Chapter Nine

Summary and Conclusion

Sri Lanka is still predominantly a rural society and seventy eighty per cent of its population live in rural areas. Historically, the country was influenced by several foreign powers such as Portuguese, Dutch and British. Of these, the British had created the major impact on Sri Lanka. The British introduced many infrastructural reforms in the country and these reforms continued after independence in 1948. Most of the reforms such as education, land tenure reforms and social welfare strategy accelerated the changes in the rural society.

This thesis is mainly concerned with the major question of how these social reforms and strategies have affected the rural society of Sri Lanka. For this purpose, I have selected a village, already studied by Nur Yalman in 1954. The present study however is not a re-study of Yalman’s village. His book is used as the baseline to gauge changes during the last 50 years in the village.

The village is Teripahe situated in the Eastern mountainous terrain of Central Highland in Sri Lanka. This is a village of the Walapane DSD of the Nuwara Eliya District (see map 02 and 03).

The process of change and continuity of this village is examined in detail with threefold theoretical tools of development, modernization and state intervention. Development is a process of planned change and the social scientists are using this concept to understand social changes of modern world. Anthropologists and sociologists in particular are using the concepts of development to explain the comprehensive improvement or growth of a society. However, taking into consideration the unequal development of the modern world, they have employed several other concepts directly related to development. ‘Underdevelopment’ is the
most common concept among them. It is often used to understand the social and economic processes of the third world, which were colonised by European powers. Sri Lanka has been colonised by three European powers, namely Portuguese, Dutch and British. Especially, during the British administration, the country gained considerable changes in social, economic and cultural spheres.

The mode of capitalist economy was initiated during the colonial administration of the country and it was gradually spread throughout the country during the decades of independent Sri Lanka. A transnational company, CTC, influenced the village Teripahe since 1950. The village economy in general and that of Teripahe in particular changed, bringing in changes in the social and cultural life of villagers. A sort of dependency developed through the process, and hence, the dependency theory is used in this thesis to understand the process of development.

Modernization as a concept is used to explain how a society changes from one particular stage to another. In other words, the concept of modernization can be employed to understand how the society is changing from traditional stage to modern stage. Sri Lankan rural society remained a traditional type of society, even when the country gained Independence. Yalman selected his primary village because of its traditional way of life. In this sense, the concept of modernization is valid here to examine the process of change and continuity in the rural society of Sri Lanka. Therefore, the model of modernization, used by Smelser and later by Magnarella, is used in this thesis to understand how rural society has changed during the last 50 years.

The time gap between Yalman's study and the present study is substantially lengthy. There were several social reforms such as land reforms, social welfare, administrative reforms and political reforms introduced by the state during the last 50
years of Sri Lanka. Hence, the concept of modernization is essential to study these processes of social change. The model of modernization used here consisted of four sub-processes or factors. They are technological development, agricultural development, industrialization and urbanization. These factors are more relevant and concrete to understand social changes in rural society of Sri Lanka. Though both the concepts, development and modernization, have very close relationship, the concept of development refers to the process of planned change by the state and other organisations, and the concept of modernization refers to the process of social change from one stage to another stage.

The state is a catalyst of social change. Especially, in most of the third world counties, the state has intervened in the development and modernization processes by introducing several infrastructural reforms in economy and land policy, and also through means of social welfare and politicisation of the administrative structure and people’s organisations. The state is responsible for the development and modernization efforts of the country. There is very close relation between state, development and modernization. However, state intervention is a process catalysing development and modernization. State intervention has caused the spread of positive as well as negative attitudes among people towards social change.

As mentioned above, there were several structural reforms during the colonial period as well as during the post-independent Sri Lanka. These reforms got momentum in 1940s and led to the formation of well-organised social welfare system in the country. Under this welfare policy, the people of Sri Lanka, especially rural masses, had got lands under the colonisation and village expansion schemes, and gained free health, education and other social security benefits. The ideology of social welfarism becomes a deciding factor in parliamentary elections. All governments
tried, in their own ways, to revitalise the grassroots organisations. The ultimate result of the state intervention was politicisation of the rural administrative structure and other social organisations in Sri Lanka. Therefore, state intervention is a prominent factor of social change in rural society of Sri Lanka.

