

## ÇOCUKLUKTA OKUL ÇEVRELERİNİN TECRÜBE EDİLMESİNDEN YANSIMALAR: OKUL BAHÇELERİ, OKUL YOLU VE ÇOCUĞUN FAVORİ MEKANLARI

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### ÖZ

Çocukların zamanlarının büyük bir çoğunluğunu geçirdiği okul bahçeleri birçok çocuk için doğal, açık alanda kendi akranları ile iletişim kurabilecekleri en önemli mekânlardan biri olarak kabul edilmektedir. Okul bahçelerinin özellikle doğal elamanlarla düzenlenmiş okul bahçelerinin çocuğun gelişimi üzerinde onarıcı/pozitif etkileri olduğu da yapılan çalışmalarla belirlenmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı doğal çevrede oyun oynamanın ve doğal elemanlarla düzenlenmiş okul bahçelerinin çocuğun gelişimi açısından önemini, okul bahçelerinin çocuk için daha yaşanılır kılınması için okul bahçelerinin tasarlanmasında farkına varılması gereken unsur ve niteliklerin çocuk gözünden ortaya konmasıdır. Çocukluk çağında okul dış çevrelerinin tecrübe edilmesinden, okul bahçeleri, okul yolu ve çocuğun favori mekanlarının nasıl anlamlandırıldığı üzerinde durulmuş olup, geniş kapsamlı literatür araştırmasına dayanan bir derleme çalışmasıdır. Okul ve çevresinin tasarımında sadece mekansal büyüklük ve niteliklerle ilgili standartları gözönünde bulundurmanın yeterli olmayıp, bu mekanlar tasarlanırken doğala yakın tasarlanmış çocuk oyun mekanlarının restoratif/onarıcı etkisini de gözönünde bulundurarak, çocukların daha katılımcı anlayışla, çocuğun hafızasında ve sonrasında gelişimsel hayatında iz bırakacak şekilde düzenlenmesi gerekliliğidir. Disiplinlerarası bir yaklaşımla mimarlar, iç mimarlar, pedagoglar, yöneticiler, öğretmenler ve öğrencilerin ortak sorumlulukla ve bir arada çalıştığı tasarımsal bir süreç modellemesi gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalara önerilmektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** çocuk mekanları, biyofilik tasarım, restoratif çevreler (onarıcı çevreler), okul ve çevresi, çocuğun favori mekanları

## SCHOOLYARDS, JOURNEYS AND FAVORITE SPOTS: REFLECTIONS ON MIDDLECHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL PLACES

### ABSTRACT

Each of us posses a treasure of memories and stories of our childhood schools, some of them are hidden in dusty corners, old benches and under the trees of the school garden. We travel back to these corners to find a safe haven, as if all worries and problems vanish in the presence of childhood's special places. What can people say about how their schoolyard was like? Where would they sit and what would they see? Where was their favorite spot? Hidden from eyes, looking towards the sea, or basking under the sun? This article draws on people's memories of middle-childhood school places, in an attempt to uncover, albeit in glimpses, the experiences of place and their longlasting memorable and restorative value.

**Keywords:** Childhood places, biophilic design, restorative environments, schoolyards-journeys, favorite place.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in uncovering what space and place represent in a childhood's journey of development. Place carries within its definition folds of physical, psychological, social and cultural meanings. However, the deconstruction of these meaning for a typical adult might not be similar to that of a child. In early childhood, as Piaget theorized, the focus of experience comes from the sensory apparatus rather than any psychological and sociological engagements. Later, a child begins to link experiences of place with knowledge, realizing how big and how small a place is for example or how a place might look like from top as they begin to read maps. The child also develops attachments, especially in places that infer meanings of safety and parenthood. However meanings attached to different places can not be easily entangled from the child's incredible capacity for imagination, which constructs the unseen and the otherworldly within the physical boundaries of objects and spaces.

