

EDITORIAL

We are delighted to bring to you this issue of the ISVS e-journal published by the ISVS and the Asian School of Knowledge (ASK) jointly with the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. ASK has consolidated its presence and its association with the ISVS taking forward both the International Seminar on Vernacular Settlements (ISVS) and the ISVS e-journal established since 2025.

This issue of the ISVS e-journal has ten papers in keeping with the scale-down approach which the ISVS e-journal is following since the beginning of 2025. In the first paper of this issue, Angshuman Borpuzari & Amanjeet Kaur examine the transformations of domestic architecture in the indigenous settlements in Assam, India. It points out that over the years, the spatial organization of Assamese vernacular domestic architecture has changed because of the changes in the socio-cultural factors. It concludes that changes in the socio-cultural factors and lifestyle have a profound effect on the layout and connectivity of the houses.

In the second paper, Khushi Sanghvi and Priyanka Kanhare examine the cultural heritage of water spaces in the semi-arid regions of India. They particularly look at the oral histories and water management practices in Dholera, Gujarat, and conclude that the traditional water spaces still continue to be relevant and invaluable in the contemporary contexts.

In contrast, Ihunwo & Nnenda Ezinwo look at the issue of adapting passive design strategies from Colonial and Tropical Architecture Movement, in the Rivers State, Nigeria. They produce a framework for thermal comfort in contemporary buildings in Nigeria, by adapting those passive design strategies. They demonstrate that it can inform the retrofitting of existing buildings and guide the design of contemporary structures in similar climatic contexts.

Abrar Abdulnabi Salem Talaq arrives from an entirely different place. She examines the impact of globalization on the architectural identity of Bahrain, specifically asking questions about the challenges and opportunities in preserving heritage. She argues that while globalization brings innovations, it also threatens local identity. The research concludes that safeguarding architectural heritage of Bahrain requires integrated strategies across design, governance and public awareness.

In sharp contrast, Nasoichah et al. examine the external influences on the languages in the vernacular settlements. They particularly look at the characteristics of the Indian influenced Palawa-Derived Script in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. They conclude that the characteristics of the ancient Javanese script on the Wadu Tunti inscription and the Wadu Pa'a inscription in the Bima Regency, Indonesia are similar to the ancient Javanese script, although there are differences.

Akash Paneliya & Shweta Suhane on the other hand, examine the scope of amphibious architecture for the below-sea-level settings in Kuttanads, India, in creating resilient infrastructure to respond to the emerging climatic calamities. They offer design guidelines to respond to the floods by considering ways in which amphibious architecture responds effectively to flooding.

Chidi Siene Eghelle & Warebi Gabriel Brisibe takes us to Nigeria again. They examine the expressions of culture through architecture bringing insights from the Mbari Houses of the Imo State, Nigeria. They demonstrate that the basic geometric forms used as components and motifs of the central chamber express cultural meanings unique to the 'Mbari-building' communities.

Similarly, Ekaterina Namicheva Todorovska & Petar Namichev examine the architectural and cultural impact of the church of Saint Sophia on the urban fabric of Ohrid, North Macedonia. They demonstrate that although urban densification has diminished, visibility and spatial prominence of Saint Sophia and its role as a point of orientation and cultural memory endures.

Shalini Amin takes us back to India and examine the issue of decoding complex buildings in the vernacular settlements. She explores the architectural and cultural characteristics of the Baroda Central Library, India and points out that this library is a testament to the vernacular settlements anchoring cultural identity of the community in a geographical space shaped by colonial influences and a princely vision.

Finally, Esha Detroja & Priyanka Kanhare examine the vernacular agricultural practices and their impact and dependency on riverine landscapes in India. They offer insights from the Mali community and argue that adaptive land use and cropping patterns there provide a sustainable and adaptive response to a non-perennial riverine setting, providing insights into resilient, temporal living.

Undeniably, these papers divulge the nuances of the manifestations of culture, traditions and the unique practices that exist in the human settlements: both rural and urban, bringing out insights hitherto not available. We are grateful to the authors for the insights shared. We look forward to their active contributions in future too.

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Editor-in-Chief