

Rules for the sīmā Regulation in the Vinaya and its Commentaries and their Application in Thailand, by Petra Kieffer-Pülz

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Rules for the *sīmā* Regulation in the *Vinaya* and its Commentaries and their Application in Thailand¹

1. One of the prior conditions for the existence and continuance of the Buddhist community is a boundary (*sīmā*) which defines the space within which all members of a single local community have to assemble as a complete Saṅgha (*samagga saṅgha*) at a place appointed for ecclesiastical acts (*kamma*). The completeness of the Saṅgha is a prerequisite for the valid performance of each ecclesiastical act of the Buddhist community. The invalidity of a boundary, therefore, implies the defectiveness of the *kamma* performed within it. On account of this, rules for the correct determination of the *sīmā* and for the application of undetermined boundaries (*abaddhasīmā*) were laid down in the *Vinaya*. These rules were provided with additional regulations and detailed explanations handed down in the commentarial (*aṭṭhakathā*), and sub-commentarial (*ṭīkā*) literature.

These texts allow one to outline the development of the *sīmā* regulations and to point to shifts concerning their application. The period covered stretches from the time of the *Vinaya* to that of the *Vimativinodanīṭīkā*, viz. from roughly the 3rd century B.C. (?) to the early 13th century A.D.

These rules, more or less, are the foundation for regulating *sīmā* questions in all Theravāda countries up to the present. However, in the course of time different countries have developed different methods regarding minor questions. In the present contribution I will first sketch the general developments, basing myself on the Pali *Vinaya* texts, thereby emphasizing those points which are relevant for the comparison with special features of the Thai tradition. Thereafter I will deal with some of these specific features of the Thai tradition more detailed.

1. The introductory part of this paper (§§ 1-4) is a slightly shortened and modified version of the introduction to my article "Ceremonial Boundaries in the Buddhist Monastic Tradition in Sri Lanka" to appear in the *Proceedings of the Wilhelm Geiger Symposium*, Colombo 1995. I thank Richard WILSON (Göttingen) for improving my English.

I. Outline of the development of *sīmā* regulations in the Vinaya literature²

2. In the *Vinaya* the *sīmā* is introduced to delimit the extension of “one residence” (*ekāvāsa*) which previously functioned as the standard for defining a complete Saṅgha³. With this innovation the rules for determining and removing a *sīmā* were introduced. First of all marks (*nimitta*) had to be announced (*kitteti*) as indications of the course of the boundary. Eight types of marks valid for that purpose are enumerated in the *Vinaya*. However, the method for their announcement is not described there. After the announcement came the determination of the *sīmā*, viz. *samānasamvāsasīmā*, “boundary for the same communion”. As a second step the function of the “not-being-separated from the three robes” (*ticivarena avippavāsa*) could be conferred upon this *sīmā*, allowing the monks to be separated from one of the three robes within the *sīmā*, without this being counted as an offence.

The overlapping and combining of two determined *sīmās* was forbidden and an “interspace to (other) *sīmās*” (*sīmantarikā*) prescribed. In the *Vinaya* we have only one form of a determined *sīmā*, viz. the *samānasamvāsasīmā*. The rule of keeping an interspace between *sīmās*, therefore, must refer to other *samānasamvāsasīmās*. Since no details are given about the size of this interspace or about how to mark it, one can assume it was, in the beginning, probably only a distance to be kept to other *sīmās*.

Additionally, three forms of *sīmās* are mentioned which could come into force if no determined *sīmā* existed, viz. the boundary of a village (*gāmasīmā*) in settlements, a distance consisting of seven *abbhantaras* (*sattabbhantara*), i.e. ca. 80 m, in the wilderness (*arañña*⁴), and the boundary consisting of the line constituted by throwing water in all directions (*udakukkhepa*) around the assembled Saṅgha on natural lakes, rivers, and on the ocean.

