

EDITORIAL

ISVS e-journal is treading on a new path in the year 2025. From January 2025 onwards it now publishes only 6 issues per year: once every two months. It is now published by the Asian School of Knowledge (ASK) jointly with the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. ASK has initiated number of other journals such as the 'Archi-Texts e-journal', 'SAAAK e-journal' and the 'A&B e-journal' focused on architecture, every-day knowledge and the relationships between architecture and Behaviour. All the journals are now accessible through one portal: 'archi-texts.com'. It also publishes the composite reviews along with the papers, so that others can learn from the nature of the comments.

This issue of the ISVS e-journal has ten papers in keeping with the scale-down approach. Febriyanti et al., in its first paper, examines the characteristics of the Bajo tribal settlement in the Gorontalo Province, Indonesia. By analysing the characteristics of the Bajo settlement, they reveal that their houses have unique characteristics: built on water on stilts, made of wood with a saddle-shaped roof, simple and able to adapt to extreme environments. Shield-shaped and made of zinc and thatch, there are lessons to be learnt from these settlements about building in harmony with Nature.

Mulyanto & Lili Hartono examine the innovation of Batik textile works using wax printing techniques. They offer insights from the use of this technique in Indonesia and concludes that the innovation of wax printed batik can produce 150 times the products compared to hand written batik.

Similarly, Husen Hendriyana et al. look at the sustainable design of crafts in Indonesia. They focus on the use of Pandan leaves: a natural resource of Indonesia. They demonstrate how that empowers the rural craft-preneurs through optimization of the craft by employing participatory action research. There are socio-cultural benefits for people to become artisans and pandanus cultivators.

Sabreen Mohammed & Zaynab Radi Abaas examine the association of spatial nodes to healthy living environments bringing insights from Baghdad, Iraq. They argue that spatial nodes act as connecting cores of the environments, actively contributing to spatial connectivity and the developments of vital locations within settlements. They show that spatial nodes link an area to its surroundings adding vitality to the spatial formations and aids in creating healthy environments.

Truong Thanh and Yen Nhi examine the strategies for preserving the historical and cultural values of abandoned structures in the Bokor Mountain and the Kep City in Cambodia. They conclude that, these structures have significant potential for preservation, despite their deterioration. They argue that if restored, they could contribute to tourism and the economy in Cambodia.

Zankhna Pathan & Shweta Suhane on the other hand, examine the problems and potentials of emerging digital technologies in documenting and preserving the living traditions and heritage in India. They show that the use of 'AI' merged with other digital technologies create precise drawings and sketches with accurate measurements. Therefore, they conclude that photogrammetry and LIDAR sensors equipped with AI can help digital documentation of physical and cultural heritage.

Nguyen Thi Bich Van takes us to Vietnam. She examines the issue of balancing heritage conservation and tourism developments. She brings insights from the restoration of the Japanese Bridge (Chùa Cầu) in Hoi An, Vietnam, and shows how that structure has achieved a delicate balance between retaining the authenticity of the bridge and promoting it for tourism.

Similarly, Ina Helena et al. examine the significant Islamic cultural attractions of tourism in Cirebon, Indonesia. However, she employs neuroscience and reveals that by employing neuroscience, it was possible to confirm that the palace, as a historical symbol, and the Cirebon Mask Dance, performed for the tourists in Keraton Kacirebonan are significant tourist attractions.

Gayatri Mukherjee, Sourojee Dutta & Madhumita Roy examine a similar issue in a different way. They look at the impact of urban developments on the historic character of Temple Towns bringing Insights from Ekamra Kshetra, Odisha, India. They conclude that Ekamra Kshetra has lost its unique character. Therefore, they recommend a declaration of heritage zones and proper urban design guidelines to sustain the character in any new developments in such historic places in India.

Finally, Meryem Haythem Ali & Shaimaa Hameed Hussien examine the issue of designing for all, employing the local standards to empower the disabled people. They look at the spaces of Abu-Nuwas Garden, in Baghdad, Iraq and point out that the local standards in Iraq do not meet the minimum standards for public urban spaces. Therefore, they argue that only by establishing a local standard, the cities in Iraq can promote the disabled people to use public spaces since their needs are considered in the design of the urban environments.

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