Development, modernization and state intervention are the three important factors, discussed in this thesis as roots of social change in rural society of Sri Lanka. This threefold theoretical framework is used to discuss one major argument by using four basic research problems. The argument is that: "the modern development and modernization efforts at national and regional levels have significantly transformed the rural society of Sri Lanka. As a result, the concepts of village, villager and village life that persisted in the rural society have been changing during the last 50 years of Sri Lanka." Four inter-related research problems are probed to substitute the argument. They are:

1. What are the salient features of a Sri Lankan village?
2. What are the basic social spheres, which are more open to change?
3. Who initiates changes?
4. Which social strata benefit more from these changes?

Taking Yalman's study as the baseline, this study focused on village Teripahe to examine how the rural society has changed in Sri Lanka during the last 50 years. The methodology employed in this research was specific when compared to Yalman's study and other anthropological studies, done on rural Sri Lanka during last 50 years. As a native anthropologist, I used auto-ethnography method with comparative and historical methods. The way I have used these methods to collect data were also specific in this research. I settled in the village with my family (see Appendix One for more details) and two research assistants for five months. The main paddy harvesting
season of the village was within the period of this intensive research work. However, non-native anthropologists are also using this type of methodology for their anthropological research, but native anthropologists have more access than the non-native anthropologists, because there are more similarities between the researcher and villagers.

**Salient Features of Village**

Traditionally, most of the Sri Lankan villages were organised as endogamous communities. The community had several basic features. They are: **first**, mainly, the villagers belonged to Sinhalese and Buddhist community. Most of the Sinhalese are Buddhists in the rural society of Sri Lanka. Buddhism is the primary factor of their identity. The identity of village Teripahe is connected with Lord Buddha’s first visit of Sri Lanka (Mahiyanganaya). The folklore of the village shows how Buddhism and paddy cultivation are incorporated into a single identity of the village. **Second**, the main source of economy was lands. The land is a main source of income and symbol of the prestige. They had four types of lands. They are paddy land, highland land, *chena* land and forest land. **Third**, the main economic activity or occupation was paddy cultivation and the second main economic activity was *chena* cultivation. Rice is the main food. They used traditional methods for paddy cultivation. The entire social and cultural life was organised around the paddy cultivation. *Chena* cultivation fulfilled villager’s physical as well as mental needs. It helped the self-sufficient life in the village. The villagers used to sell the surplus harvest to buy the items that are not produced in the village. **Fourth**, most of the villages were organised as independent villages that consisted of several service castes serving the upper caste Goyigamas. There are five caste groups and each caste has it own identity, integrated with the
village identity. Several upper caste Goyigama members dispute each other and claim that the village was initiated by their forefathers, and it reveals another level of complexity of village identity. Each caste and its sub-hierarchy had different locations in the village. However, the land ownership and cultivation were not confined to the upper caste Goyigamas only. All the low caste communities are engaged in this main economic activity as well as *chena* cultivation in the village. But, they always restricted themselves as endogamous groups. *Fifth*, there were physical and socio-cultural boundaries in the village such as footpath, forest, paddy fields, streams, castes and kindred groups. Traditionally, the village Teripahe is identified as a Kandyan village. If a village has these kinds of salient features, it can be considered as a independent village.

**Basic Spheres Open to Change**

The village Teripahe was an ancient village, organised as a traditional one, and it remained unchanged till the '40s. However, the village has opened to the outer world gradually in 1940s. Several Low Country men settled in the village and started village shops. In the meantime, the Low Country settlers (KSD communities) married from the village, especially from the Goyigama caste (Goyigamaisation). The caste etiquette were opened up to absorb the upward mobile members in the village.

The village was introduced to the new economic activity in the beginning of the 1950s. The tobacco cultivation introduced by the CTC led to cash economy. The tobacco cultivation was well organised by the TTCCS and there was polarisation of the villagers into two economic classes, the petty bourgeoisie and wage labourers.

