

**THE PRODUCTION OF THIRD SPACE:
AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY OF THE SOCIO-SPATIAL
NEGOTIATIONS AND RECONFIGURATIONS BY
ORDINARY PEOPLE IN PETTAH BAZAAR,
COLOMBO.**

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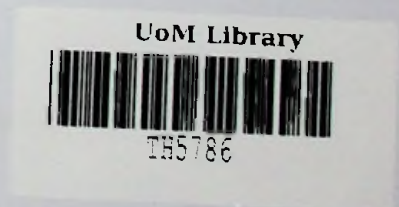
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Abstract

“...there is an ideology of space. Because space, which seems homogeneous, which appears as a whole in its objectivity, in its pure form, such as we determine it, is a social product.”

Henri Lefebvre

The creation of urban space beyond its physical entity towards a deeper social meaning has been extensively discussed in sociology, architecture, philosophy and urban design. Scholars such as Karl Marx, David Harvey, Anthony King, Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja have contributed in constructing concepts in the production of socio-spatiality. They all attempt to uphold the role of ordinary people who negotiate and reconfigure an abstract space into a lived space.

The Production of Third Space attempts to explore how the socio-cultural activities of ordinary inhabitants contribute to the production of socio-spatiality over time in a local urban space. Pettah Bazaar, a vibrant and historic commercial hub, presents a unique case to pursue the above task.

In the study, the concept of Third space/Lived Space coined by Henry Lefebvre and Edward Soja provides a wider lens to analyse the socio-spatiality in Pettah. The key objectives of the study include exploring the social, political, cultural & economic interactions in Pettah Bazaar and identifying how the space is negotiated and reconfigured to create the Lived space. The study was conducted mainly through field study, unobtrusive observations, visual mapping, and photographic analysis. The secondary data recorded on historical, cultural and political events in Pettah were also used to draw triangulated conclusions.

The study reveals that the Pettah urban space is not merely a physical backdrop against which social life occurs; instead, it is a product of social, cultural & political struggle and historical interventions which are always in the process of being negotiated & reconfigured by people.

Keywords: *Socio-spatiality, Third space, Lived space, Naturalization, Social Space, Conceived Space, Perceived Space, Pettah, Colonial influence*

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