2. For a detailed presentation I refer to my thesis published in German: KIEFFER-PÜLZ 1992.
3. The *sīmā* rules are included in the second chapter of the Mahāvagga, the Uposathakkhandhaka (Vin I 106, 1-35; 108, 26 – 111, 22); all information given here is based on these passages.
4. *Arañña* refers to all regions outside of settlements and bodies of water.

The removal of a *sīmā* was only necessary if one wanted to enlarge or diminish the space enclosed by the *sīmā* and is not discussed at length in the *Vinaya* (see below, § 3).

In the *Vinaya* the determined *samānasamvāsasīmā* represents the primary focus of the rules. The three undetermined boundaries are only provided in case a monk is not inside a determined *sīmā* when the performance of an ecclesiastical act turns out to be necessary. The description of the carrying out of the determination, removal, etc., is short and straightforward.

3. The extensive and detailed explanations in the commentary to the *Vinaya* (4th/5th century A.D.), viz. the *Samantapāsādikā* (Sp 1035.23 - 1048.32; 1049.27 - 1056.30), show that the need for more detailed rules was at hand. Out of the simple rule in the *Vinaya* of announcing the marks (*nimitta*) developed a detailed description of the method of announcing *nimitta* (Sp 1035.23 - 1036.31; 1040.16-23). Accordingly it was necessary to choose exactly defined marks from the eight objects allowed in the *Vinaya* (and defined in Sp 1036.31 - 1040.16), to announce them, proceeding clockwise, and, finally, to announce the first announced *nimitta* a second time to connect it with the previous one. Probably based on this method a new verb was introduced for the determination of the boundary. Whereas in the *Vinaya* the verb *sam-man* had been used, in the *Samantapāsādikā* the usage alternates between *bandh* and *sam-man*⁵. Out of the use of this verb the term *baddhasīmā* (t. *phaṭṭhasīmā*) developed as an expression for each determined boundary, and in conformity with this the three undetermined boundary types were called *abaddhasīmā* (t. *aphaṭṭha*^o or *akatasīmā*). The detailed explanations for how to determine a boundary in a village or one enclosing several villages (Sp 1040.23 - 1041.10), etc., show the complexity of the procedure of the determination of a boundary and the ease with which a mistake during the ceremony could render a *sīmā* invalid. It is, then, no wonder that the undetermined boundaries (*abaddhasīmā*) gained ground (see below, § 11).

In the course of time the number of monks increased and monasteries developed. In some of the larger ones resided many more monks than previously, which entailed the performance of more ecclesiastical acts (viz. *pabbajjā*, *upasampadā*, and *kammas* regulating offences). Owing

5. Cf. KIEFFER-PÜLZ, *Simā*, B Einl. 7, fn. 98.

to the fact that for each *kamma* all monks inside a *sīmā* had to assemble, the daily life of the community could be disturbed frequently. Therefore smaller *sīmās*, i.e. by-*sīmās* (called *khaṇḍasīmās*), were introduced, which were determined additionally within the space of the monastery. With the introduction of this new *sīmā* type the term *sīmantarikā*, “*sīmā*-interspace”, received an additional meaning. Whereas at the time of the *Vinaya* it was probably an undefined distance to be kept to other *samānasamvāsasīmās* (see above, § 2), it was now to be applied to the *khaṇḍasīmā* as well. The *sīmā*-interspace now had to be marked by stone marks and had to have a minimum standard of one *ratana* (ca. 40 cm), one *vidatthi* (ca. 20 cm) or four *aṅgulas* (ca. 7,2 cm) (Sp 1056.24-27). The *samānasamvāsakasīmā* enclosing the whole monastery was then called *mahāsīmā* in contrast to the small *sīmās*. In determining a *khaṇḍasīmā* and a *mahāsīmā* a certain order had to be observed: first the *nimitta* for the *khaṇḍasīmā*(s) were announced, then the *nimitta* for the surrounding *sīmā*-interspace (*sīmantarikā*), and finally the *nimitta* for the *sīmā* for the whole monastery, viz. the *mahāsīmā*. Thereafter one could determine which *sīmā* one wanted to determine first, but normally one started with the *khaṇḍasīmā* (Sp 1042.21-24). The method for determining a *khaṇḍasīmā* was the same as for the *samānasamvāsakasīmā* with the exception that as marks for the *khaṇḍasīmā* only stone marks are mentioned (Sp 1041.19 - 1042.31, cf. KIEFFER-PÜLZ 1992, B 6).

