

EDITORIAL

This issue continues to establish the steadfastness of the ISVS e-journal to support the young and upcoming researchers to share their research with wider academic community, while facilitating the established researchers to consolidate their positions and authority in the respective areas of research.

In this issue, the papers numerously examine the built-environmental issues in India, Indonesia, Iraq, Vietnam, Jordan, Ukraine and Thailand among others. New countries are always added, like Ukraine and Thailand in this issue. In fact, there are new and interesting developments too. Now, the authors come not only from the field of architecture, but from other associated fields such as fine arts and social studies. Nevertheless, they all deal with the aspects of the built-environments and demonstrate that the issues of our surroundings are complex and need to be examined through multiple lenses.

Issues are numerous and range from the vernacular as well as the issues of sense of place, architecture and sculpture, heritage conservation and even vernacular photography as a tool for social therapy. In more specific terms, the papers in this issue have focused on the following.

Nam Thanh Tran examines the relationship between decorative sculpture and architecture. Closely looking at the artistic legacy of the Nguyen Dynasty of the Imperial City of Hue in Vietnam, he shows that architecture and decorative sculpture in Vietnam are inseparable. In the Vietnamese culture, they have become unified as a powerful visual art. Nam Thanh Tran shows that they possess the same language, spatial resolution, and humane directions that serve people to live with spirituality rather than materiality.

Hanan Muneer Al Sheikh introduces a whole new idea she calls vernacular photography. She points out that taking photographs has now become an everyday act, which by definition is vernacular. In this paper however, she looks at the serious manifestation of photograph taking and displaying as a therapeutic act. She brings to us a case of a distraught family who used photographs as a mirror of family adaptation and solidarity after trauma. A fascinating paper, it shows how vernacular pervades the communities at all levels and nooks and corners.

Saja Faris Abdul Kareem and Mohammed Qasim Abdul Ghafoor Al Ani take us to the cities. They examine the issues of sense of place: place and placelessness in cities. They present insights from Basmayah, Baghdad, Iraq, on how sense of place from arises from the urban patterns in modern cities. They conclude that it is important to focus on buildings, building blocks and roadways to create a heightened sense of place when designing cities.

In a similar vein, Dharma Kuba, Wasilah Sahabuddin, & Andi Hildayanti examine the practices of preservation of locality as a vital element of architectural tourism in Tongkonan Toraja, Indonesia. They point out that by preserving and promoting architectural heritage, Indonesia can continue to attract tourists and showcase its rich history and cultural diversity, while employing traditional architecture to maintain cultural identity, preserve historical significance and also promote environmental sustainability.

Ali Moazzeni Khorasgani and Mahdi Haghghatbin is also interested in heritage conservation, but at a more theoretical level. They point out that the practice of regeneration of historical cities has evolved over time and now involves a range of approaches and methods to preserve cultural heritage while promoting sustainable development. They show that earlier, the focus was on physical restoration, but today, it has evolved to a landscape based approach, which can achieve sustainability and continuity simultaneously and effectively.

Fatimah Jumaah Idan, Saad Fawzi AL-Nuaimi and Ibrahim Jawad Kadhim AL-Yousif are also interested in environmental issues. However, for them, there is a forgotten or 'taken-for-granted' realm that needs to be brought to the forefront. They examine the power of the architect's thoughts in creating appropriate environmental responses through architecture. They look at it from an Islamic perspective and argue that the architects must employ a heritage vocabulary and local architectural elements in a contemporary manner to express culture and social identity and respond to the environment and the regional climate.

Wed Abdulmohsin Abdullah & Dheah Hameed Basee on the other hand, take us to an entirely different issue. They examine the systems of city centers and argue that their transformations pose serious issues in cities. By presenting the case of Baghdad in Iraq, they point out that urban systems have high flexibility in their structures. Any process of change at the part level is ineffective and the system adapts to it without any defect, which is what happens in traditional organic cities more than modern networked cities.

Neha Goyal Tater, Garima Toor, Rina Surana, & Tarush Chandra present a very interesting study of the role of sacred eco heritage places in conserving traditional knowledge systems. They examine closely the case of the Braj region in India and reveal that these sites have played a key role in conserving traditional knowledge through practices rooted in animism and a deep understanding of biodiversity. However, today, urban development poses a significant threat to these sacred eco-heritage sites and jeopardize the invaluable traditional knowledge systems embedded within them, along with the associated cultural and ecological heritage.

Asmaa Sadeq Abdulkareem Al-Ani & Ghada Al Slik take us away from the issues of preservation of tangible heritage to intangible heritage. They examine the relations between intangible heritage and place in order to gain insights from the celebration of Zakariyya, in Iraq. They argue that Zakariyya is a classic example for the use of intangible heritage in reviving other heritage places in Iraq and to engage people in preserving inherited beliefs and practices.

