time, preparing him for statesmanship. The madrasas commissioned by Bayezid in Amasya became prominent centers of learning during the period. These institutions served as distinguished venues where sciences were taught and knowledge was systematically transmitted. A wide range of subjects was taught in these madrasas by highly qualified scholars who specialized in various disciplines. As a result, Amasya earned a distinguished place in the history of Ottoman education, serving as both an administrative center and a cradle of knowledge and culture.<sup>31</sup>

In the Ottoman Empire, great importance was placed on books and the institution of the library, leading to the construction of significant libraries that have survived to the present day. Shortly after the proclamation of the Republic, written and printed works in Amasya, along with archaeological and ethnographic materials, were gathered in the madrasa building. This initiative marked a pioneering step in the institutionalization of both library and museum services on a regional scale. In the following years, due to the limited physical capacity of the building, the archaeological and ethnographic items were transferred to other locations. As a result, the structure began to function exclusively as a library and evolved into a repository that preserves both printed and manuscript works.<sup>32</sup>

The library houses a large number of manuscripts written in Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish. Reflecting the scientific and cultural heritage of Islamic civilization, these works have been meticulously preserved from past to present. The manuscripts have been collected from the city center of Amasya, its surrounding districts, villages, and towns, as well as from nearby provinces such as Tokat, Sinop, and Samsun. Generally dated between the 12th and 19th centuries, some of these works clearly indicate the date of transcription, while others do not. The manuscripts cover a wide range of scientific and intellectual fields,

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<sup>31</sup> Kübra İnan, *Amasya Beyazıt Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi'nde Bulunan Seçilmiş Yazma Eserlerin Tezyînatı Açısından İncelenmesi* (İzmir: Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2023), 12.

<sup>32</sup> Dündar, "Bir Belgeye Göre Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi," 143-150.

including astronomy, medicine, literature, history, philosophy, psychology, art, and occult sciences. According to the institution's inventory, the library holds a total of 2,549 manuscripts and 18,451 printed works. These materials possess aesthetic and artistic value, particularly in terms of calligraphy and illumination, and are preserved under specially equipped archival conditions. The manuscripts in the library are classified into two main collections based on their provenance: the "Ba" collection comprises works gathered from Amasya's central and outlying regions as well as surrounding provinces, while the "Gü" collection consists exclusively of manuscripts acquired from the Gümüş Public Library in the Gümüşhacıköy District. Together, these two collections shed light on the development of the library's rich manuscript inventory.<sup>33</sup>

The majority of the manuscripts housed in the library date back to the 14th and 15th centuries. Various *şemse* motifs were applied to leather bindings produced using the cold-stamping technique. Different methods such as recessed (*gömme*), undercut (*alttan ayırma*), *mülemma* (composite), *mülevven* (colored), and cold-stamped *şemse* were employed. The *şemse* motifs are typically oval or circular in shape, with extensions on the top and bottom known as *salbek*. Some *salbek* elements are enhanced with *tıgh* (spearhead) decorations, while others are left plain. In terms of page ornamentation, special attention is given to *zahriye* (title page), *serlevha* (illuminated headpiece), *takdim* (preface), and *cüz başı* (section openings). The *serlevha* pages are designed in three distinct styles: *mıhrabiyeli* (mihrab-shaped), *iklil* (crown-shaped), and *mürekkep* (ink-style). This diversity highlights both the aesthetic and historical value of the library's manuscripts. The decorative bindings of the manuscripts reflect the stylistic characteristics of their respective historical periods. While some of the bindings belong to the Seljuk era, others are from the Early Anatolian Beyliks period, and the rest from the Ottoman period. Although leather is the primary material used for bindings, some examples also feature fabric, cardboard, marbled paper (*ebru*), or plain paper covers. One of the notable techniques observed in the examined works is the *zerefşan* method, in

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<sup>33</sup> Eser Bolat, *Amasya Bayezid Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi'nde Yer Alan El Yazması Kur'ân-ı Kerim ve Cüzlerdeki Süslemeler* (Samsun: Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2019), 4-5; İnan, *Amasya Beyazıt Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi*, 13-14.

which gold is sprinkled across the surface of the binding to create a shimmering effect.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4.5. Bathhouse/Fountain (Mustafa Bey Bathhouse)