Whereas in the *Vinaya* the removal of a *sīmā* is only briefly mentioned (Vin I 110.12-14), and the *kammavācās* are given (Vin I 110.14-36), it is discussed in detail in the *Samantapāsādikā*. On account of the introduction of the *khaṇḍasīmā* a certain order of the individual steps now has to be observed not only if one wants to determine *khaṇḍasīmā* and *mahāsīmā* (see above), but also in the case of their removal, when the reverse order has to be complied with. Moreover, it is, according to the *Samantapāsādikā*, not possible to remove an unknown *khaṇḍasīmā*. The removal of an unknown *samānasamvāsakasīmā*, however, is possible, since there are places within a *sīmā* which are definitely part of it, viz. the *uposathagāra*, the *cetiya*, the *bodhi* tree, the *senāsana* etc. (Sp 1051.8-22). Assembling at these places, therefore, is a guarantee for being located within the *mahāsīmā*, and this in turn is one condition for the correct performance of the *kamma*. Where neither *khaṇḍasīmā* nor *mahāsīmā* are known the removal of neither of them should be performed, since the determination of the new *sīmās* might result in the overlapping of the newly determined *samānasamvāsakasīmā* with an

already existing unknown *khaṇḍasīmā*. This rule is important since it was changed at a later date (cf. below, §§ 4 & 10).

Another important feature is the development of the so-called *abaddhasīmās*. These had been introduced in the *Vinaya* in the event that no determined boundary existed at a certain place. The detailed commentary to these *sīmā* forms in the *Samantapāsādikā* (Sp 1051.27-1056.8) shows that they gained ground. This is especially true for the *udakukkhepasīmā*.

4. Of the four *ṭikās* to the *Vinaya* the *Vimativinodanīṭikā* is the most innovative. A very important new rule concerns the removal of unknown boundaries, which in the *Vinaya* was not discussed at all and which in the *Samantapāsādikā* is explained as being impossible for an unknown *khaṇḍasīmā* and very difficult for an unknown *samāna-saṃvāsakasīmā*. The *Vimativinodanīṭikā* (Vmv II 156.1-14) introduces a method for removing such unknown boundaries which is valid till today in Sri Lanka, in Burma and also in Thailand.⁶

The applications of sīmā rules in Thailand.

5. In the Thai tradition the course of the *sīmā* is indicated by marks as prescribed in the *Vinaya*. These *nimitta* are called *pai sīmā*, “flat stone”, in Thai, and *slīk sīmā* in Khmer (BIZOT 1988, § 86; Na Paknam 1981, p.57). Three features are peculiar to the Thai tradition: firstly, the stone boundary markers visible above the ground are not real *nimitta*, but only objects placed upon the *nimitta* which protrude above ground; secondly, as the actual *nimitta* (which are completely buried), only stones seem to have been used, though according to the Pali tradition one could choose among eight natural objects; and, thirdly, in addition to the *nimitta* indicating the course of the boundary in the cardinal directions, a ninth mark called *sīmākīl* is buried in the centre of the space enclosed by the *sīmā* (BIZOT 1988, § 9; WELLS 1975, p.180).

