



## Dossier Editorial: *Vernacular architecture*

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The dossier of this issue is a selection of articles, transformed from an international conference held at Istanbul technical University about a year ago. The theme of the ISVS-7 Conference in Istanbul which took place at Taşkışla, was Vernacular Architecture. ISVS stands for International Seminar on Vernacular Settlements. The Conference took place during the period between 15-17th of October, 2014. After having many discussions and reviews of the previous 6 ISVS themes, the local conference team in Istanbul, ITU gave a special title to the ISVS 7 Conference: Re-Assessment of Vernacular Architecture: theory and practice. With this international conference, we welcomed participants from all over the world and enjoyed the energy springing from the ideas of diverse scholars. The conference was structured around several keynote speeches, half of them Turkish, half of them international. Furthermore, 7 sessions were held, with parallels. Contribution came from active participants 23 different countries –from Asia, Middle-East, Africa, Europe, North and Central America, and Canada. Over 130 abstracts were submitted. Approximately 100 participants came over. We were able to realize the conference by the sponsorship of TUBITAK, ITU Rectorate, Real Estate Investment Fund, Çuhadaroglu Aluminum Systems. The tripod of the conference structure was composed of the Dean of Faculty of Architecture, Architectural Design Typology Working Group, and Housing Research Center of ITU. While the dean together with the Rectorate offices was promoting the funds to realize the conference and opening up the spaces with, in Taşkışla, the working group undertook most of the human and intellectual responsibilities over long hours and days and weeks of work. The Center mobilized all its facilities almost everyday, welcoming and tracking the conference process before, during and after the Conference. The original founder

of the series of biennial international seminars has been a group of scholars from Asia which started in Indonesia in 1999. It has aimed to promote research on Vernacular traditions and settlements.

After reconsidering the previous ISVS themes and its main goals, the local organising committee at ITU has decided that conference focus on the following topics:

- Theory, philosophy and practice: Knowledge formation
- Globalization and Local Identities: Small Traditions and Grand Traditions
- Politics: Informality, Third Space, Otherness, Struggles, Exclusion, Resistance, Diversity, Plurality, Gender, Class, and Ethnic Differences
- Human Factors/Behavioral Aspects: Women, Children, the Aged, Everyday Life
- Meanings and Experiences: Place-making, Dwelling, Non-Place
- Commodification: Consumption, Media Intervention, *Touristification*, and Inappropriate Policies
- Environmental Concerns: Formation of Public Space, Street Art
- Socio-Cultural Sustainability: Cultural Ecology of Vernacular Housing
- Technology and New Materials: Climate, Ecology, Recycling, Saving of the Resources

The participants included full-paper presenters, organization committee members, scientific committee members from different universities and geographies, architects-planners from offices, invited speakers, researchers from various research centers, and doctoral students from national and international universities. Diversity of geography, education, occupation and backgrounds was a springboard for heated discussions on the changing definition of what is vernacular and what is not. The conversations continued at coffee-breaks, lunches and even after the conference. The keynote speakers from international universities included Miki Desai from CEPT University, India; Nezar Alsayyad from University of California, Berkeley, USA; Attilio Petruccioli with Italian

origin, from Qatar University. Furthermore, a guest speaker from Bahrain University Pratyush Shankar gave the welcoming speech as one of the core members of ISVS committee. Three best papers were selected to promote research on the theme by the organizing and scientific committee, and first, second, and two third best papers are included within this dossier in this and the next issue of the journal.

A. Petruccioli's article is the first one, and the author gives a well-founded critique of vernacular architecture Works at the contemporary times. He selects samples from the known architects and scholars. Understanding the typology process is the focus of the article, as a way of challenging the contemporary design in the built environment. E. Hasg  l emphasizes the incremental growth of squatter settlements in İstanbul. She examines the cultural identity in the informal settlements and examines the house production process to the extent of its improvements in time.

M. Dabaieh and B. Eybye have written their article on an interesting comparison between a middle-eastern country and a northern European Country. Through the context of acclimatization of adobe housing, they have shown that, even in different cultural contexts, people's approach to sustainability can be similar..

E. Torbaoğlu and Y. Demir have based their article on a long-lasting research on settlements of Kemaliye, Erzincan In the article is examined the concept of continuity, a highly crucial parameter of transference of vernacular architecture to the new and coming generations throughout time for their cultural, as well as spatial sustainability. The critical regionalism formed the theoretical framework of the article.

R. Dayamanti and F. Kossak use in their article, the major urban identity definers of Kevin Lynch in order to re-assess them in view of vernacular architecture. The article carries the Lynch's theory of imageability of contemporary third space. The authors attempt to interpret the theory and its application in a new way.

T. Iyendo, E. Akingbaso, H. Z. Alibaba and M.   zdeniz have made a research as the background for his article

on the Cypriot buildings. Their emphasis is on the microclimate-based design alternatives. Their study reveals that vernacular housing embodies more climate-responsive and human-comfort oriented design approach than the contemporary buildings The article contributes to the understanding of the relevant knowledge whether it becomes an input in the design concept and design process or not. W. Brisibe has conducted an extremely interesting field study in African fisher village using ethnographic methodology. He examined on one-to-one basis through interviews, photos the fisher tribes housing and settlement forms, and their activities differentiated by gender and age. The life styles of these migrant fisher families of Nigeria require highly hierarchical spatial arrangements. The article reminds us one more time that the best knowledge about the Local can only be derived from the local community, in place.

S. K     k has conducted quite an interesting work on Hittite civilization with its own unique architecture. The author curiously intends to follow up the traces of the vernacular from Hittite's time up to the Ottoman period for comparative purposes. To fulfill this aim, the Hattusha village local architecture is examined. The change along time longitudinally has existed; yet, same material and structural design factors persisted despite thousands of years in between, indicating continuity of the vernacular.

M. I Hidayatun and J. Prijotomo, and M. Rachmawati, similar to the 6th article in the dossier, have interpreted and applied an existing theory, in this case Paul Ricoeur's theory, on a different context of design approach. The authors explore the capacities of the contemporary usage of Vernacular Architecture for a viable tool for today, in the light of Ricoeur's theory.

S. Patidar and B. Raghuvanshi dwell in their article on a timeless argument of whether Vernacular Architecture is dominated by the modern Architecture, or if the two can co-exist for a sustainable development. They have explored a central tribal settlement in India, in its ecological, architectural, and economic aspects, to find leading

guidelines for the design of sustainable development of the modern. Throughout the Conference, this issue has been debated; and it seems that this article contributes to this discussion by pointing out its significance for consideration in a realizable development.

*R. Dayaratne* in his article has a detailed examination of the traditional architecture of Bahrain in order to show that re-dignification of the vernacular is possible. He justifies it by the

significance of sustaining the identity of the culture and the nation. Under the global forces and with the loss of pearl industry the major traditions are threatened to be diminished, and the author claims they need to be revived.

I hope that the readers share the ideas of the authors presented here, and at the same time re-assess their daily lives in connection with local values in their built and social environments.