The village leaderships (Irrigation Headman and Village Headman) changed and were replaced by Cultivation Committee and Grama Sevaka system respectively.
in the later part of 1950s and the initiated years of the 1960s. The village leadership was further changed and it was politicised after 1970s. The village was fully equipped with central government institutional structure, and later in 1987, it was divided into two sections – one belonging to central government and the other to the provincial government. The state has penetrated into almost all the institutional affairs of the village.

The Low Country settlers initiated several social changes in village Teripahe. Especially, they broke caste barriers in the village, but they did not violate their own caste etiquette by marrying from the other low castes in the village. They married from upper caste Goyigamas only. They acquired lands in Teripahe and started small-scale business in the village. However, they could not become rich businessmen such as other Low Country settlers in Nildandahinne town. The businessmen in Nildandahinne who migrated from Low Country had acquired more lands in village Teripahe. The Low Country settlers became agents of change in the village; especially, the headmaster of the village school who was from Low country, prompted the low castes members to give proper education for their children. Though they could not enjoy equal facilities, several low caste members had good education and occupation. The free education system of the country further supported these changes in the village.

The tobacco cultivation was the main channel for social and cultural changes in village Teripahe. This new cash crop introduced profit and money oriented social relationship among the villagers. The CTC handled the regional management of the tobacco cultivation in Walapane when TTCCS managed the tobacco cultivation in village Teripahe. TTCCS was responsible for spread of tobacco cultivation in the village by providing better management system. The TTCCS had its own barns in the
village and were managed by three leading members of the village. Three of them belonged to the SLFP and they had got good support from the government administration of the region. Some of the barn owners gained the knowledge of modern management and got connected with the country’s financial market. They had good relationship with government and private financial agencies. This knowledge is helping them to convert to the commercial vegetable cultivation in the village today. This petty bourgeois group acquired lands in the village and now they are turning to vegetable cultivation. The development of infrastructural facilities such as roads and ASCt in the village has prompted them to shift to commercial vegetable cultivation. However, the process of politicisation of village’s main economic activities and rural organisations has created fissures in the village social structure. The villagers have been polarised into UNP and SLFP camps and this politicisation has also affected the village ritual practices.

Who initiates Change?

The village Teripahe had undergone several changes with development and modernization. First, the Village Expansion Scheme distributed state lands among the villagers. The scarcity of lands in the village was sought to be solved through implementing the Village Expansion Scheme and Colonisation scheme by the state. The main paddy field, Bolagandawela, of the village came under the Village Expansion Scheme. Second, several families migrated to the new colonies initiated by government. It was named Colonization Scheme. Under the Colonisation Scheme in which several families were settled in new colonies and the villagers lost kinship ties with kindred groups which did not affect village Teripahe much. Third, in the recent past, the AMDP became a crucial factor in changing the social and economic life of
the village. The AMDP affected the village Teripahe severely. *Chena* cultivation was one of the main economic activities of the villagers. This cultivation was banned under the forest reservation for three main reservoirs of AMDP. Two of reservoirs are linked with the village boundary and nearly 7500 acres of forest lands have been restricted to the villagers. A number of orphaned elephants that lived in the cleared forest area under the AMDP were adopted to this forest area. Now these elephants are damaging the villager’s crops and other properties. Fourth, The party politics was a main channel to gain infrastructural facilities to the village from the state. The villagers have their own ideas about which village had gained several facilities under the two main parties. The villagers believe that the dedication to the party and the MP will benefit them in getting jobs and in realising other needs. The state and MP became provider of development of rural society. However, when the needs of the villagers were not met with, they shifted their loyalty. The politicisation of this sort sometimes affects negatively the process of development and modernisation.

Party politics began to function in the beginning of 1950s. However, the villagers’ main problem, road access, was solved in 1974 under the SLFP government. The new bus service also started simultaneously. Likewise, the village got several infrastructural facilities in this period. After 1977, the UNP government also gave several facilities to the village such as electricity supply, new roads, health facilities to the dispensary, etc. The villagers believe that these things had been done by their party and leader. They got job opportunities through them. Therefore, the villagers favour the party and leader who support them. All village organisations are led by political representatives of the village. However, the frustrated villagers of this party politics have joined with the extreme political group called JVP, especially in 1988/89. They have challenged mainly the UNP leading members of the village and
these members were from the upper caste Goyigamas. This insurrection reflected the social unrest of the youth and the tension of the suppressed groups such as low castes in rural Sri Lanka. After the violent JVP insurrection of 1988/89, the country is facing another major problem, that is, the Tamil separatism in Northern and Eastern parts of the country. This problem has affected villages like Teripahe and it has obstructed the village development process. Though the state has attempted to modernize the institutional and administrative structure of the country, these vulnerable political problems have blocked the intensity of the development and modernization in rural society of Sri Lanka.

