

**An extension to Nur Yalman's *Under the Bo Tree: A Survey into Diaries of Mr. KB Nissanka, School Head Master of 'Terutenne'*.**

**Anura Manatunga**

**ABSTRACT**

*Under the Bo Tree* by Nur Yalman has been considered one of the best socio-anthropological books on Sri Lanka. It is mainly based on field studies conducted in a Kandyan Village, 'Terutenne', for his PhD at Cambridge under the supervision of Edmund Leach from 1954 to 1956. The book was published in 1967 by the University of California Press and popularized among academics as a prescriptive text on the Sinhalese society.

'Terutenne' is a fictional name coined by Yalman for Teripehe, a remote village in the Walapane Division of Nuwara Eliya District. The focus of his study was on caste, kinship and marriage in the Kandyan Sinhalese village in Sri Lanka.

The present research is an extension of Yalman's study through analysing diaries of late Mr. KB Nissanka who was a native of the village and the Head Master of the school when Yalman conducted his research. Nissanka and his family have been widely referred to in Yalman's book and they have met each other on several occasions including some of the important family functions at home.

Mr. Nissanka was born in 1908 in Teripehe and died in 1991 in the same village. He was the Head Master and Principal of the Teripehe School for over two decades and later was promoted as the School Inspector of the region. He retired in 1968 and continued his service as a member of the Village Council and functioned in various other capacities which were integral to the life and society of 'Terutenne'.

He was a regular diarist from around the 1930s and these diaries are not only a record of his personal life, but also a repository of facts which reflect various aspects of village life and contemporary society in Sri Lanka. An analysis of these diaries is important as a cross reference to Yalman's claims and is a definite extension of Yalman's study in terms of time and scope.

*Keywords: Kandyan Village, Sinhalese Society, Sri Lanka, Yalman, Terutenna*