The true *sīmā* stones are of unhewn rock buried in the ground at the four cardinal points and four intermediate points of the compass. Above these are placed stones or other materials which are visible to the eye to mark the sites. These stones, slabs of concrete or pillars of brick, are decorative and may depict

6. Compare also VAJIRAÑĀVARORASA 1983, pp. 30f; cf. KIEFFER-PÜLZ 1992, p. 327, fn. 590.

the Wheel, or a leaf, or have little niches within where candles may be placed⁷. *Simā* stones can also be embedded in the Uposatha walls. There is a ninth and most important *simā* stone in the center of the consecrated soil under the floor of the *Uposatha* hall. With this is sometimes placed articles of value and the name of the donor of the building together with the date. The ceremony of consecration starts from this central point. (WELLS 1975, p. 180).

Neither of these features is documented in the Pali *Vinaya* texts, including the *ṭīkā*s, up to the 13th century.⁸

The oldest *pai simā* are from the northeastern region of Thailand and belong to the Dvaravati Period (6th to 9th cent. A.D.; NA PAKNAM 1981, pp.57-62)⁹. As early as in the 6th or 7th centuries they can be observed also in the southern, northern and central Thai provinces, and in parts of Burma and Cambodia (BIZOT 1988, § 87). This usage was therefore already customary before the Sinhalese *nikāya* was introduced into Thailand. Though we have comparable *simā* stones during the Polonnaruva period (1017-1235 A.D.) in Sri Lanka, this is not the same phenomenon, since these stones are real *nimitta* and not only decorative markers.

The method of burying the marks for the *simā* reminds one of the custom of Hindu societies of marking their village boundaries by invisible, i.e. buried, marks and of placing visible marks, such as trees, etc., above the ground.¹⁰ The purpose of this measure was to prevent shifting of the boundaries and to keep evidence of the real course of a village boundary in case another group tried to shift it. Since, however, the destruction of the marks of a ceremonial boundary of the Buddhist Saṅgha does not render the *simā* itself invalid (Sp 1043.9-11), there would be no need for this procedure.

The fact that only stones are used as *nimitta* reminds one of the usage connected with the *khaṇḍasimā*. Though the *khaṇḍasimā* is only a special form of a *baddhasimā* and on account of this the eight objects allowable as marks of a *simā* could have been used for the *khaṇḍasimā* as well, only stones are mentioned as its *nimitta* in the Pali texts. This

7. See No NA PAKNAM 1981, and GITEAU 1969.

8. Later texts have not yet been edited or examined.

9. It should be mentioned that these decorated stone slabs were not only used to demarcate the *simā* but also other buildings within the monastery. To be certain that a *simā* was indicated, one therefore has to dig below these relief stones for the actual *nimitta*.

10. Ganganatha JHA, *Hindu Law in Its Sources*, vol. 1, Allahabad 1930, pp. 346-348.

supports the assumption that the Thai *sīmā* originates in the *khaṇḍasīmā* (see below).

Whereas according to WELLS (see above) unhewn rocks are used as *nimitta*, VAJIRAÑĀṄAVARORASA (1983, p.14 fn.1) mentions round stone balls. This tallies with the observation by WIJEYWARDENE, who describes the *nimitta* as consisting of “black granite, round, with a diameter of about two feet” (1986, p.96).

The use of a ninth *nimitta* in the centre of the place – not found in any Pali *Vinaya* text so far known to me – is also attested to for Java (BIZOT 1988, § 88). This *nimitta* plays a role within the ordination ceremony of the *Mahānikāya*, and probably also the other *nikāyas*, since the *upajjhāya*, i.e. the monk leading that ceremony, sits in front of it (BIZOT 1988, § 10).