Located in the city center of Amasya, this bathhouse is situated within the boundaries of Mehmet Paşa Neighborhood, to the east of the historic *Bimarhane* building and behind the Mehmet Paşa Mosque. No inscription related to the construction or restoration of the structure has survived to the present day. Built on a flat foundation, the building features an L-shaped layout in terms of its spatial organization. This plan type is considered one of the rare examples within classical Ottoman bathhouse architecture, particularly with regard to its functional spatial arrangement.<sup>35</sup>



Figure 6: Mustafa Bey Bathhouse

Mustafa Bey Bathhouse reflects the classical Ottoman construction tradition in terms of building materials. Rubble stone was used in the outer walls of the bathhouse, while the monumental entrance portal (taçkapi) was built entirely of ashlar stone. The lantern windows used for

<sup>34</sup> İnan, *Amasya Beyazıt Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi*, 14-16.

<sup>35</sup> Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, *Türkiye’de Vakıf Abideler ve Eski Eserler*, 1 cilt (Ankara: Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 1983), 289; Sultan Murat Topçu, *Amasya’da Türk Devri Hamamları* (Kayseri: Kimlik Yayınları, 2018), 20.

lighting were constructed from brick. The most monumental part of the structure, the changing room (soyunmalık), is located on the southern side and is accessed through a round-arched stone portal. A wooden canopy, added later, is situated above this entrance. Within the changing area, wooden dressing cabins are arranged on four sides, and eight niches with six-tiered muqarnas vaults on the inner walls draw attention. The dome drum is surrounded by prismatic triangles, and the central dome is pierced with thirteen circular skylights that provide natural illumination. Additionally, round-arched windows on the western and southern façades further enhance the lighting. At the center of the changing room stands an octagonal fountain pool, believed to have been constructed contemporaneously with the building itself.<sup>36</sup>

The *soğukluk* (cooling room) of the Mustafa Bey Bathhouse is square in plan and covered with a dome featuring trompe transitions. This space is illuminated by ten circular skylights positioned at the center of the dome. On the eastern wall, there is a seven-lobed muqarnas niche, while the western wall contains an arched niche and a slanted window. From the pointed-arched opening in the northwest of the *soğukluk*, one can access the *hela* (toilet area), and the door on the northeast leads to the *tıraşlık* (shaving area). Both of these sections are domed, with the transition to the dome achieved via ribbed trompes, and natural light is provided through skylight windows. After the *soğukluk*, the first warm room (*sıcaklık*) is square in plan and has four *eyvans* (vaulted recesses). The transition to the dome is carried out using muqarnas, and the space is illuminated by circular skylights that open to the dome and the *eyvans*. This section is surrounded on three sides by *sekis* (raised marble platforms), with basins (*kurna*) placed on them. The main hot room (*ana sıcaklık*) is accessed through a pointed-arched door to the east. This space also has a four-*eyvan* layout and includes two private bathing chambers (*halvet hücresi*). The upper cover is a dome supported by pendentives. Eight skylights are placed at the center of the dome and around it, with one skylight opening into each *eyvan*. In the center of the room, there is an octagonal *göbek taşı* (heated massage platform). A total of seven *kurnas* are located at the corners of the *eyvans*. The square-planned *halvet* chambers, symmetrically located on the north and south sides of the entrance, are

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<sup>36</sup> Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mimarisinin İlk Devri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, 1972), 79.

also domed, and each is illuminated by seven circular skylights. At the entrance of the southwestern chamber, a marble railing draws attention. The window opening in the northern *eyvan* of the main hot room leads to the water tank (*su deposu*), and to the north of the tank lies the *külhan* (boiler room) of the bathhouse.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4.6. Cultural/Traditional Heritage (Yalıboyu Houses)



Figure 7: Yalıboyu Houses

Yalıboyu stands out as one of the most authentic areas reflecting the historical urban fabric of Amasya. Extending parallel to the banks of the Yeşilirmak River, this residential zone is distinguished by its outstanding examples of traditional Turkish civil architecture. The Yalıboyu Houses are significant for their architectural features as well as for their harmony with the natural environment, their integration with social life, and their continuity within the urban memory.

