

EDITORIAL

This issue continues to establish the steadfastness of the ISVS e-journal to support the young researchers to share their research with the 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 and Thailand among others. New countries are always added, like Vietnam 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 range from the vernacular as well as 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. He shows that they possess the spatial resolution, and humane directions to enable people to live with spirituality.

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, she looks at the serious manifestation of photograph taking and displaying as a therapeutic act, bringing to us a case of a distraught family who used photographs to recover.

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. In comparison, Neha Goyal Tater, et al. examine the role of the places of sacred eco heritage in conserving traditional knowledge systems: They examine the case of the Braj Region in India.

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.

Narisa Noithapthim, et al. 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. Slamet Supriyadi et al. offer a pragmatic-semantic analysis of the Demak Great Mosque and acculturation of the surrounding communities. Andi Hildayanti, & Wasilah Sahabuddin examine the tectonics of vernacular: the design techniques of the Tongkonan House, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Asmaa Sadeq Abdulkareem Al-Ani & Ghada Al Slik examine the relations between intangible heritage and lace and brings us insights from the celebration of Zakariyya, in Iraq. Finally, 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.

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.

Dr. Ranjith Dayaratne
Editor-in-Chief