The ceremony of announcing the *nimitta* (called *dak nimitta*) deviates from that described in the *Samantapāsādikā* in so far as the ninth mark has to be included. Instead of beginning in the east and of moving around clockwise till they again reach the east, the main body of monks remains in the middle of the place while four monks go to the eastern, southeastern, southern, etc., and eastern *nimitta*, where they, in question and answer, establish each *nimitta*, and then return to the middle (WELLS 1975, p.183; WIJEYWARDENE 1986, p.97). This simple ceremony corresponding to what is prescribed in the Aṭṭhakathā is embedded in a ritual in which lay people also participate. The most important feature in this connection is that the stone balls serving as *nimitta* hang over the holes dug in advance, supported by a tripod and suspended by threads. Only after the *dak nimitta* has taken place and in the presence of a great number of lay people are these threads cut, and the stone *nimitta* fall into their respective holes (WIJEYWARDENE 1986, pp.96, 98f.).

6. Before a monastery can be built in present-day Thailand royal permission must be obtained. The same is true if one wishes to determine a *sīmā* (WELLS 1975, p. 180; ISHII 1986, p. 74). Two types of monasteries are differentiated: monasteries which have obtained a royal grant of *visuṅgāmasīmā*, i.e. which have permission to establish a *sīmā* and build an *uposatha* house within it; and monastic residences (t. *samnak saṅgha*) which do not possess an *uposatha* house (WELLS 1975, p.27; ISHII 1986, p. 104).

The place granted by the government within the precincts of the monastery is called *visuṅgāmasīmā* and is generally not larger than

260 x 130 feet (i.e. ca. 80 x 40 m). This area is to be marked off by *nimitta* and determined as *sīmā* space. Thereafter, normally within that area, the *uposatha* hall is erected. This serves for all ecclesiastical acts of the community – not only for the *uposatha* ceremony. The area granted by the government can only be recalled if the *sīmā* determined there is removed by the monks in an ecclesiastical act (WELLS 1975, p.179).

The *visuṅgāmasīmā* is explained as: "... given to the Sangha as *visuṅgāmasīmā* land, – removed from the status of government land, being a special place devoted to Sangha ceremonies according to the *Vinaya*." (WELLS 1975, p.179).

In the Pali commentary to the *Vinaya* the term *visuṅgāmasīmā*, "boundary of a village (having been) separately (given to someone)", is used as the antithesis of *pakatigāmasīmā*, "boundary of a common village" (Sp 1052.1-4). There the term *visuṅgāmasīmā* describes an area given to a certain person, monastery, etc., who then receives all taxes, etc., originating from this area. The land can be recalled by the king whether or not a ceremonial boundary (*sīmā*) of the Saṅgha has been determined within it. In the *Samantapāsādikā* the *visuṅgāmasīmā* is enumerated together with other types of the same *sīmā* form, i.e. a non-determined boundary (*abaddhasīmā*) consisting of the boundary of a settlement, viz. *gāmasīmā*, *niḡamasīmā*, and *nagarasīmā*. This indicates that the *visuṅgāmasīmā* is named there as a possible *abaddhasīmā* only. The question whether or not the determination of a *baddhasīmā* within this area is possible, is not dealt with. But in analogy to the rules for the *pakatigāmasīmā* this should be no problem. Thus the questions of who the *visuṅgāmasīmā* is given to, whether it is used as an *abaddhasīmā* by any community or whether a community determines a *sīmā* there are irrelevant in this respect. The *sīmā* determined by a Buddhist community has nothing to do with any boundary indicating ownership. Thus, if a person were granted a *visuṅgāmasīmā* and one or more *baddhasīmās* existed within this area, this did not at all affect that person's right to receive taxes, etc. This seems to be different in Thailand. There the land given as *visuṅgāmasīmā* cannot be recalled by the king or government if a ceremonial boundary of the Buddhist community has been determined within it. Only after the ecclesiastical act for the regular removal of a ceremonial boundary is the king or government able to withdraw the land.

Among the monasteries with an *uposatha* house, there are some which do not possess an area granted by the government. These monasteries are

called *baddhasīmā wat*, and it is assumed that they received their original grant from some past ruler (WELLS 1975, p.28). They only differ from the *visuṅgāmasīmā wat* in that they do not own a written document regarding the area used as *sīmā* compound.