Who Benefited More from these Changes?

While these changes affected the village Teripahe there are also several changes that took place in the villager’s social relationship. The state intervention in rural society of Sri Lanka caused these social changes among the villagers. The reforms introduced during the post-independence period by the state made avenues for the upper caste Goyigamas as well as other suppressed castes in the rural society of Sri Lanka. The situation of caste mobility in Low Country is distinct from the Up Country or Kandyan region. Low Country has been more affected by colonial administration. The Goyigama members as well as KSD members gained high mobility in the Low Country. Especially, KSD members migrated to various parts of the country including Kandyan region. In the village like Teripah, Goyigama members grabbed many opportunities that opened through the social reforms or the modernization efforts by the state. However, several low caste members also gained upward mobility, crossing many social and cultural barriers in the village. Some low
castes that are numerically dominant in the region have been attempting to get upward mobility by challenging the Goyigamas.

The Goyigama caste had more opportunities to educate, get jobs, lead the village community and accumulate capital in village Teripahe. They led the tobacco cultivation, because they had lands, capital and power in the village. The children of this privileged hierarchy of the Goyigama caste had better education and high opportunities in the country. They have migrated to the urban centres. While they are sharing the benefits of the national and regional development and modernization of the country, the low caste members, especially Berava members of the village also developed competitiveness. They also acquired lands and started the tobacco cultivation and other small-scale businesses in the village. Their political links further supported them to get permits for tobacco barns. The political motivation of Berava caste in village Teripahe had given significant challenge to the Goyigama caste. The lowest hierarchy member of Berava caste became a Pradeshiya Saba member of Walapane. They were emancipated from the social and cultural obligations of the earlier society. They want to equalize their identity with other identities of the village. They changed their names and surnames. They are giving more weight to education of their children. Today, they have an atmosphere to bargain with Goyigama caste on their traditional service. Simultaneously, other low castes are also gaining social mobility in village Teripahe. The process of Goyigamisation, followed by the KSD migrated members, has made more avenues for the changes in caste mobility in the village.

The social and cultural changes that took place through the economic liberalisation after 1977 have influenced village Teripahe. Today, many young girls from poor and suppressed groups have migrated to the FTZs in Colombo and settled
there. Some of them migrated to regional industrial centres of the country. These members modified their life style and these changes influenced other villagers. The families who are working in the urban centres are depending on their monthly salaries. The same dependence on salaries is with the army recruits. Due to the escalated terrorist problem in the country, many young men from the poor social and cultural background in the village joined the police and armed forces. Their salaries maintain their family members in the village, and these families now enjoy good social and economic status as compared to the ordinary farmer in the village. The other benefits and by-products of the open economy are modern vehicles and transport services, television and radio services, money oriented activities and attitudes that are entering the village life today.

The rural society of Sri Lanka has undergone several structural changes during the post-independence period. These changes can be witnessed in village Teripahe also. The causes related to these changes were initiated during the last years of colonial administration. The Colonisation Scheme and Village Expansion Scheme were directly related to the land policy of Sri Lanka. Land was vital factor for villagers and their life. The social welfare system, especially health and education, helped them to improve their life and mobilized them through various channels of development and modernization. The state has introduced several structural reforms such as land reforms, social welfare, administrative reforms, and political reforms after independence. These structural reforms supported the spread of health, education and other social welfare activities in the country on a wider scale. The increase of population was controlled and the rural society was given better environment for development and modernization. However, rural society started getting politicised gradually through the state intervention. The state penetrated the villager's social life
and their organisations, and the politicisation was accelerated after 1977. While these changes occurred in the rural society of Sri Lanka, the group of youths, politically motivated against the two main political parties of the country, came up in revolt in 1971 and 1988/89. The causes of these political conflicts in the rural society of Sri Lanka cannot be theoretically analysed with development and modernization perspectives. Therefore, further theoretical attempts are needed to understand these political conflicts in Sri Lanka that is not in the scope of the present study. The national and regional level development efforts have overwhelmed the rural society. As a result of these efforts, the villages are loosing its human resources, and the urban centres of the country absorb these human resources. There is no feedback to the village from the expert personnel who migrated to the urban centres. Therefore, in a sense, the village remains still an isolated, fragmented and underdeveloped unit in the rural society of Sri Lanka.

