

Kandy City Centre as a Public Space

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Kandy City Centre (KCC) is a modern commercial complex in Kandy, Sri Lanka. It is the only shopping complex in Kandy and an important public space in the city. This study discusses the significance of studying Kandy City Centre as a public space. This study develops around the two research questions: How Kandy City Centre has been developed as a situated space and lived space and how Kandy City Centre challenges the Kandyan landscape. A public space is a space that is open to and accessible to the public. A situated space is a space that is experienced and understood in a particular way by the people who use it. A lived space is a space that is shaped by the everyday practices of the people who use it. The conceptual framework is based on two approaches from study of Geographies of public space (2020): public space as assemblage and public space between inclusion and exclusion. Primary data was collected through interviews and observations of people who visited the Kandy City Centre. Secondary data was collected from research articles, web contents, books, and newspapers. Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. In addition, Carl Sauer's morphological approach to landscape studies and James Duncan's "landscape as a text" concept were important in studying how KCC challenges the Kandyan landscape. Easily accessible location and assemblage of services were causes to KCC developed as lived and situated space. In addition, the KCC building exterior reflects Kandyan architecture, but the interior is modern. According to the findings, studying Kandy City Centre as a public space can provide valuable insights into the ways in which public spaces can be developed to be more inclusive and accessible to all.

Keywords: Exclusion, Inclusion, Lived space, Public space, Situated space