Many historical buildings in Amasya have been damaged over time due to natural disasters and fires, leading to their replacement with new constructions. Nevertheless, despite these transformations, certain areas of the city still preserve traces of traditional civil architecture and maintain their original settlement patterns. In this context, Yalıboyu emerges as the most prominent residential area where traditional civil architecture in

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<sup>37</sup> Mutlu, *Amasya'da Osmanlı Devri Anıtları*, 141-143.

Amasya is most densely and qualitatively observed. Yalıboyu refers to the housing zone located on the northern bank of the Yeşilırmak River, between the İstasyon Bridge and the Hükümet Bridge. In this region, the traditional Amasya houses are aligned in a homogeneous manner, and the original urban fabric has been largely preserved. With their positioning that maintains a visual connection to the river, their façade arrangements, and architectural forms, these residences represent a regional interpretation of Ottoman-Turkish house architecture. According to archival photographs dating back to the 1900s, there were 12 traditional Amasya houses located between the Hükümet and Alçak Bridges, 23 between the Alçak and Magdenus Bridges, and 24 between the Magdenus and İstasyon Bridges. These data are highly valuable in demonstrating the historical density and urban continuity of residential structures in Yalıboyu.<sup>38</sup>

These structures, which constitute a significant pattern of traditional Turkish houses in Amasya, are commonly referred to in the literature as the “Yalıboyu Houses.” Registered by a decision of the High Council of Antiquities and Monuments of the Ministry of Culture, these residences are located within a second-degree urban conservation area designated to preserve the historical fabric of the city.<sup>39</sup>

The Yalıboyu Houses are aligned in an adjoining row along the southern bank of the Yeşilırmak River in Amasya, built adjacent to the historic city walls, and they reflect the characteristic features of traditional Turkish residential architecture in Northern Anatolia. This group of structures draws attention not only with their architectural forms but also with their harmony to the topography and street pattern. The spatial organization observed in traditional Turkish cities—sensitive to natural slope, street orientation, and the distinction between public and private spaces—is skillfully implemented in the Yalıboyu district. The doors of the houses and courtyards generally open onto long, narrow streets running parallel to the Yeşilırmak River. These streets function as shared outdoor spaces and lead to small squares located at the ends of the bridges spanning the river. Streets running perpendicular to the river are mostly

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<sup>38</sup> Ali Kamil Yalçın, *Amasya Geleneksel Kent Dokusu: Amasya Koruma Amaçlı İmar Planı Araştırma ve Analiz Çalışmaları* (Amasya: b.y., 1997), 55-73.

<sup>39</sup> Orkan Zeynel Güzelci, *Amasya Yalıboyu Evleri Üzerine Bir Biçim Grameri Çalışması* (İstanbul: İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2012), 54.

cul-de-sacs; however, some are connected to the settlements across the river via bridge links. This spatial arrangement both preserves the principle of privacy and provides a suitable ground for neighborhood social interaction.

The houses along the Yalıboyu are generally designed with courtyards and gardens. In single-unit houses, access proceeds from the street to the courtyard and then from the courtyard to the living space. This typology provides a significant spatial solution for the preservation of privacy. In addition, there are more complex residential structures composed of two distinct sections: the *harem* (private quarters) and the *selamlık* (public guest area). In such dwellings, the courtyard is situated at the center of the building, allowing the house to adopt an introverted and enclosed character. With their balance between the built environment and natural surroundings, their harmony between streets and structures, and their spatial organization based on the principle of privacy, the Yalıboyu Houses represent one of the finest examples of traditional Turkish residential architecture in Amasya.<sup>40</sup>

The Yalıboyu Houses generally consist of two-story structures built above a basement level. However, examples with a single story above the basement can also be found. Some buildings are slightly elevated from ground level, a feature that reflects both structural adaptation and measures taken against climatic conditions. The basement floors, located below ground level, typically serve as storage rooms, pantries, or wood storage areas in residential buildings, while in buildings with commercial functions, they are used as service spaces. The upper floors, or the main living levels, maintain the characteristic layout of the Traditional Turkish House. In the spatial organization, *sofa* areas and the rooms opening onto them are the primary defining elements. In Yalıboyu, houses with various plan typologies can be observed, such as those without sofas, with interior sofas, exterior sofas, corner sofas, and central sofas. These plan types may vary between floors; for instance, a building designed with an exterior sofa on the ground floor may feature a corner sofa arrangement on the upper floor. Moreover, with the advancement of construction technologies and changing sociocultural needs over time, wet spaces such as bathrooms and toilets—which were traditionally located outside—have begun to be incorporated into the interiors of these buildings to align with modern

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<sup>40</sup> Muzaffer Doğanbaş, *Amasya Evleri* (Ankara: Doğu Matbaa, 1996), 53-55.

living habits. This transformation is particularly significant as it illustrates how traditional spatial understanding has been integrated with contemporary lifestyles.