Teripahe in the Macro Social Context (The Past and the Present)

The rural society has various social and cultural diversities in terms of ethnicity, religion, external influences and climate and physical conditions of the country. In this sense, the village Teripahe has a specific social, cultural and historical identity. The village is situated in the eastern steep of the central highland. And also, it is an ancient village of Kandy kingdom. It was a traditional Sinhalese Buddhist village with two main economic activities, paddy and chena cultivation. When Yalman studied this village as primary village of his research in the 1950s, the village was encroached by the Low Country settlers. The Low country settlers influenced the life of the Up Country people when the former migrated in various places of the country as government officers, businessmen and land owners. However, it was a
more traditional village than the other villages that Yalman approached. The social structure he described was mostly similar to the other Kandyan villages, studied by other sociologists and anthropologists during 1950s and 1960s. When Yalman sought to present the village social structure, he faced several problems of correctly depicting the social and cultural context that existed in the village. Though there are several inaccurate descriptions of village social structure, Yalman’s study can be considered as one of the classical social anthropological studies of 1950s. Thus, Yalman’s study of this particular village can be used as a base for further social anthropological study of Sri Lankan rural society.

The present study consisted of different themes, theoretical perspectives and methodology from that of Yalman’s study. This study is mainly concerned with social changes in the rural society of Sri Lanka. The society of Sri Lanka is subjected to gradual change, especially during the colonial period and the post-independence period. As mentioned above, the later part of the colonial administration had introduced several social reforms. However, these reforms got momentum during the post-independence period. This is the period in this thesis where the probe into the social changes in rural society of Sri Lanka is mostly directed. The argument of this thesis is built around the three integrated concepts – village, villager and village life. We have argued that the mechanisms related to these three concepts have been changing due to the complex influences of development and modernization, taking place in the national and regional levels of the country during the last 50 years. Moreover, this argument is supported by four interrelated research problems (see Chapter One).

The processes of development and modernization in Sri Lanka, especially in the rural society, are related to agriculture. However, the village as a smallest social
unit of rural society was organised as an independent and self-sufficient unit. This situation was diminishing due to development, modernization and state intervention during the post-independence period. Development and modernization, as patterns of change, have influenced the village social structure in Sri Lanka. The state intervention initiated the efforts of development and modernization in the country, and as a result of the state intervention, the rural society and its administrative structure have got highly politicised. Though the state has introduced several social reforms, there is no significant change in the economy and still the economy is organised on a capitalist mode. Hence, development, modernization and state intervention are used as theoretical perspectives to measure the social change in rural society of Sri Lanka.

As discussed above, Sri Lanka has been colonised by European powers and the impact of colonial administration also influenced the rural society. Even, after independence, the state has been depending on foreign sources. There are many transnational companies directly related to the rural economy. In this sense, it is more appropriate to use the dependency theory for discussing the process of development in Sri Lanka, especially in rural society. The dependency theory reveals that the development that had taken place in the Third World was the ultimate result of colonialism during the last three centuries of world history. The capitalist mode of economy has exploited these countries and this process of exploitation persists but in different ways. The version of dependent development introduced by dependency theory is appropriate to understand the development process of Sri Lanka. The country has continued with the economic and administrative structure borrowed from the colonial rulers after the independence. Though, the state introduced several social reforms, there was no significant change in the capitalist mode of economy. Rather,
the reforms strengthened the same mode (open economy was the better example). Therefore, the state has aimed dependent development in the country with assistance of foreign aids and transnational companies. This dependent development has affected the village Teripahe in three ways. They are:

1. The CTC introduced commercial cultivation of tobacco, and this caused changes in the village economy as well as social relations of the villagers. The villagers had developed money and profit oriented attitudes through this tobacco cultivation.