Another, according to WELLS (1975, p.28) comparatively rare, type of monastery is the *mahāsīmā wat*. This *wat* owns a great *sīmā* (*mahāsīmā*) enclosing the whole monastic area. If we consider these different types of monasteries with *uposatha* houses, it is evident that the *mahāsīmā wat* represents the monastery which according to the Pali texts is the regular one, since normally the residence where the monks lived (*āvāsa*) was included within the *sīmā* along with all buildings belonging to the monastery. The problem that, on account of this, all monks had to assemble for each ecclesiastical act was alleviated by the introduction of the “by-*sīmā*” (*khaṇḍasīmā*; see above, § 3).

The *visuṅgāmasīmā wat*, which seems to be the regular type of monastery in Thailand, is not represented in the Pali texts at all – the term *visuṅgāmasīmā* being used in a slightly modified sense in the Pali texts as indicated above. Whereas in the Pali texts a place for the *uposatha* house is provided within the *sīmā* enclosing the whole monastery, the Thai *sīmā* generally has become so small (except in *mahāsīmā wats*) that it often includes only the *uposatha* house itself. As a consequence, the *uposatha* house is the place for all ecclesiastical acts of the community, whereas according to the Pali texts at least *uposatha* and *upasampadā* may be performed in different places, viz. within the *uposatha* house and within the *khaṇḍasīmā* respectively.

7. In Thailand *sīmās* are found with a single and with a double line of marks (*nimitta*) (BIZOT 1988, § 87). Whereas the single line of *nimitta* is easily explained, the double line presents some problems. BIZOT, basing himself on DAMRONG, suggested that they could be the sign of a renovation by the Sinhalese *nikāya* (BIZOT 1988, § 87). This assumption is most improbable. For, if even the destruction of the real *nimitta* of a *sīmā* is unimportant with respect to the validity of that *sīmā* (see above, § 5), how much less would the disappearance of only the decorative flat stones count. The doubling of the *pai sīmā* as a renovation measure also seems strange, since in the case of renovation one normally only restores something already existing, but does not double it.

A *sīmā* enclosing the whole monastery, i.e. a *mahāsīmā*, only has a single line of *nimitta*. Contrary to this the *khaṇḍasīmā*, which is situated

within the *māhasīmā* and separated from it by a *sīmā* interval (*sīmantarikā*), seems at first sight to have a double line of *nimitta*. In reality the inner line of stones indicates the course of the *khaṇḍasīmā*, whereas the outer line points to that of the *sīmantarikā* (this at least is valid for all Theravāda traditions).¹¹ The earliest traces of the institution of the *khaṇḍasīmā* go back to the Dīpavaṃsa (4th century A.D.). Thus this *sīmā* type could well have been known in Thailand by the 6th century.

There is one possible explanation for the phenomenon of the double line of *nimitta* which would agree not only with present-day usage, but also with the information drawn from the Jinakālamāli: The *sīmās* with these double lines of *nimitta* could have been *khaṇḍasīmās*, situated within a *mahāsīmā* enclosing the whole monastery (this would fully correspond with the prescriptions in the Pali Aṭṭhakathā). The marks for the *mahāsīmā* might have been chosen in accordance with the Pali Aṭṭhakathā from among natural objects such as rivers, trees, hills, etc. Possibly the *khaṇḍasīmā* had mostly been used for the various ecclesiastical acts, so that the *mahāsīmā* fell into oblivion and, since it had only natural boundary markers, nothing remained to remind one of its existence. Another possibility is that the inhabitants of such a monastery left and later newcomers did not know of the existence of a *mahāsīmā* at all. All that survived visibly for others then would have been a small *sīmā* marked by a double line of boundary markers. One should also keep in mind that the possibility of removing old and unknown *sīmās* was introduced only after the time of the Aṭṭhakathā, i.e. after the 5th and before the 13th centuries, so that in earlier times there would have been no way of removing such *sīmās*. With this hypothesis information from the Jinakālamāli (1529 A.D.), a chronicle of Northern Thailand, agrees fully. The only form of a *baddhasīmā* mentioned in this text is the *khaṇḍasīmā*.¹² This *khaṇḍasīmā* enclosed the *uposatha* house as is the case in Thailand up to the present. Nothing is said about a *mahāsīmā*,