Imelda Ann Achin, Addley Bromeo Bianus & Zairul Anwar Md Dawam bring to us an entirely different yet very relevant facet of everyday life. That is the issue of cartoons and how they depict artworks in newspapers. By closely looking at Mingo's Artworks in the Newspapers in Sabah, Malaysia, they conclude that the notion of editorial cartoons has a symbolic purpose to prepare or criticize social and political issues as practiced by Mingo through his cartoons. The artworks are invariably linked to imagination and architecture.

Lidiya Kukil thus deals with a similar aspect but manifested in architecture. She examines the Mascarons in the Architecture of the Late Lviv Secession in 1908-1914 in Ukraine, and reveals the ideas behind them and their manifestations. She concludes that the masks (mascarons) found in Lviv architecture at the beginning of the 20th century were influenced by Western European styles, particularly the Secession movement. The sculptors in Lviv employed a new approach to forming plastic elements in the mascarons, imbuing them with human emotions and abstract concepts.

Hamsa Abd Al-Rahman AlJanabi and Mohammed Qasim Abdul Ghafoor Al Ani examine the contemporary issue of digitizing architecture. They look closely at the post reality and virtual reality in heterotopic and heterochronic spaces, and point out that characteristics of cyberspace reflect and symbolize the future of heterogeneous and heterogeneous spaces. They argue that it is possible to define a heterogeneous spaces and heterogeneous space frameworks for observing cyberspace and both of these types of spaces are able to absorb the past and the present together simultaneously: harmony between the real and the fantastical, through imagination.

Fitri Prawitasari & Amos Setiadi take us back to heritage and conservation. They examine issues of authenticity by looking closely at the conservation of Chinatown architecture in the Ketandan village, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. They identify five priority revitalization places which need immediate attention based on cultural heritage building values.

Majd Albaik examines gentrification as a phenomenon that reflects the image of many types of transformations of neighborhoods. She points out that recent indicators show signs of gentrification in Jabal Al-Waibdeh, Jordan, Amman. Therefore, she examines how gentrification has affected the social interactions among the communities in Jabal Al-Waibdh, and concludes that there is a relationship between gentrification and social interaction. However, as she discovers, it has a negative impact on communication among the residents.

Narisa Noithapthim, Thanasun Tepparat, Mohummad Eisa Ruhullah & Suphat Bunyarittikit present a unique study of the impact of sea breeze on the vernacular houses. They examine the settlements of Tha-Sala in Southern Thailand, and demonstrate the adaptations of coastal communities in settlements and house planning. They show that the influence comes from the natural environment to cope with the annual monsoon winds, as well as the lifestyles. They show that the

houses are oriented toward the road with distinctive features, in an East-West direction so that they do not have to resist the sea wind.

Slamet Supriyadi, Endang Widiyastuti, Nadia Sigi Prameswari, & Wirania Swasty examine acculturation which often happens in situations of mix of cultures. They produce a pragmatic-semantic analysis of the Demak Great Mosque and acculturation of the surrounding communities, in Indonesia. They demonstrate that the Great Mosque of Demak's construction prioritizes functional components over aesthetics, as seen in the mosque's places for prayer, education, tourism, business, and socio-cultural activities. They show that the Great Mosque of Demak has also been designed by emphasizing semantic aspects, as evidenced by the usage of ornaments from three civilizations at once: Islam, Hinduism, and Java.

Fatehi Abdul Ameer Yassir & Mustafa Abdel Jalil Ibrahim take us to a very different issue. They examine the changing land uses at the Oil Fields in Iraq. Looking specifically at the Zubair Oil Field, they argue that the predominant land use in the Zubair oil field is dedicated to oil exploration and extraction activities, resulting in the conversion of agricultural and pastoral land. This shift has led to as they argue, to many environmental consequences. In addition, the expansion of infrastructure and related services has also affected the local communities, changing their socio-economic dynamics.

Finally, Sheikh Hameem, & Md. Asaduzzaman examine community participation in the sports clubs of Bangladesh. Looking closely at the case of Sheikh Kamal Sports Complex of Abahani Limited, they propose a four-level community participation model for sports clubs, along with a numerical evaluation method to evaluate their effectiveness.

Overall, this issue of the ISVS e-journal—as it always is—has been a collection of very meaningful studies into the vernacular settlements as well as the human settlements in general bringing out insights hitherto not available. We are most encouraged by their contributions; indeed, we are thankful to all our authors for their great contributions.

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