2. The AMDP, the country’s largest regional development programme has badly affected the Kandyan villages, especially villages like Teripahe. Under this development effort, the villagers could not continue their *chena* cultivation. Then, several of them follow the *chena* cultivation in their garden lands (but, devoid of the social and cultural practices that they had earlier) and some of them are engaged in commercial vegetable cultivation.

3. The FTZs under the open economic policy have led to ‘spread effect’ or ‘trickling down’ results in the rural society of Sri Lanka. Especially, substantial number of villagers has migrated to these industrial and commercial centres of the country. This process of development has established a dependent economy in village Teripahe.

Today, there is no independent and self-sufficient social and cultural structure in village Teripahe.

Smelser and Magnarella’s model of modernization, with its four interrelated sub-processes is used in this research to understand the process of modernization in the rural society of Sri Lanka. The rural society has seen several structural transformations during the last 50 years. There are several *technological*
developments in village Teripahe. The villagers are using high yield paddy seeds, fertilizer, water motors, weedicides and insecticides, emphasising the Green Revolution. The ASCt of Teripahe has been supplying most of the modern things to the farmers. Even, the propaganda of the multinational companies helped to spread these modern technologies. However, there is a crucial factor against the modern technology in the village. That is the topography of village. They cannot use tractor and paddy harvesting machines for their agriculture because of high steepness of the paddy lands. For transport purposes also they have to use traditional thawalam system and it is appropriate and simple for a village like Teripahe. However, this traditional method of transport is confined to village itself, and it is replaced by the modern vehicles from village to village and village to-town. The rice mills in the village have changed women’s role in the family. Now they are engaging in some other activity such as vegetable cultivation. Compared to the past, the villagers are using modern technology for their cultivation, and as a result of technological development, the village has agricultural development today. They have shifted to tobacco cultivation from commercial vegetable cultivation. As discussed in Chapter Six, the tobacco cultivation is not popular due to several reasons. Then, today, they are interested in cultivating vegetable. The village is linked with urban centres, and middlemen and traders come to buy products after the development of the road structure in the village. The village has a market economy and the villagers are buying many commodities from the village market. Many agricultural relationships are decided on money. Furthermore, there are agricultural labourers and petty bourgeoisie in the village. The industrial development in rural society of Sri Lanka is very less compared to other indicators of modernization. The village Teripahe has electricity supply, but not for the all dwellings. Those who have electricity are using it for
domestic consumption only. Agriculture is mainly depending on human and animal power rather than the modern industrial outcome. *Urbanization* is a common factor in the rural society of Sri Lanka. After the open economic policy in 1977, the urban centres and FTZs became pull factor of migration. The villagers have migrated to these centres as unskilled workers. There are more than 225 villagers from village Teripahe (see table 14) who are employed in various urban centres, especially in Colombo. Many of them who migrated to these urban centres have modernized their life style and attitudes. They are the agents of change for the village.

State intervention is the most important factor for social change. The colonial government with natives’ representation initiated Village Expansion scheme and Colonisation Scheme to solve the landlessness, and these schemes also initiated agricultural development in the rural society of Sri Lanka.

The AMDP is the modified regional development programme that directly influenced the rural society. AMDP developed and modernized several regions of the Dry Zone when some areas of AMDP are subjected to restriction of villagers in central highland. Teripahe is a village restricted by AMDP under the name of development. *Chena* cultivation was banned, and all forest areas became highly restricted lands for the villagers. The two reservoirs constructed in the boundary of the village produce hydropower for the country, but many villagers do not have electricity supply to their houses. The village has 907 dwellings and there are less than hundred houses with electricity supply. This kind of unequal development generates pessimistic attitudes among the villagers.

