

# Tribute to Venerable Ānanda

-A Unique Ritual by the Buddhist Nuns of Japan-

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Introduction:

It is known very well that Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, the foster mother and aunt of the Buddha, was the first bhikṣuṇī of the Buddhist world. The first bhikṣuṇī saṅgha was established due to the Himalayan patience and religious awakening of Mahāprajāpatī, along with the women accompanying her, as well as the intelligent advocacy and cooperation of venerable Ānanda. The thanks due to Ānanda for his implementing the possibility of women becoming nuns have inspired various rituals paying tribute to him. The Buddhist nuns paying tribute to venerable Ānanda in various forms in gratitude began very early in Japan. This unique tradition still continues. Perhaps the most prominent ritual is the Anansonja kōshiki.

About Anansonja kōshiki

Among these ceremonies, the most systematically organized is Anan kōshiki or Anansonja kōshiki which came into existence in the 12th century

as a result of the great effort by venerable Myōe (明惠上人1173-1232 A. D.) , an eminent Buddhist monk of the Kamakura period. The name Anan kōshiki or Anansonja kōshiki refers to the text of this ceremony as well as the ceremony itself. The original text was composed by venerable Myōe, the founder of Kōzanji temple (高山寺) of Togano'o (桐尾) , Kyoto, but it no longer exists. Presently there are only 3 manuscript copies available. All the three are the hand-written copies dating from the Edo period (1603~1867). One of those is in Kōzanji temple. The second one is in the National Diet Library (國立國會図書館) at Tokyo and the third one is in Shōrin-in temple (勝林院) at Ōhara, Kyoto.<sup>1)</sup>

Almost 600 years after the formation of the original Anansonja kōshiki by venerable Myōe, the Buddhist nun Kankōni (觀光尼) achieved a remarkable thing. On the 1st day of the ninth month, 1827 (文政十年九月一日) , she borrowed the original Anansonja kōshiki from venerable Eyū (慧友) , the then Abbot of Kōzanji temple, to prepare a wood block print of it which was completed in the seventh month of 1829 (文政十二年七月) .<sup>2)</sup> Thus, a printed version of Anansonja kōshiki was made, which is still widely used.<sup>3)</sup>

#### A Ritual for the Buddhist Nuns

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1) These two versions use the term Anan kōshiki, where as the Kōzanji version uses Anansonja kōshiki.

2) Sōtōshū nisōshi, p. 274.

3) See photo-1.

On the cover page of the manuscript of Anansonja kōshiki preserved at Kōzanji temple the following sentence appears:

高山寺開山明惠上人爲尼代撰<sup>4)</sup>

It means, venerable Myōe compiled the Anansonja kōshiki for the Buddhist nuns on their behalf. The other two manuscripts of Anan kōshiki<sup>5)</sup> mention ‘爲西院尼記之’<sup>6)</sup> which means that it was written for the Buddhist nuns of Sai-in temple (西院). From these statements and from the prevailing practice as well, it is evident that Anansonja kōshiki is a ritual exclusively for the Buddhist nuns.

Venerable Myōe, the writer of the Anansonja kōshiki, was an eminent Buddhist monk of the Kamakura period. He was a great scholar of the Kegon sect (華嚴宗) as well as the Tantric sect of Buddhism.(密教). He always laid stress on Buddhist practice and tried his best to follow the tradition and discipline prevailing during the time of the Buddha himself in the 6th century B. C. He observed the vinaya precepts very strictly. He was in close association with Zen master Eisai<sup>7)</sup> (榮西禪師), the teacher of Zen master Dōgen (道元禪師). He was even certified by Eisai as having gained enlightenment (印可). In this way, he was related to Soto Zen through Eisai. He got some tea seeds from Eisai, which he brought from China, and started the planting of tea. It is said that this marks the beginning of tea planting in

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4) Misshūgakuho, p. 26.

5) The National Diet Library version and the Shōrin-in temple version.

6) Nomura, 2002, p. 396.

7) He is called as Yōzai according to the Zen tradition.

Japan.