On the upper floors of the Yalıboyu Houses, one frequently encounters *cumbas* (projecting bay windows), which are among the characteristic elements of traditional Turkish residential architecture. These projections typically face the street and, more prominently, the scenic view of the Yeşilirmak River. In doing so, they provide visual dominance over the surroundings while simultaneously expanding the usable interior space. Thanks to the use of *eliböğünde* brackets as structural supports, these projections sometimes extend beyond the boundaries of the historic city walls, physically reinforcing the relationship between the house and the landscape. *Cumbas* are not limited to rooms; in some structures, they are also applied to *sofa* areas, thereby creating spacious and well-lit living spaces that open onto both internal courtyards and elements of the natural landscape. The inclusion of such projections not only on the river-facing front façades but also on the rear façades opening to streets and courtyards demonstrates that spatial solutions were guided less by symmetry and more by effective utilization of environmental factors such as light, air, and views.<sup>41</sup>

## 5. The Pedagogical Value of Cultural Heritage Elements in Amasya as Out-of-School Learning Environments in Religious Education

Today, religious education has evolved from being a process limited solely to classroom instruction into a multidimensional structure that prioritizes experiential learning. In this context, evaluating historically and culturally rich religious sites as out-of-school learning environments offers a pedagogical opportunity that integrates religious knowledge with spatial experience. Ottoman-era structures in Amasya—such as mosques, tombs, and madrasas—serve as unique learning spaces where abstract concepts of religious education can be conveyed through tangible realities. This section will explore how these structures can be functionally incorporated into religious education, focusing on pedagogical foundations, the relationship between content and space, learning through field trips, and alignment with The Century of Türkiye Education Model.

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<sup>41</sup> Güzelci, *Amasya Yalıboyu Evleri*, 56-57.

The objective is to examine how religious and cultural heritage can be transformed from mere informational content into a medium that imparts values, attitudes, and aesthetic sensitivity.

### **5.1. On-Site Learning Approach and Pedagogical Foundations**

In recent years, the on-site (in-situ) learning approach has gained prominence in educational sciences. This approach emphasizes learning through direct experience, integrating knowledge with the physical, cultural, and historical context in which the learner is situated. Particularly in religious education—an area involving abstract concepts, historical continuity, and the transmission of values—this method transforms learning from a merely cognitive process into a holistic experience that includes sensory, emotional, and social dimensions. On-site learning encourages students' active participation in the learning process and aims to enhance cognitive skills such as curiosity, exploration, observation, and critical inquiry.<sup>42</sup>

The foundational basis of on-site learning lies in John Dewey's pragmatist educational philosophy, which advocates experience-based learning, as well as the constructivist learning theories of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. According to Dewey, education should shape the individual's thought system through lived experiences. Vygotsky, on the other hand, emphasizes that cognitive development occurs through interaction with the social environment. In this context, historical and religious sites gain pedagogical significance, functioning as educational contexts in which the historical layers of the space interact with the cognitive structures of the learner.

In addition, Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences is one of the approaches that highlights the importance of on-site learning. Educational activities conducted in historical sites activate spatial, visual, naturalistic, and interpersonal intelligences, thereby addressing students' individual learning styles and enhancing the depth of learning. On-site learning restructures traditional, lecture-centered religious education by establishing a pedagogical bridge between knowledge and context, and between narrative and experience.

In cities like Amasya, which possess a deep-rooted historical heritage, Ottoman-era religious structures serve as architectural

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<sup>42</sup> Bk. Taylor vd., "Out-of-School Learning", 1017-1036; Anna Hawrot, "Out-of-School Learning Assistance in Adolescence", 513-534.

monuments while at the same time functioning as educational resources. These sites offer students the opportunity to connect with the past, engage in value-based thinking, and develop a sense of religious and historical consciousness. Therefore, the on-site learning approach paves the way for a new educational paradigm in religious instruction—one that integrates not only curriculum content but also space, culture, and lived experience.

## 5.2. Spatial-Content Integrity: The Educational Potential of Religious Architectural Structures

Space in learning processes is not merely a physical environment; it is also a context for making meaning of knowledge, internalizing it, and transforming it into lived experience. Especially considering the multilayered themes present in religious education—such as worship, sacredness, belonging, historical continuity, and aesthetics—the concrete experience of these contents within a lived space offers unique pedagogical opportunities. In this regard, Ottoman-era mosques, madrasas, tombs, and *küllîye* complexes function as historical and architectural elements while simultaneously serving as educational environments that embody and transmit religious and moral values.

Theoretical approaches explaining the relationship between space and learning, particularly through environmental psychology and experiential learning theories, demonstrate that space directly influences students' cognitive and affective development. David Kolb's experiential learning theory is based on a cyclical process involving concrete experience, observation, conceptualization, and experimentation. Religious structures naturally support this cycle by providing richly meaningful environments. For example, a *mihrab* is not merely an architectural element indicating direction; it also facilitates individual understanding of concepts such as the awareness of the qibla, orientation, humility, and prayer. The *minbar* serves not only as a pulpit but also as a symbol of oral tradition, religious guidance, and community connection. In this context, each architectural element carries pedagogical significance beyond its functional role.

Spatial-content integrity enables knowledge to transcend abstract narration by being reinforced through environmental cues. For example, observing the structure of a madrasa provides a concrete context for exploring the theme of “the value of learning,” while visiting tombs allows themes such as “death, the afterlife, and exemplary personalities” to

transform into emotional and moral learning experiences. This integrity facilitates students' acquisition of knowledge while at the same time fostering the development of values, sensitivity, and active participation in cultural memory.

In conclusion, the educational potential of religious architectural structures lies in their ability to create a unique learning atmosphere where space integrates with content, abstract concepts transform into concrete experiences, and historical continuity becomes a pedagogical tool. In this context, the Ottoman-era buildings in Amasya serve not only as cultural heritage but also as functional pedagogical resources and out-of-school learning environments for religious education.

### **5.3. Concrete Religious Education Through Field Trips**

Religious education is a holistic process that aims to convey knowledge at the cognitive level while simultaneously fostering change within the individual's value system through affective gains. In this context, the permanence and meaningfulness of abstract concepts and historical content in students' minds can only be achieved when supported by concrete experiences. Field trips emerge as an effective instructional strategy that directly addresses this need, enabling religious education to extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

John Dewey's experience-based educational approach asserts that learning occurs most effectively through lived experience. According to Dewey, students derive meaning from knowledge through their interactions with the environment. From this perspective, performing the midday prayer in a mosque courtyard is not merely a ritual act of worship; it also enables the direct experience and understanding of concepts such as unity, direction, communal awareness, and the perception of sacred space. Similarly, visiting a tomb transcends the abstract notion of an "exemplary personality," allowing students to form an emotional connection with historical identities.

Instructional activities conducted through field trips allow students to physically engage with religious structures, establish connections between architectural aesthetics and values, and develop historical awareness. For example, the architectural design of Sultan II. Bayezid Mosque in Amasya enables students to gain knowledge about classical Ottoman worship architecture and to understand how worship is integrated with space. At the same time, this site reveals how Islamic

values such as humility, simplicity, and aesthetics manifest in the spatial environment, creating a multilayered learning setting.

Field trips gain meaning through the space itself in conjunction with pedagogical planning supported by guidance, narration, observation, and interaction. Accordingly, the teacher should clearly define the objectives of the trip, establish a direct connection between the visited structures and the learning outcomes in the curriculum, and encourage active participation by assigning responsibilities to the students. While explaining the historical contexts, architectural symbols, and functions of the buildings, students should be prompted to make observations, take photographs, and express their feelings and thoughts, thereby activating multiple learning domains.

In conclusion, religious education conducted through field trips offers the transmission of knowledge while simultaneously fostering sensitivity, strengthening connections with history and culture, and nurturing aesthetic and moral awareness. This approach enables students to integrate learning with life while transforming space into an active component of the learning process. Thus, out-of-school learning environments assume a functional and transformative role in religious education.

#### **5.4. Out-of-School Religious Education Vision Aligned with the Century of Türkiye Education Model**

The Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Model defines the educational process within conceptual frameworks such as “balance between intellect and emotion,” “unity of matter and meaning,” and “ontological, epistemological, and axiological coherence,” aiming for a student-centered, multidimensional learning experience. The model emphasizes principles including the guarantee of lifelong learning rights, consideration of individual differences, equal opportunity, value education, and the incorporation of a sense of responsibility at the core of educational programs. These principles can be strongly applied in out-of-school learning environments as well.<sup>43</sup>

The Century of Türkiye Education Model particularly advocates for an “experience-based,” “contextual,” and “interdisciplinary” teaching-learning approach. The use of Ottoman-era religious structures as learning

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<sup>43</sup> Bk. Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, *Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli: Öğretim Programları Ortak Metni* (Ankara: Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2025), 35, 53.

environments aligns perfectly with this perspective: religious architectural elements can be effectively integrated with curriculum content through their historical, artistic, and social dimensions. Additionally, the Century of Türkiye Education Model emphasizes the relationship of responsibility between acquiring knowledge and acting upon that knowledge. In this context, fostering behaviors related to the care, preservation, and use of historical buildings is important for developing students' national-spiritual consciousness and a sense of active citizenship.

The Century of Türkiye Education Model embraces the concepts of "learning evidence" and "formative assessment" within extracurricular activities, aiming to make the learning process visible through process-oriented evaluation tools. Accordingly, in activities such as school trips, students' observations, photography projects, notebook entries, or group presentations can be used as tangible evidence of learning. Consequently, the vision of the Century of Türkiye Education Model envisions enriching out-of-school learning environments not only with knowledge transfer but also with content that supports holistic personality development in dimensions such as value acquisition, aesthetic sensitivity, historical-scientific awareness, responsible behavior, and social belonging.

### **5.5. Religious Culture and Ethics Curricula and Out-of-School Religious Education**

The Religious Culture and Ethics curricula, renewed within the framework of the "the Century of Türkiye Education Model", go beyond mere knowledge transmission to emphasize meaningful learning, value-based education, and skill development. Both the primary education (grades 4–8) and secondary education (grades 9–12) programs aim to foster deep awareness in students across fundamental areas such as the search for meaning, value formation, moral responsibility, and cultural heritage consciousness.

A prominent common feature in both programs is the emphasis that the learning process should not be confined solely to the classroom. The curricula envision students internalizing religious and cultural content through an "experience-based learning" approach. In this context, the on-site examination of religious, historical, and cultural sites, supported by concrete observations, is explicitly recommended. For example, the II. Bayezid Complex, mosques, madrasas, and manuscript libraries in Amasya serve as natural learning environments for developing skills such

as “observing the relationship between religion, culture, and civilization” and “evaluating within a historical context,” as outlined in the curriculum.

The primary education curriculum (grades 4–8) specifically aims for students to become familiar with the life of the Prophet Muhammad, reflect moral values in their behavior, and recognize the cultural elements of Islamic civilization. These learning outcomes, when concretized in out-of-school learning environments, provide students with a rich experience at both the cognitive and affective levels.

At the secondary education level, the program aims for students to analyze Islamic civilization from past, present, and future perspectives; evaluate the relationship between religion and art; respect diverse religious interpretations; and understand the connections between religion, science, and art from a holistic viewpoint. Effective use of architectural and cultural heritage within out-of-school religious education is crucial to achieving these learning outcomes.

From a pedagogical perspective, this approach activates knowledge transmission while at the same time promoting higher-order thinking skills such as observation, analysis, problem-solving, and contextual evaluation. Students learn experientially by touring a madrasa to understand the Islamic educational tradition, examining the mihrab and minbar of a mosque to appreciate the aesthetics of worship, and visiting a manuscript library to experience the historical journey of knowledge. Such activities align directly with the “Virtue-Value-Action” approach emphasized in the curriculum, as they enable meaningful learning processes that integrate knowledge, emotion, and behavior. Consequently, when the value- and skill-based approach of the Religious Culture and Ethics programs combines with the experiential richness provided by out-of-school learning environments, religious education transforms into a robust learning ecosystem supporting both academic and personal development. This integrated model concretely contributes to the Century of Türkiye Education Model’s vision of nurturing culturally rooted, conscious, virtuous individuals who are attuned to contemporary needs.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study aimed to evaluate six distinctive Ottoman-era structures in Amasya as out-of-school learning environments for religious education. Accordingly, Sultan II. Bayezid Mosque, Şehzade Osman Çelebi Tomb,

Sultan II. Bayezid Madrasa, Bayezid Manuscript Library, Mustafa Bey Bathhouse, and Yalıboyu Houses were examined in detail. The analyses revealed that these historical buildings are not merely architectural or aesthetic assets; rather, they can be transformed into powerful pedagogical resources that contribute significantly to individuals' religious, historical, and cultural awareness.

Evaluations considering each structure's historical context, architectural form, symbolic content, and place in social memory concretely demonstrate how enriching out-of-school learning can be for religious education. These sites function as transmitters of information while simultaneously serving as spaces that embody values, materialize meaning, and cultivate moral sensitivity in students. The multifaceted functions of the buildings within the II. Bayezid Complex, in particular, have allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the relationship between space and learning.

Furthermore, it has been determined that learning processes based on field trips and the alignment of structures with content are compatible with the Century of Türkiye Education Model and the 2024 Religious Culture and Ethics curriculum. The model's emphasized approaches—"local and national," "value-based," "inclusive," and "contextual" learning—are integrated with the religious, aesthetic, and cultural heritage embodied in the Ottoman-era structures.

In conclusion, historical religious structures should be regarded not only as subjects of instruction but also as educational environments. The buildings in Amasya provide a concrete foundation for the frequently emphasized approaches of "experience-based learning" and "on-site learning" in the religious education literature. In this context, developing space-centered pedagogical designs in religious education enhances the permanence of learning and strengthens students' connection with values.

This research should not be limited to the case of Amasya; space-based religious education models should also be developed for other cities with similar historical and religious textures. Cities such as Bursa, Konya, Edirne, and Istanbul hold significant potential in terms of complexes, tombs, and manuscript libraries. In this context, pilot schools or elective course contents themed "Religious Cultural Heritage and Education" can be established in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education and Provincial Mufti Offices in selected regions.

Religious Culture and Ethics teacher candidates studying at faculties of theology and education are generally trained through classroom-based instructional techniques. However, skills such as on-site learning, spatial analysis, and establishing cultural context are essential for contemporary religious education approaches. Therefore, teacher training programs should include practical courses or fieldwork such as “Out-of-School Religious Education” and “Value Education in Historical Sites.” Relevant higher education institutions should design “Pedagogical Field Trip Applications” that connect teacher candidates with historical structures.

Field trips conducted in Religious Culture and Ethics courses often remain superficial and touristic in nature. Therefore, systematic activity plans should be developed for out-of-school learning activities, with clear connections between structures, objectives, and learning outcomes, supported by assessment tools. For example, during a visit to the Şehzade Osman Çelebi Tomb, students could be guided to recognize themes such as tomb culture, etiquette of the grave, humility, and mortality. Within this framework, structured content including pre- and post-visit activities, conceptual analyses, and value-based discussions should be created.

Historical structures, as exemplified in Amasya, are generally preserved and managed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the General Directorate of Foundations, local municipalities, or civil society organizations. Therefore, active collaborations with these institutions should be established in out-of-school religious education activities, providing support such as guided tours, digital content, student brochures, and educational materials. Student workshops, competitions, or exhibitions themed “Education through Religious Heritage,” organized with the participation of these institutions, will strengthen students’ spatial memory and connection to cultural heritage.

The value-based, authentic, and indigenous pedagogical approach of the Century of Türkiye Education Model provides a strong foundation for the use of historical sites in religious education. In this context, the Ministry of National Education should develop guiding national policies that define historical structures as usable educational spaces, integrate them with the curriculum, and encourage teachers. Within this framework, it is recommended that teachers be awarded in-service training credits or be recognized within professional development

frameworks and included in incentive systems that promote the integration of cultural heritage into instructional practice.

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