The welfare schemes were continued after the independence. The two leading political parties have named and modified these schemes in different ways when they were in power. The process of social welfarism in Sri Lanka improved the social life
of its population. The health and education in rural society have shown better improvement during the post-independence period. The conditions of village Teripahe also have improved as other villages in the country, and the village has a dispensary with maternity ward, one secondary school (*Maha Vidyalaya*) and two primary schools. These infrastructural facilities have improved villagers’ social life (see tables 06 and 08). The level of absolute poverty has come down through the various poverty alleviation programmes, especially *Janasaviya* Programme. Earlier, the third hierarchy of Goyigama caste and other low castes members had very poor living condition in the village. However, after the tobacco cultivation in 1960s and 70s, their living conditions also improved by working as labourers or small scale tobacco cultivators. The living conditions of villagers (see table 09) has further improved after the open economy in 1977, because many villagers from suppressed castes and families have migrated to urban centres for better employment opportunities.

State intervention has politicised the rural masses and rural administrative structure during the last 50 years. The state has penetrated the rural society as a guarantor or provider of basic needs of the people. Therefore, gradually the village leaders as well as suppressed groups (poor families of Goyigama cast and low castes) have lined up with party politics.

Village Teripahe was polarised into two main political parties, UNP and SLFP, in 1950s. The political conflicts started between two parties in the parliamentary election of 1965. The low caste members came to the centre of the political stage in 1980s. This is a most important factor of political participation in village Teripahe. For example, as a result of this political participation, a low caste member from the lower hierarchy of Berava caste became a *Pradeshiya Saba* member of Walapane. Berava caste is the numerically dominant caste in Walapane region.
Otherwise, the upper caste Goyigama does not favour of them. Moreover, the state intervention and politicisation of village social life have generated new stratification on political lines.

Village Teripahe was organised on caste stratification. Yalman’s study explains how this village was stratified on caste lines. The village had five caste communities and they had organised themselves as endogamous groups. However, the caste stratification in this village had been changing after the migration of Low Country men and the spread of tobacco cultivation. Now there are eight castes (see table 23). All Low Country settlers belonged to KSD communities. They have assimilated themselves into Goyigama caste. This is the process of Goyigamaisation. However, this process of Goyigamaisation has mitigated the caste etiquette in the village. There were very few cases of inter-caste marriages in the village and they could not settle in the village. Usually, they ran away and settled in a distant village. Today, the inter-caste marriages are common (see table 26) because of modernisation of village life. The modern social and economic milieu that diffused after the open economy has broken the caste barriers further. One the one hand, all the low castes members have confined to their duties of ritual practices, and on the other hand, the low castes, especially Berava caste, are progressively working with the upper caste Goyigama members. The progressiveness of the Berava caste has created several caste conflicts with Goyigama caste. It is an important change of social stratification in the village Teripahe. The changes in social stratification caused further changes in the village social life.

The village land tenure and the transmission of land have changed due to several reasons during last 50 years. They are:

1. The migration of Low Country settlers and the process of Goyigamaisation.
2. The rapid spread and success in tobacco cultivation.

3. The new land policies under the AMDP.

4. The changes of personal status and migration to the urban centres of the country.

5. The rural poverty and indebtedness to the moneylenders.

6. The alienation of ancestral lands among the new generation.

The village is claiming that it has genuine identity based on paddy cultivation since Lord Buddha’s first visit of Sri Lanka, and all the caste groups also claim their own identity in the village. Today, the village social life has changed, and new generation is mobilized in what is perceived as global culture. They have become westernised and they do not need to connect with the past. The elders are still representing themselves as guardians of the village identity. Therefore, the village Teripahe continues to struggle to protect its identity vis-à-vis the indifferent new generation who does not care for the past.

If village Teripahe changed under these circumstances, the other villages in the rural society of Sri Lanka might have also changed accordingly. The level of change could be gauged by the extent that these villages were influenced and to the extent they resisted development and modernization. Finally, the village Teripahe has slightly changed its physical features when the villager and village life have drastically changed due to development and modernization initiated by the state.

The village Teripahe is ideally suited for the longitudes studies in social anthropology. Yalman initiated it in 1954 by studying the social structure of the village and the present study is contributing towards how this particular village has changed during the last 50 years. The present study is helping to understand changing patterns of village Teripahe in particular and the changes of rural society of Sri Lanka.
in general. Hence, this study will benefit comparisons with other villages of rural society, especially in the Kandyan society.
End Notes: