TANGIBLE - INTANGIBLE HERITAGE(S)– DESIGN, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CRITIQUES ON THE PAST, PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

• Paper / Proposal Title:

Commodification of place and the decline of patchwork cosmopolitanism: case of urban patch at the cantonment edge of Pune, India

• Author(s) Name:

1. Dr. Tapas Mitra
2. Ms. Saeed Pawar

• University or Company Affiliation:

1. School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal
2. School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal

• Presentation Method. I would like to:

i. present in person (with/without a written paper)

• Abstract (300 words):

The diverse communities settled on the edge of the British cantonment town in Pune established in 1818 to serve it, traded in daily provisions like grains, fuel, vegetables and crafted articles like shoes, saddles and imported luxury goods. Cobblers and other service providers were also part of the settler communities and occupied urban blocks specializing in products and services and over time consolidated to form a cosmopolitan urban patch on its western edge. Within the guidelines of the cantonment authority an eclectic Indian urban form with its Allis, Gallis (bylanes) and Puras (clusters) emerged with central courtyard type house as the dominant building plan form. Vernacular expressions and ornamentations typical of
the diverse communities of Hindus, Bohra Muslims, Parsis, Goan Christians and the Jewish communities settled here formed unique urban artifacts in a mixed use urban space.

Growth of Pune as the second most prominent city of Maharashtra in post partition Bombay state in 1960 and growth of industrial areas around Pune increased pressure on urban land. In the last twenty five years the IT industry has also consolidated the city’s global nature. The cosmopolitan mixed use urban edge of the cantonment in question has been transforming fast into a commodified space dominated by global retail footprints and finds itself in certain ways within a larger narrative of eviction (Sassen, 1995) of traditional commerce and living processes in this urban space. The present work examines ways of retaining the urban fabric and uses heritage as a thematic device and explores the role of urban design interventions to counter the visually seductive, privatized public culture (Zukin, 1995), having identified the right time to address issues of outmigration and degeneration of the urban fabric (and its placeness) in the context of the development control guidelines of the cantonment over the patch.

•Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

1. Dr. Tapas Mitra is an architect and urbanist. He is an Associate Professor and presently the Head of the Department of Urban Design in the School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal. In the last 25 years, he has worked on diverse issues of the urban core of Indian cities, specifically in the old city areas of Calcutta, linking social and spatial transformations with collective memory and the urban myth. Tapas Mitra teaches various courses in Architecture, Urban Design and Conservation related to Design theory, Aesthetics, and Urbanity. He is a self taught artist and teaches techniques of documentation in old and new city areas through sketch-crawls and on-location drawing. Dr. Mitra has been a featured artist thrice in the international website of Urban Sketchers. He has been an invited international faculty and lecture leader at the 8th International symposium of Urban Sketchers in Chicago in 2017. He also has post graduate and doctoral scholars working with him in the domain of urban studies and has presented and published his research work internationally.

2. Ms. Saee Pawar is an architect from Pune and is presently a graduate student of Urban Design at the School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal. Apart from the mandatory studios in her undergraduate programme, she has worked on a community development project in Mathura, India in collaboration with Curtin University, Australia. Her interest lies in the study of interfaces of the built and the unbuilt, communities and engagements of diverse user groups, especially in the inner cores of Indian cities. In her post graduate thesis, Saee is exploring the role of urban design in reinstating the essential ingredients of the urban at the inner core of Pune. She examines the mandate of the discipline in restructuring building regulations to strike a balance between everyday living processes and
diverse aspects of tangible and intangible heritage and re-imagine the inner core as a construct of its people, space and artifacts in achieving specific urban singularities.