During the Kamakura period, in the Rebellion of Jōkyū (承久の亂) of 1221 (承久3年), many women from the warrior class lost their husbands and children and became destitute. Some of these women took refuge with venerable Myōe and became Buddhist nuns. One of them was the nun Kaikōni (戒光尼). She was the widow of Gonchūnagon<sup>8)</sup> Nakamikado Muneyuki (權中納言中御門宗行), a member of the aristocracy as well as a leading person of the above revolt. He was sentenced to death in 1221. For the repose of her husband's soul, Kaikōni built a Buddhist nunnery called Zenmyōji(善妙寺) near Kōzanji temple. Buddhist nuns, who were the disciples of venerable Myōe, lived and practised the Dharma here.<sup>9)</sup> It is believed that Anansonja kōshiki was formed for these Buddhist nuns of Zenmyōji temple. Also it is believed that the statement written on the cover page of the manuscript of the Anansonja kōshiki preserved at Kōzanji temple, mentioned above, indicates the Buddhist nuns of Zenmyōji temple. In Kōzanji engi (高山寺緣起 History of Kōzan temple) it is recorded that on the 21st day of the fourth month, 1224, venerable Myōe enshrined the portraits of 16 arahats<sup>10)</sup> and venerable Ānanda in Zenmyōji temple and he himself performed the consecrating ceremony.<sup>11)</sup> It is believed that the

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8) An official rank.

9) Kamakurakyūbukkyō, p. 116.

10) Popularly known as jūroku-rakan in Japan. It refers to the sixteen great disciples of Sakyamuni Buddha who vowed to remain in this world in order to protect the doctrines of the Buddha. They are : Piṇḍolabharadvāja, Kanakavatsa, Kanakabharadvāja, Subinda, Nakula, Bhadra, Kālīka, Vajraputra, Jivaka, Panthaka, Rāhula, Nāgasena, Aṅgaja, Vanavasin, Ajita, Cūḍapanthaka.

11) 貞応三季甲申四月廿一日、唐本十六羅漢像、並阿難尊者、成忍筆、被渡案當寺本堂畢、同日開眼供養 … : Kōzanjiengi, p. 657.

chanting of the Buddhist nuns of Zenmyōji chanted in front of the portrait of venerable Ānanda enshrined came to be known as Anansonja kōshiki.

As mentioned earlier, the manuscripts of the National Diet Library and the Shōrin-in temple state that the Anansonja kōshiki was written for the Buddhist nuns of Sai-in temple. Here, it does not mention that it was written by venerable Myōe. But from the close relationship of Myōe and Zenmyōji temple, Matsumoto Gimyō thinks that it was originally created for the nuns of Zenmyōji.<sup>12)</sup>

According to the Kōzanji version of the Anansonja kōshiki, 8th day of the second month and the 4th day of the eighth month has been accepted as the death anniversary day of venerable Ānanda. But according to the other two versions, it is the 8th day of the second month and the eighth month.

#### Contents of Anansonja kōshiki

The rituals of Anansonja kōshiki have been divided mainly into three steps: the introductory statement (表白文), the main statement (本文) and the prayer for the well being of all (回向文). The main statement again has been divided into three steps i.e. gratitude for venerable Ānanda, praising venerable Ānanda's virtues and praising the Buddha. In the first step of the main statement, it is mentioned that if Ānanda had not been there, nuns would not have appeared in this world. As venerable Ānanda pleaded for women to be allowed to be nuns, Buddhist nuns should always show their gratitude for him. Particularly, on the 8th day of the second month and the eighth month the nuns must observe the 8 precepts. Then in the second step,

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12) Matsumoto, 2003, p. 10.

the nuns praise venerable Ānanda's virtues from four aspects. A summary of those is given below:

1. Praising the body marks of venerable Ānanda (讚阿難身相) : His appearance, form, behaviour- everything was so charming and polished that there was nobody who was not pleased to behold him. All the people of the country rejoiced at his birth. Hence, his name was Ānanda. He was the cousin of the Buddha. He resembled the Buddha so much that, during the First Buddhist Council he was thought to be the Śākyamuni Buddha born again or that he himself became the Buddha. That is why when he started saying 'thus have I heard' everybody was surprised. People were very happy just to see his every gesture. During the First Buddhist Council, venerable Mahākassapa and the entire Buddhist saṃgha chanted the following verse praising Ānanda, 'Your face is like the flawless full moon. Your eyes are like pure lotus flowers.' The water of the vast ocean of the Buddha's doctrine flows into the heart of Ānanda.