11. Other *Vinaya* traditions do not have such an interspace, e.g. the Mūlasarvāstivādin, cf. Jin-il CHUNG and Petra KIEFFER-PÜLZ, "The *karmavācanās* for the determination of *sīmā* and *ticivareṇa avippavāsa*", *Dharmadūta, Mélanges offerts au Vénérable Thich Huyên-Vi à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire*, ed. by Bhikku Tampalawela DHAMMARATANA and Bhikku PĀSĀDIKA, Paris 1997, pp. 13-55.

12. N. A. JAYAWICKRAMA, *The Sheaf of Garlands of the Epochs of the Conqueror. Being a translation of Jinakālamālipakaraṇaṃ of Ratanapañña Thera of Thailand*, London 1968, pp. XXV, 132, 134, 147, 162.

the existence of which would be a prerequisite for the existence of a *khaṇḍasīmā*. Furthermore in present-day Thailand only few monasteries with a *mahāsīmā* exist (see above, § 6). The fact that only stone *nimitta* are used for the Thai *sīmā* also point in this direction.

8. The question of when the tradition of determining a *sīmā* including only the *uposatha* house had its starting point cannot be answered. Possibly it is a consequence of the tradition that the relevant area had to be granted by the government or king (though we do not know when this usage dates from either). Since this piece of land was henceforth alienated from the crown or government it was in the interest of these institutions to grant only small areas. Considering the great number of monasteries and the tendency among the lay population to prefer the erection of new ones instead of repairing older ones (because more merit would so accrue) this can easily be understood.

9. In the secondary literature it is stated that "... traditionally, there appear to have been no *bod* (*uposatha*-house) in the monasteries within the city walls. The entire city being consecrated, ordination could be conducted, technically, anywhere within the city." (WIJEYWARDENE 1986, p.91). One reason for this could have been that in the Thai tradition the *uposatha*-house itself was enclosed by a *sīmā* in most cases, so that if a great *sīmā* was to be determined, the *bod* within the city was avoided in order not to mingle or overlap one *sīmā* by another one.

A determined *sīmā* enclosing a whole city like Anurādhapura or Chiang Mai (WIJEYWARDENE 1986, p.91) is a *mahāsīmā*. It could therefore include various *khaṇḍasīmās*. Though the *sīmā* enclosing the *uposatha* house is called *khaṇḍasīmā*, it seems not to have been understood as *khaṇḍasīmā* in the sense in which this word is used in the Pali *Vinaya* texts. Otherwise it would have been no problem to place a *bod* encircled by a *sīmā* (*khaṇḍasīmā*) within a city enclosed by a *sīmā* (*mahāsīmā*)

The Jinakālamāli shows the same understanding of the term *khaṇḍasīmā* as that prevalent in present-day Thailand, in that it is used for the place, where the *uposatha* house is situated, though no *mahāsīmā* exists.

10. It has already been mentioned above that the *Vimativinodaniṭikā* contains a rule on how to remove *baddhasīmās* whose course is unknown (above, §4). This now generally accepted method is also adhered to in Thailand (VAJIRAÑĀNAVARORASA 1983, p.30; WELLS 1975, p.181f.; WIJEYWARDENE 1986, p.97). The removal of the *sīmā* (pa. *sīmāsamuggāta*; t. *suot thon*) is performed previous to any *sīmā* determination. The ceremony described by WIJEYWARDENE goes as follows:

The monks form two rows from the stone inside the building to the one at the entrance and then to the one on the right. Two named senior monks chant at the central stone and, without the rows of monks moving, two others, also named, chant at the stone at the entrance (east). When these two are completed, the row of monks between the centre and the entrance move, and take up positions between the stone in the southeastern corner and the one in the southern position. The chant is then made at the southeastern stone. They go round the building in this fashion, repeat the chant at the eastern stone (at the entrance) and back into the building (WIJEYWARDENE 1986, p.97).