Childhood's experience of places, as an encompassment of the meaningful physical environment, have been related with environmental psychology theories, such as place attachment and restorative environment theory. Especially notable in these studies is the effect of favorite or special places of childhood on the child's wellbeing and healthy emotional and psychological development. The results usually concur with the notion that a child's most memorable experience occur in natural settings. These places can be typified as forts, dens and hideouts (Sobel, 2002) and offer the child the ability to manipulate and change their physical components to conform with specific types of play motifs and activities. This autonomous place-making activity is shown to be a positive mechanism to develop a sense of identity, social cooperation and emotional stability among other developmental aspects. However, for anyone interested in the design of the built environment, the next question might be; do these experiences only occur in natural settings or can they be somehow emulated into everyday man-made places? Recent design philosophies, like Biophilic Design and Restorative Environmental Design, with a young but well-established body of multi-disciplinary evidence in biology, psychology, sociology or anthropology, seek to steer designers toward creating places that take lessons from the natural world.

Outside experiences in nature, children spend the largest part of their time in otherwise rigid environments, especially children within urbanized contexts. School buildings have for a long time been the physical representation of the institutionalism, the place where children are taught their lessons in a prevalent atmosphere of order and discipline. Spaces within the school were strict and monofunctional; dictating specific activities and prescribing certain behaviors.(Dudek, 2002) This provoked the idea that children are educated into molds, that schools were encouraging conformity rather than a sense of community. (Wolfe and Rivlin, 1987) Hertzberger called for a more interchangeable forms of school buildings and spaces, allowing for exploration and discovery, that support selfesteem and awareness of the child. (Hertzberger, 2008) The ability to make changes in the environment to conform to one's personal preferences, emotional states and moods encourage a sense of self and fosters a better culture of creative participation. For example, Some studies show that with a simple rearrangement of classroom seating nudges the students to be more participating and socially interactive. (Marx et al., 2002) If such small interventions goes a long way, how would a school rethought in light of children's development and place-making activities affect the next generations?

However, renovations in school architecture goes parallel to considerations of revolutionizing curricula and educational models. Educationalists are still grappling with the classical debate between progressive experiential education and traditionalist education. The studies of place have certainly brought new understanding to learning. place-based education seeks to augment learning with the experiential role of place. (Smith & Sobel,2010) With these emerging possibilities we are seeing some revolutionary school environments. For example, The school building is seen as a third teacher in the philosophy of Reggio Emilia schools.(Strong-Wilson & Ellis, 2007) Waldorf schools emphasize the embodiment of physical and spiritual well being of children. New approaches seek to balance the contemporary emphasis on technological applications and a return to a more connective culture with nature that seek to awaken the innate Biophilia lurking in each one of us. (Figure 1)

