



Zufluchtnahme

und andere Texte der Begegnung

Zufluchtnahme und andere Texte der Begegnung
Stammbach 2011

Herausgeber:
MUTTODAYA
Buddhistisches Waldkloster
Herrnschrot 50
D 95236 Stammbach
eMail: muttodaya@googlemail.com
webseite: www.muttodaya.org
Verantwortl.: Mettiko Bhikkhu

The opening of the time of making robes is the so called “spreading of the kaṭhina”. The kaṭhina originally was a wooden frame on which the monks arranged pieces of robe cloth before they sewed them together by hand. This frame was necessary because large pieces of cloth often were not available and several monks had to join hands to work on one robe. The kaṭhina frame provided stability to the work project and prevented the pieces from slipping out of their proper position.

Nowadays we got sewing machines. Thus we could call the opening of the robe season “plugging in of the sewing machine” but we still maintain the old expression and speak of “spreading the kaṭhina”.

The kaṭhina celebration has to be initiated by the lay community without interference by the sangha. In Thailand’s forest monasteries usually white cloth is given, which has to be dyed and dried, but pre-dyed cloth is permitted, too.

The kaṭhina has to be held in the first month after the rains retreat. At least 5 bhikkhus have to attend. The Buddha relaxed a few rules for the time of receiving and making robes which makes those procedures easier. This is called vassa privileges and they are in effect for this one month. If a kaṭhina has been formally spread they are valid for 4 months and are called kaṭhina privileges. The kaṭhina day is a good opportunity for experienced monks to pass on their sewing skills and for the whole community to work together in harmony.

For the ceremony a piece of cloth is given which must be big enough to make it into a robe. Then the sangha agrees on a monk who is qualified to receive the cloth, make a robe and spread the kaṭhina with it. The monks give a blessing and rush to start making a robe. It has to be finished before dawn of the next day in order to spread the kaṭhina with it and receive the kaṭhina privileges. It is the custom that all members of the sangha help with making the robe according to their abilities.