It is obvious that the course followed in performing this ceremony is the same as that used for the announcement of the marks, i.e. the goal is to connect all marks. The same is stated by VAJIRAÑĀNAVARORASA (1983, p.31) “the chanting ... is done once at the centre, such as in the *Uposatha* hall, and then at each corner, corresponding to the *nimitta*, ...”. The method for the removal of a *sīmā* resembles that described in the *Vimativinodaniṭikā* (Vmv Be (Chs) II 156.1-14; KIEFFER-PÜLZ 1992, p.327 fn.590). However, VAJIRAÑĀNAVARORASA relates that he has heard “that in former times, the head of that ceremony used a bamboo lattice with spaces big enough to accomodate each monk, linking them together within a forearmlength throughout the area.” (VAJIRAÑĀNAVARORASA 1983, p.30).

11. In the introductory part (above, §3) it was mentioned that the *abaddhasīmās* gained ground from the time of the commentaries onward (5th century A.D.). This is confirmed for the Thai tradition by the *Jinakālamāli*. Here various *udakukkhepasīmās* are mentioned.¹³ Obviously this has been the most common *sīmā* form, being replaced by a determined *sīmā*, viz. a *khaṇḍasīmā*, only in certain cases. It is, however, evident from secondary literature that in present-day Thailand this *sīmā* form is no longer used. WIJEYWARDENE (1986, p.99ff.) quotes a

13. Op.cit., pp. XXV, XXVII, XXXII, 130, 138, 154.

sermon given the evening previous to the determination of the *sīmā*. This sermon consists of a dialogue between two monks. The one asks the other what “*ubosat on the water*” is, and receives the reply that it is an *uthak’ukkhepana sīmā* form, which was popular in ancient times (WIJEYWARDENE, p.102f.).

ABBREVIATIONS

- BIZOT 1988 François BIZOT, *Les traditions de la pabbajjā en Asie du Sud-Est* (Recherches sur le bouddhisme khmer, IV), Göttingen, 1988 (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl., 3. Folge, Nr. 169).
- GITEAU 1969 Madeleine GITEAU, *Le Bornage rituel des temples bouddhiques au Cambodge*, Paris, 1969 (Publication de l’École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 68).
- ISHII 1986 Yoneo ISHII, *Sangha, State and Society: Thai Buddhism in History*, Honolulu, 1986 (Monographs of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University).
- KIEFFER-PÜLZ 1992 = Petra KIEFFER-PÜLZ, *Die Sīmā. Vorschriften zur Regelung der buddhistischen Gemeindegrenze in älteren buddhistischen Texten*, Berlin, 1992 (Monographien zur indischen Archäologie, Kunst und Philologie, 8).
- NA PAKNAM 1981 No NA PAKNAM, *The Buddhist Boundary Markers of Thailand*, Bangkok, 1981.
- VAJIRAÑĀṄAVARORASA 1983 = VAJIRAÑĀṄAVARORASA, *The Entrance to the Vinaya. Vinayamukha*, vol. 3, Bangkok, 1983 (original Thai version 1921).
- WELLS 1975 Kenneth E. WELLS, *Thai Buddhism its Rites and Activities*, Bangkok, 1975 (3rd updated edition; 1st ed, 1939).
- WIJEYWARDENE 1986 = Gehan WIJEYWARDENE, *Place and Emotion in Northern Thai Ritual Behaviour*, Bangkok, 1986 (Studies in Thai Anthropology, 2).