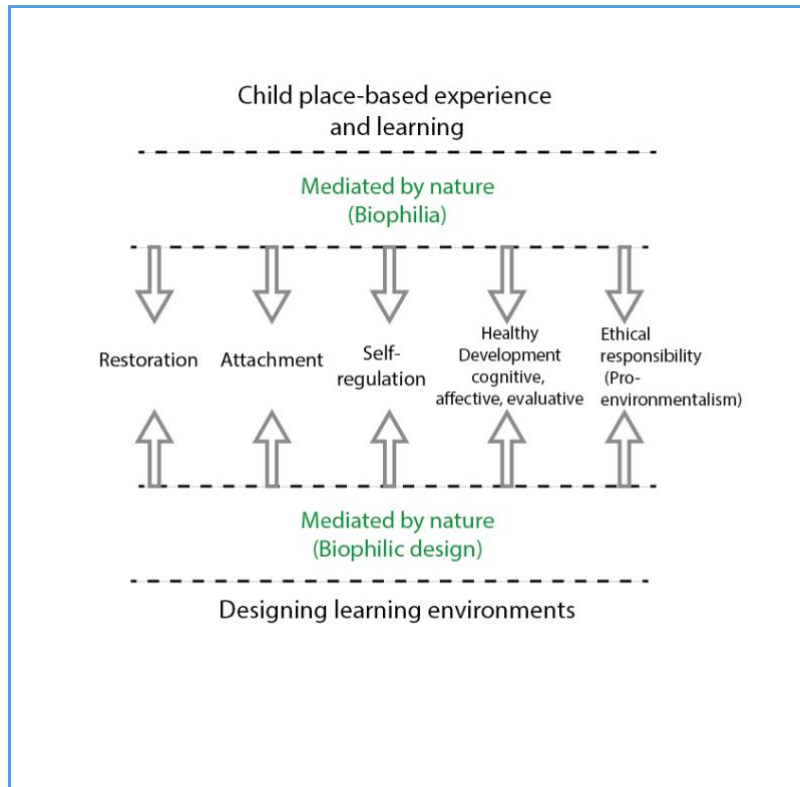


Figure 1: Diagrammatic Summary of Literature Review

For us to understand and appreciate the effect of childhood places on our development and sense of self, we sometimes must dig into childhood memories of place, the little corners, the dusty attics and window sills where we sat and viewed the incredibly beautiful and daunting world unfolding around us. In fact many of us delve into these memories when we feel the need for a safe haven and a respite from the turbulences of life. This desire for psychological comfort is evidence of the long term restorative qualities of the places which this study seeks to explore. Talking with people about recalling their childhood places is a narrative qualitative research method that uses memory and nostalgic feelings to uncover qualities of nourishing and restorative places. In her book; *House as a mirror of self*, Claire Cooper Marcus, asks people about what they remember about childhood away-from-home experiences and how that is connected with autonomous place-making activities. (Cooper Marcus, 1995) Following a similar method, this article draws on a collection of interviews done with 10 adults. In them, participants, who come from slightly different cultural backgrounds, recount some of their middle-childhood memories of certain places in the school. The participants were asked to focus on remembering places outside the classroom, in an attempt to uncover the restorative qualities and their longlasting influence on people's perceptions of place.

## METHODS

This article draws on extensive literature review on the topic to display qualitative nature of people's memories of middle-childhood school places, in an attempt to uncover, albeit in glimpses, the experiences of place and their longlasting memorable and restorative value.

### Place, nature and childhood

Put simply, a place emerges from associating different human meanings or values to a space. Place; according to Yi-Fu Tuan, is a 'special kind of object' where 'one can dwell' and is experienced as the 'concretion of values'. (Tuan, 1978) more specifically a place is where one feels belonging, attachment and a sense of identity. Some of these values and meanings are considered universals, others are specific to certain cultures and sociological conditions. Children from an early age begin to internalize these values from the people and the environments around them. For children, places are less about functionalities and more about how they view them as "big sensory exploratorium" where they learn about the world (Day, 2007). Children explore places foremostly through their bodily position and movements, a place perception then becomes constituent of the activities happening in it. This dimension of "embodiment" brings a new understanding to a phenomena usually discussed within psychosocial models. A form of phenomenological anthropology tries to hack away at the body/mind dichotomy and emphasize the direct connection between learning and bodily kinesthesia (Mackley et al, 2015). This phenomena is most evident in the time children spend playing in outdoor natural settings.

Recent psychological and biological research investigates how direct, indirect and symbolic experiences of nature affects cognitive, affective and evaluative development of children. (Kahn & Kellert, 2002). Children's experiences in natural settings not only have direct physical benefits, but develop the place-making capabilities that act as a catalyst to learning and development. Patterns of play and place-making activities typify places associating both tendencies for sharing and privacy. David Sobel proposes that special places of childhood can be typified as "play motifs". (Sobel, 2002)

"Spend time at a safe, woodsy playground and you'll find children (1) making forts and special places; (2) playing hunting and gathering games; (3) shaping small worlds; (4) developing friendships with animals; (5) constructing adventures; (6) descending into fantasies; (7) and following paths and figuring out shortcuts." (Sobel, 2002)