2. Praising the virtues of venerable Ānanda as the attendant of the Buddha (讚侍者德) :

Here, venerable Ānanda is praised as a faithful servant of the Buddha. He was born on 8th day of the fourth month, the day of Enlightenment of the Buddha. He served the Buddha like a shadow sincerely for 25 years in all circumstances and he was never disliked by the Buddha. When Ajātaśatru wanted to kill the Buddha by means of a mad elephant, Ānanda was with him. During the Mahāparinirvāṇa, the Buddha spent his last moment holding the hands of Ānanda.

3. Praising the virtues of venerable Ānanda as the great listener of the Buddha's teachings (讚嘆多聞德)

When serving the Buddha for a long period of 25 years, whatever venerable Ānanda heard from the Buddha, he remembered completely without forgetting a single word. When Mahākassapa compiled the Tripiṭaka, he recited the doctrines of the Buddha not missing even any minor thing.

4. Praising the virtues of Ānanda as the relinquisher of his own body (讚遺身德)

Ānanda left the country of Magadha and proceeded to Vaiśālī [wishing his parinirvāṇa to take place there]. When he was crossing the river Ganges by a boat, king Ajātaśatṛ of Magadha yearned for the virtues of Ānanda and went after him to keep him back. [On the other bank of the river], the king of Vaiśālī was waiting anxiously to welcome Ānanda [to his country]. Eventually, the armies of both the kings appeared on both the banks of the river to gain Ānanda in their country. At that time Ānanda intentionally entered into the Fūfunjin sanmai(風奮迅三昧<sup>13</sup>) in the middle of the river to save people from an unwanted war. As a result of that Samādhi, his body was burnt and turned to ashes. Then, he divided his relics into 4 parts and gave one each to lord Indra, the dragon king called Nāgarāja Sāgara, king Ajātaśatṛ and king of Vaiśālī. Thus, four stūpas were erected at four different places and worshipped.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, in this fourth stage, Ānanda is praised for his great sacrifice.

In the third step the nuns praise the deep compassion of the Buddha. Great as Ānanda's earnest appeal to the Buddha for the women is, really a great

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13) It is a kind of Samādhi that disperses the parts of the body by causing strong wind.

14) It is based on the description of the Anansonja kōshiki. The travel accounts of Fā-hien (see Hokkenden (Taishō shinshū daizōkyō, vol. 51, p. 862.) and the Pāli sources (see Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā, Vol. 2, p. 99-100) mention about it too but with different variations.

contribution, but finally it is the Buddha's deep compassion for the womenfolk allowing them to renounce household life and become bhikṣuṇīs, that made it possible for the bhikṣuṇī saṅgha to come into existence.

Then it is concluded with prayers for the well being of all (回向文) chanting the following verse from the Lotus Sūtra,

We beg that the merit gained through these gifts  
may be spread far and wide to everyone,  
so that we and other living beings  
all together may attain the Buddha way.<sup>15)</sup>

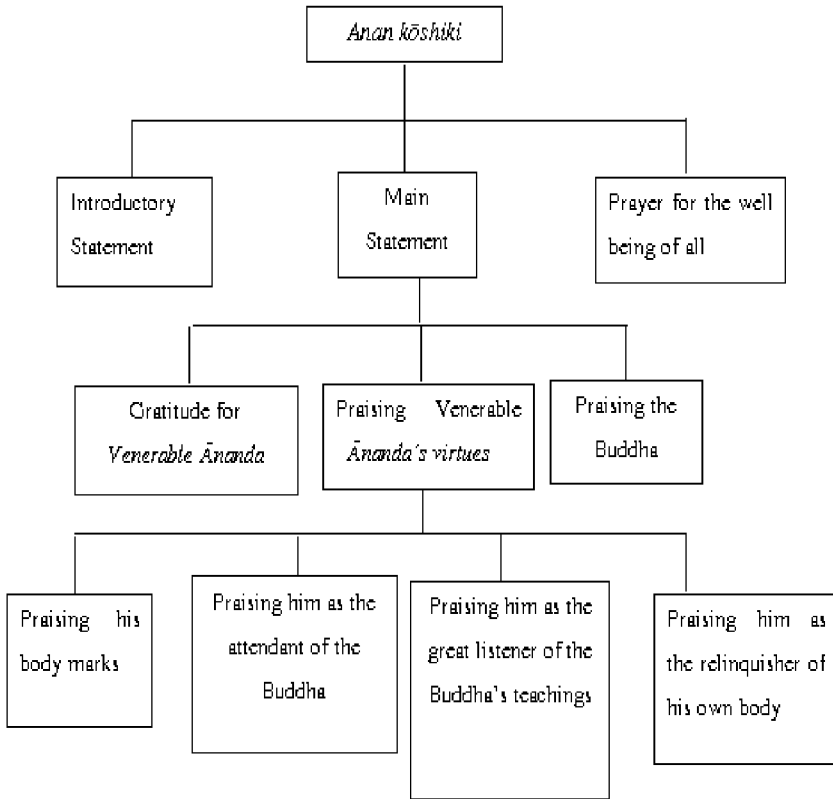
A diagrammatical representation has been given below for a better understanding of the contents:

Anan keka:

Anan keka is another ritual in gratitude to venerable Ānanda. As mentioned above, according to one of the manuscripts, Anansonja kōshiki was written for the Buddhist nuns of Sai-in temple. The formal name of Sai-in temple is Junwa-in (淳和院). Originally it was located along Nishiōji Street. But, unfortunately, it no longer exists. Princess Masako (正子内親王), the consort of emperor Junwa (淳和天皇823- 833 A. D.), became a Buddhist nun in 860 (貞觀2年5月) taking the religious name Ryōso(良祚) and entered the Sai-in temple after the death of the Emperor. It is recorded in the Sanbōekotoba (三宝繪詞 Illustrated Tales of Three Jewels), a text dating to the mid Heian era (11th century A. D.), that Ānanda

15) Watson, 1993, p. 130. (願以此功德 普及於一切 我等與生 皆其成仏道)





was one of the important figures of worship at Sai-in temple and a religious ritual called Anan keka (阿難悔過 confession [before] Ānanda) was performed twice a year on the 8th day of the second and the eighth month.<sup>16)</sup> On these days the nuns used to observe the 8 precepts<sup>17)</sup> and perform rituals all day long making Ānanda as the main focus of their worship.

16) Sanpōekotoba, pp. 176~179.

17) aṣṭāṅga-samanvāgatopavāsa (八齋戒) : The precepts of purity: 1. Not to take life, 2. Not to steal, 3. To refrain from all sexual activity, 4. Not to deceive, 5. Not to drink anything intoxicating, 6. To keep away from perfume, dancing, and the theater, 7. Not to sit or sleep in an adorned chair, 8. Not to eat after the noon hour.

## Tribute to venerable Ānanda at different places:

Apart from the above two rituals, various other forms of paying tribute to venerable Ānanda can be found in Japan. Some of those are described below:

1. The above-mentioned Zenmyōji, which was originally near Kōzanji of Togano'o, no longer exists except as a place name marked by a stūpa. Most probably the buildings stood until the later part of Tokugawa period (1603~1867). It is believed that the nuns of Zenmyōji built a stūpa to Ānanda to remember and worship venerable Ānanda and venerable Myōe. This is all that remains today to tell the story of Zenmyōji. It is a hōkyōin tō (法篋印塔; Skt. karaṇḍa-mudrā-stūpa) . The words “ built on the 8th day of the 8th month of the second year of Bun'ei (1265)” (文永二年八月八日建之) have been engraved on the back side of the stūpa. Now it is one of the important cultural properties of Japan.

2. Kankōni, was the 5th abbess of Mishōdō temple (微笑堂) of Tokoname city (常滑市) as well as the 10th abbess of the Yōrin'an temple (養林庵) of Kyoto. She was born in 1785 (天明五年) and became a nun at the age of 8 ordained by venerable Dokushōshi of Jizōin temple (地藏院獨照師) . She left this world on the 1st day of the eleventh month, 1868 (明治元年十一月一日) at the age of 84.<sup>18)</sup> During the reconstruction of Mishōdō temple, she enshrined venerable Ānanda as the principal figure of worship there instead of Lord Buddha which is the only example of its kind.<sup>19)</sup> In 1829 she had a hanging scroll painting of venerable Ānanda prepared which is kept presently at Jakkōin (寂光院) , a Buddhist nuns' temple in

18) Sōtōshūnisōshi, pp. 273~280.

19) *ibid*, p. 276.

Kyoto. Thus, she left behind a legacy and tradition for the nuns of Japan to praise and worship venerable Ānanda for his contribution to establish the bhikṣuṇī saṅgha.

3. The Annual Events of Hokkeji, the temple of annihilating sins (法華時滅罪之寺年中行事), revised in the seventh month, 1322 (元亨二年7月) by nun Yūse (融施) is an official document of Hokkeji Imperial Buddhist convent in Nara Prefecture. From this record it is evident that ‘Anansonja kōshiki’ was performed at Hokkeji twice a year, i.e. on the 8th day of the second and the eighth month. Also it is clear that it was one of their annual events during the late Kamakura period (1288~1333).

4. Yōrin’an, a Buddhist nunnery in Kyoto, was restored by Kankōni where she was the 10th Abbess. Earlier it was a Rinzai Zen temple but now it belongs to the Sōtō Zen sect. It had been treated as an imperial Buddhist nunnery till 1884 (Meiji 17). Here, there is a statue of Ānanda which has been worshipped since the time of Abbess Kankōni.<sup>20)</sup> But at present no ritual is performed except for daily worship.

5. Enshōji (円照寺尼門跡) is an imperial Buddhist convent for nuns of the Rinzai Zen sect situated in Nara. It was established in the 17th century. Here, there is a stūpa of venerable Ānanda in front of the main altar that is worshipped at the New Years with an offering of kagami mochi<sup>21)</sup> and chanting of Daihiju Darani (大悲呪陀羅尼). In addition to it, the stūpa of Ānanda is worshipped on the 7th day of every month offering the Ryōgonju Darani (稜巖呪陀羅尼) <sup>22)</sup>.

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20) See photo2.a, 2.b, 2.c.

21) Japanese round shaped rice cake offered to a deity. It is made from glutinous rice that has been steamed and then pounded.

6. Chōfukuji (長福寺) is also a Buddhist nuns' temple located in Nishikyōgoku area of Kyoto. It belongs to the Shingon sect of Buddhism and was established in the 18th century by the effort of Kyōreimon'in (恭禮門院1743~1795), consort of Emperor Gomomozono. It is not open to the public. Here, too, there is a stūpa of venerable Ānanda in the precincts of this temple. The Abbesses of this temple used to offer their hair when they were ordained<sup>23)</sup>.

7. Aichi senmon nisōdō (愛知專門尼僧堂), a training monastery for the nuns of Sōtō Zen sect at Nagoya, used to perform Anansonja kōshiki about fifty years ago. But these days it mainly performs a ritual called Anan tange (阿難歎偈), or praising Ānanda with deep admiration on the night of the 7th day of every month. Then on the 8th day morning, the nuns of this nunnery offer boiled rice to Ānanda and observe it as his death day. Although the ritual is a little different from Anansonja kōshiki, the purpose i.e. tribute to venerable Ānanda, is the same. Anan tange is like a summarized version of 'praising venerable Ānanda's virtues' part of the Anansonja kōshiki mentioned above and has been placed in the last part of the Anansonja kōshiki that is used to day. It is a later addition to Kankōni's wood block printed version. The nuns of this training center also observe Anansonja kōshiki, but only occasionally. Mahāprajāpatī, the foster mother of the Buddha as well as the first Bhikṣuṇī, is also worshipped here with Ānanda. During the observation of Anansonja kōshiki, the hanging scroll of Ānanda is brought from Jakkōin (寂光院) and placed in front of the image of Śākyamuni, the principal deity here. When the ritual is finished, the scroll

22) Bunchi jōō, p. 234. See photo - 3.

23) It is based on oral information from the temple.

of Ānanda is returned to Jakkōin again. It is the same hanging scroll painting of Ānanda that Kankōni made with the wood block printed text of the Anansonja kōshiki.

Origin:

Unfortunately I am still lacking concrete information about the origin of Anansonja kōshiki. However, the following literary evidences throw some light on it.

The Daihōben butsu hōngyō (大方便仏報恩經、Ch. Da-fang-bian-fo-bao-en-ying) , an old Buddhist text of the later Han period (25-220 A. D.<sup>24</sup>) , gives a detailed description of worshipping Ānanda by the Bhikṣuṇīs. Here, Mahāprajāpatī says to her fellow Bhikṣuṇīs, ‘We should pay respect to the great teacher Ānanda. If a Bhikṣuṇī wants to get salvation, she should wear a clean robe, observe the 8 precepts, and pray [to Ānanda] all day long on the 8th day of the second and eighth month. Ānanda’s great power will fulfill the desire’.<sup>25</sup>

Although a Sanskrit origin of this text is not yet known, still the possibility of a Sanskrit origin can not be denied as the date it was written is too early for the Chinese to have created a Buddhist text of its own. And thus, an Indian origin may be guessed. It is also quite probable that venerable Myōe was highly influenced by this text.

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24) Bussho kaisetsu daijiten, Vol. 7, p. 488.a.

25) Daihōben butsu hōngyō, p. 154.b.

(我等应当至心歸命阿難大師。若有女人欲求安隱吉祥果報。常當於二月八日八月八日。著淨潔衣。至心受持八戒齋法。晝夜六時建大精進。阿難即以威神力。應聽護助如願即得。)

The following statement of Mahāprajāpatī just before her death is found in the Pāli canonical texts. During her last visit to the Buddha and his disciples, she said to Ānanda:

“Through you, my son, I reached quenching as my refuge. You requested our father and obtained permission for us to go forth. Do not loose your mind, my son. Your effort has borne fruit”.<sup>26)</sup>

It is, perhaps, the oldest record available of Indian origin on paying tribute to venerable Ānanda.

Fa Xian<sup>27)</sup> ( 337-423 A.D. ) records that at Mathura the Bhikṣuṇīs made frequent offerings to the stūpa of Ānanda, because it was he who requested the Buddha to allow the women to renounce the household life and become bhikṣuṇīs.<sup>28)</sup> Xuan Zang<sup>29)</sup> (602-664 A.D.) visited India about 230 years after the visit of Fa Xian. He too records that the bhikṣuṇīs used to worship venerable Ānanda at Mathura.<sup>30)</sup> It can not be said with certainty if any

26) The Commentary on the Verses of the Therīs, p. 190, verse no. 67~68.

na yuttarī sociturī putta hāsakāle upaṭṭhite  
 tayā me saraṇarī putta nibbānarī tam upāgatarī. 67  
 tayā tāta samajjhittāho; pabbajjarī anujāni no  
 mā putta vimano hohi saphalo te parissamo. 68 (Therīgāthā-aṭṭhakathā, p. 144;  
 Therī-Apadāna, p. 534, verse no. 64~65)

27) A Chinese Buddhist priest and pilgrimage who traveled to India. He has translated many Buddhist scriptures.

28) 國名摩頭羅…諸比丘尼多供養阿難塔。以阿難請世尊聽女人出家故: Kōsōhokkenden, p. 859.

29) A Chinese Buddhist priest and pilgrimage who traveled to India. He is a great translator of Buddhist scriptures.

30) 秣菟羅國…釋迦如來諸聖弟子遺身窣堵波…阿難陀…諸苾芻尼供養阿難: Daitōsaiiki, Vol. 4, p. 890.

ceremony like Anansonja kōshiki was performed in India too when Fa Xian and Xuan Zang visited India. But it is clear from these records that worship of venerable Ānanda was in practice.

In other Buddhist countries like Taiwan, China and Korea etc. there is no evidence of examples of paying tribute to venerable Ānanda.<sup>31)</sup> The question, whether Anansonja kōshiki is an original ritual of Japan or whether it owes its origin to any other country, requires further study.

#### Conclusion:

The popularity and influence of venerable Myōe make it highly probable that Anansonja kōshiki maintained its continuity during his life time. There is a gap of almost 90 years between his death (1232) and the revised edition of the Annual Events of Hokkeji done by nun Yūse in 1322. This probably means that Anansonja kōshiki was already established as an annual event by this time and must have been in practice for a good number of years at Hokkeji. Considering that a well-established practice does not disappear all of a sudden, but must have some reason to go out of practice one would expect to find documentary evidence. No record has yet been found to support either the cessation or the continuation of Anansonja kōshiki. Hence, it may be assumed that it was in continuation since the time of venerable Myōe till the late 14th century.

Although there is no documentary evidence available, it could be possible that Anansonja kōshiki went out of existence completely during the

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31) Based on an oral discussion with the Buddhist nuns of these countries.

Suppression of Buddhism (廢仏毀釋) at the beginning of the Meiji era (1868). Buddhism suffered a lot at the hands of this boycott movement when Shintoism and Buddhism were separated. The second reason may be the decreasing status and decreasing number of Buddhist nuns in Japan. The observation of the ceremony might have ceased with the decreasing number of nunneries. Unfortunately, information on Buddhist nuns is not sufficient in almost all the eras in Japan. So, all that we can do is to guess from the scantily available materials and establish an acceptable conclusion.

Anansonja kōshiki is not practiced widely and regularly in Japan today. But today it is drawing the attention of the Buddhist community. Aichi senmon nisōdō has produced a video recording of Anansonja kōshiki and a book containing the text of the Anansonja kōshiki with a short introduction to the ceremony and the story of Ānanda, on its 100th commemoration. The book states very clearly that it has been made with the purpose to preserve this great tradition.<sup>32)</sup> At the end of the book, it is wished that anansonja kōshiki should be practised irrespective of the boundary line of any sect or country. In spite of its narrow exposition, it must not be underestimated, as it used to be a unique ceremony performed by Buddhist nuns only and a tribute to venerable Ānanda for his contribution to the formation of the bhikṣuṇī saṃgha.

Although there is no restriction upon the nuns to continue this tradition on a regular basis, still it is not observed regularly. There could be three main reasons behind it. One is the long duration. It takes more than two hours to perform it. The second reason could be the shortage of nuns. Anan kōshiki requires at least 12 well-experienced nuns to carry out the ritual by playing

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32) Aoyama, 2003, p. 11.



different roles as shikishi (式師<sup>33</sup>), baisi (唄師<sup>34</sup>), sangeshi (散華師<sup>35</sup>), bonnon (梵音) <sup>36</sup> etc. But due to various reasons the number of Buddhist nuns is decreasing day by day in Japan. In most of the Buddhist nunneries only one elderly nun remains. Some Buddhist nunneries are facing the problem of a successor. In such a situation it is very difficult to carry on Anansonja kōshiki formally. The third reason could be the poor financial status of most of the nunneries. To undertake such a grand ritual, a considerable amount of money is necessary, which is not an easy task to bear every year.

Almost one thousand five hundred years after the formation of the first bhikṣuṇī saṃgha, Anansonja kōshiki was started in Japan. Then it lost its identity in the darkness of history for a long period. And now it is worthy to note that a few but strong voices are raised for its revival. Although Anansonja kōshiki is not observed in its stricter sense, tribute to venerable Ānanda has been always paid in different names and different forms i.e. Anan geika, Anan kōshiki, Anan tange, and others. As long as evidence regarding this ceremony in China, Korea, Taiwan etc. does not come to light, the credit goes to venerable Myōe for its creation and to the Buddhist nuns' community of Japan for keeping alive such a wonderful heritage of the Buddhism of ancient India.

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33) The leading nun in the ceremony.

34) The nun in charge of reciting the verses.

35) The nun in charge of strewing flowers before the Buddha.

36) The nun in charge of playing cymbals etc.



Photo-1: The first wood block printed *Amida kichiki* made by Karkam presented at Yonju-ssi temple

Courtesy: Yonju-ssi temple



Photo-2a: Image of venerable *Amida* at Yonju-ssi temple



Photo-2b: Image of *Karkam* at Yonju-ssi temple



Photo-2c: A total view of the idols of venerable *Amida* and *Karkam* at Yonju-ssi temple



Photo-3: Stupa of *Amida* at Bodeji

Courtesy: Budeji JSA

## 일본 비구니들의 아난존자에 대한 공경의식

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불교 최초의 비구니 출현과 함께 비구니 승가는 건립 되었다. 이 과정에는 큰 인내심으로 많은 여성들을 이끌었던 종교적으로 깨친 마하빠자빠띠 뿐만 아니라, 아난존자의 지성적 보호와 협력이 커다랗게 작용한 사실은 잘 알려져 있다. 일본의 비구니들은 불교 전래 초기부터 다양한 형식으로 아난존자에 대한 감사 의례를 지내고 있으며, 이러한 특별한 전통은 현재까지 일본의 비구니들에게서 지속되어 오고 있다.

이러한 의식들은 일본의 불교사 시작부터 지금에 이르기까지 다른 불교권에는 찾아볼 수 없는 독특한 불교문화로서 정착되었다. 이 작법들의 두드러진 특징은 비구니들에게만 한정되어 진행된다는 점이다.

이 논문에서는 이 의식의 다양한 형식들, 예경대상들의 형상, 이 의식의 기원과 이러한 보기 드문 불교작법에 대한 현재적 관심들을 다룬다.

