

EDITORIAL

We are delighted to bring to you this issue of the ISVS e-journal published by the Asian School of Knowledge (ASK) consolidating its academic pursuits, while organizing the ISVS 14 in Vietnam in December.

This issue of the ISVS e-journal has nine 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, Lucas Narzari and Jogesh Kakati offer us an articulated discussion about 'Kheri' as a form of communication within the Bodo Community in India. They point out that it is a vibrant form of folk performing art rooted in the religious and cultural traditions of the Bodo community. They conclude that Kherai is an important form of folk performing art that communicates the religious and cultural traditions. They emphasize the need to protect and promote this unique cultural legacy for the future generations, ensuring the preservation of its invaluable traditions.

In the second paper, Hema Sree Rallapalli & Janmejoy Gupta present the patterns of use and conditions of rooftops in low-rise housing in India. They offer insights from Hyderabad where urbanization has led to growing concerns about the efficient use of available spaces, especially in the low-rise residential areas. They argue that, rooftop spaces, often underutilized, hold immense potential for addressing these challenges by serving as multifunctional areas. They underscore the need for collaborative efforts between architects, urban planners, and residents to transform the rooftops from underutilized spaces into vibrant, functional areas.

In contrast, Bushra Yaroub Alarbeed & Harshit Sosan Lakra present the transformations and adaptations of vernacular houses to contemporary needs in Sweida, Southern Syria, while pointing out the existence of them as a living heritage. They argue that the transformations of vernacular settlements represent ongoing negotiations between inherited architectural forms and evolving functional, social, and economic requirements. In the paper, they demonstrate that vernacular architecture remains dynamic, continuously shaped by residents' negotiation between preserving inherited cultural identity and addressing practical living needs.

Süheyla Birlik et al. arrive from an entirely different place. They examine the transformations of the Değirmenbaşı Street in the City of Safranbolu in Türkiye as an issue of integrating the new with the old. They point out that the historical environments should be conserved, adapting to the existing conditions and henceforth, this requires that planning authorities must recognize the importance of the past of the city for establishing its urban identity.

In sharp contrast, Noura Saud Albinali examine the impact of technology on cultural identity and traditional practices of Bahraini Architecture. She points out that in recent decades, Bahrain has witnessed rapid architectural developments influenced by global design trends and technological tools. However, they have also led to the erosion of traditional architectural elements such as courtyards, wind towers, and mashrabiya screens. She concludes that a hybrid approach—combining modern tools with vernacular strategies—is essential for preserving the architectural identity of Bahrain while embracing innovations.

Qusai Majed Harby Abu Omar & Huriye Gurdalli on the other hand, examine the multi-functional use of spaces in the traditional residential architecture. They bring insights from flexibility in Ottoman Houses in North Nicosia, Cyprus. They offer the Ottoman principles that enable actualizing adaptability and flexibility in house building, learning lessons for creating such affordances in the future.

Similarly, Mulyanto et al. examine the revival of preserving the Panji Stories. They bring insights from the revival of the nearly extinct Wayang Beber Folklore in Indonesia. They examine the process of transferring the vehicle from Panji story to making wayang beber and its performance by creating new Wayang performances and ascertaining their values.

Gorelikov Andrey Ivanovich, Akhmetova Anna Valinurovna take us to a different world. They examine the evolution of health care in the traditional societies of the Russian Far East in the 20-21st centuries. They reveal that there have been state interventions to preserve the indigenous people there. The statistics show that there has been an improvement of the demographic situation of the traditional societies, as a result.

Finally, Zainab Yahya Ahmed bring us back to Bahrain. She examines the issue of balancing progress and preservation of heritage highlighting the dilemmas in the historic cities of Bahrain. She shows that the majority of the people of Bahrain value heritage preservation but are concerned about its erosion due to modern constructions. In conclusion, she recommends adopting urban design strategies that incorporate traditional elements, promoting inclusive urban planning, and supporting adaptive reuse.

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 the future to bring to light the relevance of vernacular in the contemporary world.

Dr. Ranjith Dayaratne
Editor-in-Chief