In his research with children aged 9-11 in New Mexico, Tori Derr identifies four types of children's experiences of place. (Derr, 2009) Rites of Passage refers to the exploratory and adventurous aspect of interacting with places. Here, children are especially relying on their physical activities and movements which they incorporate into discovering geographies like climbing hills and walking through forests. Similar to Sobel's findings, children are more inclined to exploring natural settings, however some children find similar interest in exploring some old or abandoned buildings. Fort-makers theme refers to children's special places and place-making activities. David Sobel identifies four types of special places; Forts, dens, treehouse and hidden places. (Sobel, 2002) Sobel, Derr and other researchers found that between age 8 and 11, children like to retreat into their own constructed places. These places are usually away from home, away from parent supervision. According to Cooper Marcus; developing place-making activities appears especially in away-from-home experiences, and these have the most nostalgic feelings towards childhood years. (Marcus, 1995) Contrary to what we might think children sometimes seek places of privacy where they can be fully themselves and are able to change and manipulate the environment to their needs. A study found that even within the most institutionalized environments, like a hospital, children showed a desire to configure their own rooms when they were given the opportunity. (Wolfe & Rivlin, 1987)

However, children's experiences of places are not and should not always be free of constrictions and behavioral patterns dictated by the supervisions of adults. The third theme, Learning Care, refers to the children learning to develop attachments to places as they interact with adults. The adult acts as guiding model of respect towards nature, animals and other people. This may include activities like gardening, ethnobotany and taking care of animals. The final theme explains how children experience a cultural place "giving context to the meanings and attachments they feel toward a place. The Web shows a deeper layer of connection to places, through attaching stories, from family, community and especially the elderly, to the place knowledge. Stories leave a long-lasting impression on children, a story of grandparents events, and festivals, or stories ghost haunting a certain place, evokes a sense of being part of the place culture and community. (Derr, 2009)

Children are more malleable to absorbing values from the environment and people around them than what adults experience with their already established values. Places communicate to children, not just through visual messages. Christopher Day argues that the reality of today's built environment are mostly excluding of children as autonomous individuals, which leads to a widespread sense of "cynicism" and "disenchantment" in young people. (Day, 2007). We seem to view childhood as a temporary stage, a preparatory course, for children to enter into the adult world and become *like us*. We then treat their places as temporary aspects of space and time that they will soon grow out of.

This is no more true than in typical school buildings, the place where children spend the largest part of their day. Instead of embodying the learning through places experience, schools have for a long time, and still in many geographies, communicated the rigidity of institutionalism. Traditionalist education views children as passive observers and absorbers of information and codes of conduct, the test scores as the end product of learning, and family and community as an external part to learning experiences. The result is school building that are rigid and spaces that are "monofunctional" dictating specific activities and outcomes of interactions.(Dudek,2002) The beginning of the last century witnessed the emergence of progressive educational models in Europe, following the works of some radical educationalists like John Pestalozzi in Switzerland, Samuel Wilderspin in England and Friedrich Froebel in Germany. These progressive models called for a type of knowledge acquired through play, experimentation and social interaction. Children were to enjoy as much freedom to explore as possible, teachers took the role of facilitators and guides. Following the change of educational theories, schools started changing their strategies of building forms and space arrangements. For example, Reggio Emilia schools considered the architecture of schools and pedagogy as one entity, in which school became as a third teacher (Strong-Wilson and Ellis, 2007). Schools like Montessori and Steiner were established in the early 20th century and focused on the well-being of children, by fostering the connection with the outdoor and the emphasis on physical as well as spiritual development of children. Some of the new progressive schools went a bit far in its no-fixed lessons no-formal-teaching kind of learning, and some took the balanced approach that was inspired by the highly influential theories of John Dewey. His theories on experiential education has a great influence on school design. He emphasized the importance of stimulating senses as part of the educational process.(Dudek, 2002 ) schools are becoming aware of the positive effect of connecting school buildings to green school yards and sunny spaces.

