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**The Relevance of Mātikā (Topics) in the
evolution of Theravāda Abhidhamma Pitaka.**

**The Independent thesis for Masters of philosophy Degree
Examination
2005/2006**

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Abstract

The subject selected for this dissertation is "The Relevance of Mātikā (topics) in the evolution of the Theravāda Abhidhamma pitaka". My study has been presented under four main chapters. In the first chapter a critical study of the term Abhidhamma was undertaken to clarify the significance of the term. I have also attempted to examine critically the definitions given to the word Abhidhamma in post canonical works.

In the first section of the second chapter there is a discussion on the place of Mātikā in the structure and the content of the seven books (Sattappakarana) of the Abhidhamma Pitaka. There I have examined critically the attempts in Theravāda tradition to defend the view that Abhidhamma is the word of the Buddha and have provided evidence to show that Abhidhamma has developed gradually on the basis of Mātikā. In the second section of the chapter I have discussed the analysis of the Atthasālini commentary on Dhammasangani Mātikā.

In the first part of the third chapter I examined the role of Mātikā during the Suttanta period and attempted to see how Mātikā influenced the origin of Abhidhamma. In the second section of This Chapter an attempt was made to examine the form of Mātikā in the Patisambhidāmagga and to examine the subject matter contained in them. Since the Patisambhidāmagga should have been included under Abhidhamma, though it is included in the Sutta Pitaka, special attention was paid to the examination of Patisambhāmagga Mātikā.

In the first section of the fourth chapter I discussed the difference between the Suttanta Mātikā and Abhidhamma Mātikā. Two methods of Suttanta Mātikā and Abhidhamma Mātikā are taken to show the distinction and identity of these two methods of examination of Sutta and Abhidhamma. In the second section of the fourth chapter a study about Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda Abhidhamma is presented specially with a view to show how the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma was also compiled on the basis of Mātikā.

The main objective of this critical study of Abhidhamma Mātikā was the promotion of an analytical understanding regarding the origin and development of the Abhidhamma Pitaka.