However, this approach to building schools reconnecting children with nature and natural play should be seen in the light of not only changing educational theories and models but as a design paradigm shift. In our present reality, children are moving from the realm of physical and social interactions to cyber ones, promising alternative attachments from behind a screen. Richard Louv, in his popular book *Last child in the woods* warns that the more we become technologically advanced the more we seem to be disconnected with the natural world. He stresses the need for a paradigm shift in thinking to avoid an inevitable outcome of nature depravity. He terms this phenomenon as the 'Nature Deficit Disorder' (Louv,2006,2011)

“By Its broaderst interpretation, Nature Deficit Disorder is an atrophied awareness, a diminished ability to find meaning in the life that surrounds us whatever forms it takes” (Louv, 2011)

Researches on the ecology of childhood and designers draw on the recently popularized "Biophilia" Hypothesis, originally put forward by biologist Edward O. Wilson and psychologist Stephen Kellert. (Kellert & Wilson, 1993) The term covers the understanding of the inherent, deep-seated desire of the human race to be affiliated with nature. Previous studies have shown, with empirical evidence, the positive effect of being in contact with nature; whether directly or indirectly, on restoring physiological, psychological and social resources (Hartig, 2012) .This has come to be known in the field of environmental psychology as the restorative environments theory and includes major works like the cornerstone research of Roger Ulrich on Stress Recovery Theory and Rachel and Stephen Kaplan's research on Attention Restoration Theory and others.

The effect of restorative environments has mostly focused on adults' places. However more recent studies have begun to investigate the benefits of children spending more time outdoors and in contact with nature, such as countering sedentary behavior, cognitive development problems, and attention functioning disorders. (Moore & Cooper Marcus, 2008) For example, the Human-Environment Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois have found that children with Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD) showed reduced symptoms after exposure to outdoor natural settings.(Taylor et al., 2001) Other benefits can be in dealing with issues such as child obesity, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), low attention span and nearsightedness. Moreover spending time in nature especially in middle-childhood can be associated with spiritual and transcendental experiences. A study done by Edward Hoffman, shows that many people when asked to recall spiritual experiences in middle-childhood associate that with encounters of nature.(Hoffman, 1992) David Sobel sees these experiences as twofold; being in connectedness with nature, and unique and separate from it.

"The sense of continuity provides the foundation for an empathic relationship with the natural world. The sense of separateness provides a sense of agency, of being able to take responsible action for the natural world. " (Sobel,2008)

### **Schoolyards, arrival Journeys and favorite places**

Spending time outside the typical classroom hours, running in the corridors, passages and courtyards is a part of school life a child undoubtedly looks forward to. Through these journeys, children not only take a respite from too much intellectual concentration but, if designed with care can use them to learn a great deal about how to navigate their environment and care for the natural world, develop attachments to certain places, socialize and look for mood and emotional regulators. Schoolyards can very easily be the "leftover space fenced in ways that leave children peering out, similar to inmates'. While adding landscape and greening features can be the easiest and cheapest way to transform a school ground, many schoolyard suffer from looking and feeling "hard". According to Day, the schoolyard can be for urban children one of the first outdoor experiences through which they learn to interact with the environment. "The school ground experience could make or mar a child's attitude to being outdoors in later life". (Day, 2007)

During classes break time, children form attachments with specific places or corners. Research found that favorite places of childhood act as restorative and mood regulators. (Korpela et al,2002) More qualitative inquiries are required to find out the qualities of special or favorite spots especially within school grounds and buildings. While most research shows that favorite places occur in the outdoor, away from home and school supervision, uncovering their qualities can contribute to the ongoing debate of child supervision and freedom.

Similarly, the journey of arrival at school can have a great influence on children's attitude of wanting to go to school rather than being forced to. Christopher Day refers to this journey as a pedagogical one; of spaces unfolding and of places that speak to and welcome the child. The arrival journey can be rich in its connection between in and out, the sensory encounters of smells, textures and images and the feel that the school opens up and absorbs the neighborhood and community around it. (Day, 2007).

While each of these school places can offer broader possibilities of research, they are considered in a general framework of long-lasting restorativeness and attachment. For this purpose, the inquiry that inspired this article explores what adults can recall about their childhood places in schools. Their description of places, narrative of certain events and activities attached to the place cannot uncover the particulars of experience but rather shed light on memorable and preferred aspects of spaces designers seem to hastily add in between classrooms. The inquiry is carried out through semi-structured interviews with ten people. They are asked to recall the school they went to between age 7 and 12. The participants are then asked to recount what they remember about the school yard or break area, talking about how it looked like, what activities do they mostly associate with it, and what aspects of it did they mostly like as children. They are then asked to describe the everyday journey upon arriving to

school grounds until they reach their usual classroom. And finally the participant are asked to describe a favorite or special place within the school and explain why they consider it so.

In recalling schoolyard areas, almost all participant started by saying how "hard" or how "soft" the yard was and if there was a garden or trees in the yard. One of the participants gives a striking description to how she perceived the hardness of her vast schoolyard: " The school yard was a very big extent of rectangular floor and not a tree in sight. The floor was some kind of asphalt material, it was like being in the middle of a street, I still remember how painful it was to fall on it, I got intimidated of sports class because of that, I would try to avoid running in this yard". Too much "hard" surfaces begets "hard" types of behavior and a feeling of intimidation. Also, without the breaking softness of landscape, children won't find activities to foster learning care. School gardens in which children participate in caring for plants and animals make a great difference in environmental attitudes even in advanced life years. A participant recalls having a part of the school yard for planting activities, where you can find "olive, lemon and apple trees". Stephen Kellert argues that part of the cognitive development of children can be enhanced through direct or indirect experiences of nature and plants, in which a child learns to identify and categorize and name different plants and species, which can "facilitate the developing capacity for sorting and retaining information and ideas". (Kellert, 2002)

On the other hand, the periphery of the yard has a strong symbolic message to offer, it can indicate safety and enclosure, or it can give impressions of imprisonment. A participant says " from one side [the yard] was surrounded by classrooms, I think that was a beautiful aspect of the school.. On the other side there was the wall separating the school from the outside.. It was a very high solid wall.. You can't see anything beyond.. Not even the buildings facing the school.. It was like they wanted to prevent any kids from escaping.. ". However, another participant explained that although their school had two schoolyards, one closer to school entrance and more open to the outside, she and most school children would prefer to be in the further fenced schoolyard, as it would feel like the place was their own.

More than one participant described a schoolyard that was surrounded by classrooms, especially ones that can be entered directly from the outside, as being a reason why they thought the schoolyard was beautiful. One of them explains "what I like about the schoolyard especially is that you could immediately enter to the classrooms from the outside yard, it felt like this gave the classrooms a feeling of openness and connection with the schoolyard. Plus when we were sitting in the classroom, our windows were looking to the yard, what only separated us from it is a shaded walkway running in front of the classrooms.. It was on a slightly higher level from the yard. So that shadowy walkway was really nice", another participant described a similar in-between passage between the classrooms row and the floor of the courtyard. She describes that place as one of her favorite places to sit and eat with her friend, while watching other kids playing in the schoolyard.

The schoolyard can be the main theatre for children to participate in place-making activities as well as inventive and pretend play that uses the direct physical environment to their advantage. Steen Eiler Rasmussen argues that children make use of places we as adults might not even think of assigning a functionality to. Through extending their senses and what they employ in play to lifeless objects, they unconsciously experience certain elements of architecture and make them part of their play. Rasmussen projects a picture of a child getting the feel of a large high solid wall by bouncing a ball on it.(Rasmussen, 1962) Children also use their bodies to experience places and architectural elements. One participant recalls that there were two large round columns in the middle of the hallway as you enter the school building. As a child of 6 or 7 she would hug the columns, feeling their roundness and cold soft texture. Because they are large they would also play chase around them. These and another curved wall that leads to a passage stands out in an environment made up of typically rectilinear surfaces. Concavity and convexity of surfaces offer a spectrum of play patterns for a child.

Some of these place-making activities become patterned and extend the creative power of children to manipulate their surroundings and expand their spatial knowledge. One participant remembers a particular game she and her friends would play in the schoolyard; " Since our yard used to be made of



rectangle tiles, we used to draw borders for these rectangles and play a game called "Rectangle". A girl stands on each corner, and pulls the girl beside her in the next corner to take her place, according to the game rules". Placemaking; when done in a group and with the guide of teachers, boosts a child's sense of esteem and identity. Some of the participants remember a feature of the schoolyard which they helped add to or change. For instance, children painted the stones of the school building wall that overlooked the schoolyard, others would paint on the floor or grow plants in the school garden.

Other memorable aspects of school grounds is the difference of level. Especially in arrival journeys, children familiarize and know through their bodily experience, how often they go up or down steps or an incline. Children's sense of adventure increases with these differences of level. Later in life people can recount these journeys almost easily as they become part of body-memory. Some participant associated the climb of the stairs with older kids. As they were in the first few grades, they either stayed in the ground or first floor. The upper floors were a mysterious realm you can reach when you are big enough. One participant said that her school was small and spread horizontally, so everyone was familiar with each other.(Figure 2)

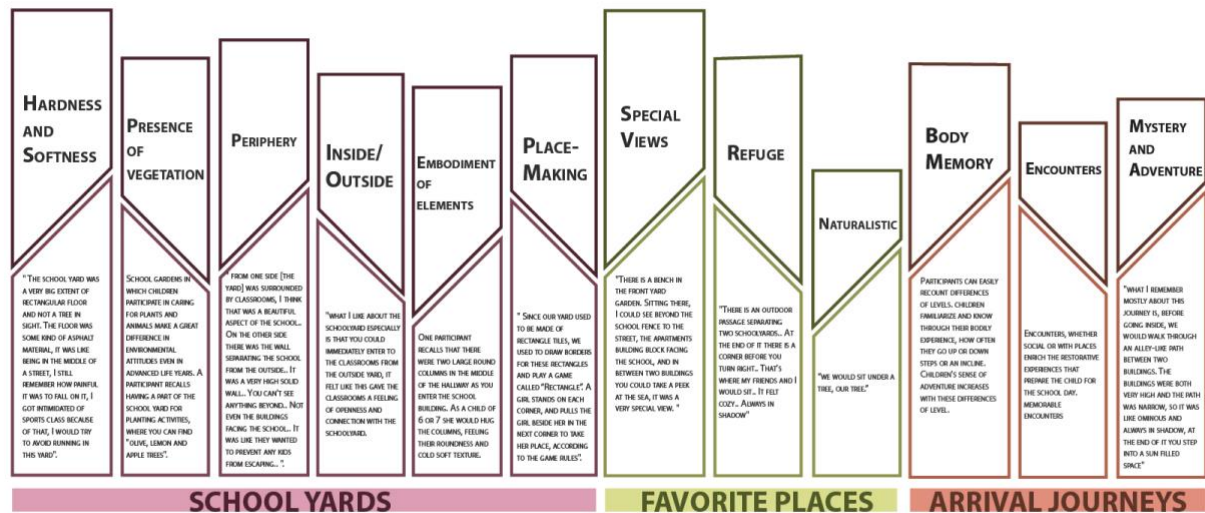


Figure 2: Templates of concepts occurred in the interviews with children

Encounters, whether social or with places enrich the restorative experiences that prepare the child for the school day.

"For schools, this typically is: gate, grounds, path, school building, entrance doorway, passage, then class- room door. Path and passage – influencing how we move – are phases of mood-progression. Gate and doorways – about how we meet things – are thresholds. The quality, character and messages we encounter on this journey influence how we interpret all subsequent experiences." (Day, 2007)

One participant recounts a memorable light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel experience from her journey to classroom "what I remember mostly about this journey is, before going inside, we would walk through an alley-like path between two buildings. The buildings were both very high and the path was narrow, so it was like ominous and always in shadow, at the end of it you step into a sun filled space"

Some participants have memory of school places that would evoke their curiosity. They speak of an old rusty iron door that is always looked, rooms that look abandoned, basement storages that they go and explore against teachers' orders. Recent research suggests that an environment having a degree of



mystery, mimics a quality of space found in nature that creates anticipation and drives one to explore. (Browning, 2014)

Favorite places were usually associated with either an enclosed shaded spaces, corners in the schoolyard, or places with special views.

"There is a bench in the front yard garden. Sitting there, I could see beyond the school fence to the street, the apartments building block facing the school, and in between two buildings you could take a peek at the sea, it was a very special view. "

"There is an outdoor passage separating two schoolyards.. At the end of it there is a corner before you turn right.. That's where my friends and I would sit.. It felt cozy.. Always in shadow"

"There is a classroom in the third floor.. My friends and I would go there often, because it has a very beautiful lake view"

"The outdoor corridor in front of the classrooms, which was like a balcony, because you can see the main yard and the performance stage from it ."

## CONCLUSION

The examination of childhood experience of places is highly complex and challenging task to tackle. Recent studies show how experiences of place can be part of learning due to its essential part of supporting and fostering child development. Our understanding of how the environment effects our psychological and physiological states cannot escape the deeper meanings of culture and spirituality. According to Salingrose and Masden we might begin to understand our connection with places and nature through defining three levels of human nature: the abstract being, the biological sensory being and the spiritual being. (Salingrose & Masden, 2008) Recent design philosophies such as Biophilic design and restorative environmental design seek to reestablish the deeply rooted connection we have with nature and emulate that into our daily urban places. This is becoming more dire than ever as children's health problems and sedentary behavior are becoming a result of the technologically driven paradigm, keeping children indoors. Schools have a great role to play in combating these patterns of behavior, by becoming environments that encourage outdoor play and care for the natural environment. School places should foster place- making activities, and school journeys that create adventure and excitement rather than routine and monotony. (Figure 3)

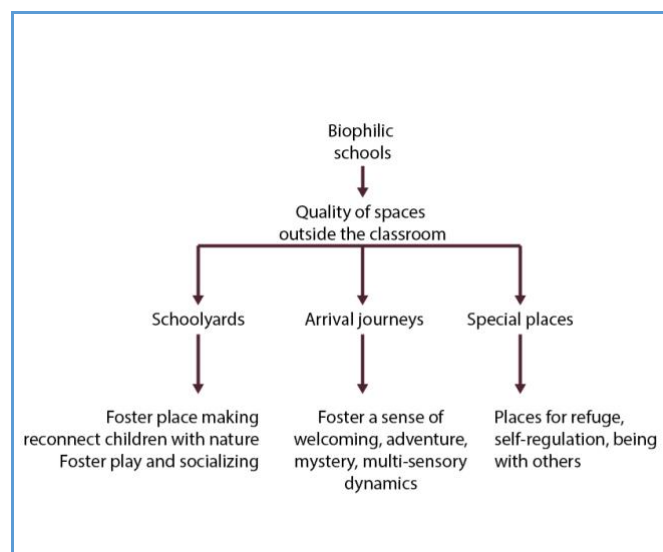


Figure 3: Design Implications of the theory

This article has examined the long-lasting restorative qualities of school places outside the classroom, by asking adults to reflect on memories of childhood places. The participants interviewed recounted diverse, and sometimes similar accounts of their impressions on schoolyards, arrival journeys and favorite spots. While the discussions presented offer almost universal types of experiences to places, more research can be conducted to relate these experiences to specific contexts and cultures, such that can be similar to The Web (Derr,2009 ); encompassing local cultures and stories of places and how they affect our experiences of them as children. The accounts and analysis presented may just be able to draw sketchy pictures of childhood places floating to the surface from deep corners of memories. Today we contend that school places should be viewed from a larger lense, that look to contemporary changing educational theories, and design philosophies and most importantly be informed from researchers' interaction and observation of children within their places. However, what can be gained from these insights is an alert to the designer as they plan children's school places, they might end up being someone's special place and safe haven, or swept under the many more that are forgotten .

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