A
lthough the names of many Buddhist temples, or jigō 寺号, are in constant use among Japanese and Western students of Japan’s history, religion, and art, they never seem to have been made the subject of systematic research, not even, as far as I know, by the Japanese themselves. (There exists, however, a short and not entirely satisfactory article on jigō in Mochizuki Shinkō, ed., Bukkyō Daitīten, 9, pp. 307f.) Just as Christian churches take their names mainly from the multitude of saints and other holy persons (according to their patrocinium), from the body of theological concepts, such as Trinity, Holy Spirit, Sacred Heart, etc., and, less frequently, from other spheres of religious thought and devotional life, so many Buddhist temples are named after sacred persons in the ‘pantheon’ (Buddhas, bodhisattvas, etc.) and important doctrinal terms. But in addition an astonishing number of temple names represent titles of scriptures (sutras) and theological or philosophical treatises, use symbols and metaphors, express good wishes and auspicious omens, or are taken from ritual and devotional practice as well as from legends and local traditions. As even this short and provisional enumeration shows, the variety of name types is much greater than it is in the Christian tradition; it is further enriched by naming a particularly large number of temples after historical persons who were their founders or patrons or to whose memory and spiritual welfare the temples were dedicated.

Thus the corpus of temple names (and there are thousands of them, showing a bewildering diversity) is embedded in the system of Buddhist thought, cult, and religious life on the one hand and in the fabric of Japanese political, social, and cultural history on the other. The variety, freedom, and even arbitrariness in naming the temples are enormous and call for clarification and classification.

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A more comprehensive presentation of the material and discussion of pertinent problems is published in the author’s Buddhistische Tempelnamen in Japan (Münchener Ostasiatische Studien 37), Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1985, which includes a special chapter devoted to the technical terms used for the different types of temples and monastic institutions (as opposed to their names as such). In the present article only a few isolated examples have been selected from the approximately 1,300 temple names analyzed in the book.
This introductory essay will provide, after some general remarks, a survey of the main groups of temple names in typological order, illustrating each of them by some examples selected from a much greater stock of available ones. Inevitably the picture presented in this sketch shows the rich and variegated material in undue simplification. We have to exclude or to reserve for further study the specific reasons, occasions, motives, and circumstances that led to the choice of a particular temple’s name, the question of regional distribution of names throughout Japan, and the possible predilection for certain names or types of names in different periods. Also excluded is, of course, any attempt at providing statistics; quite a number of names are found only once, others more or less frequently, and some in their dozens or even hundreds. The question of whether or not and to what degree sectarian affiliations of temples manifest themselves in their names is briefly discussed. So also is the problem of the importation of temple names from China; their number would appear to be much smaller than one would expect.

Categories of Temple Names

*Official Names.* What we call temple names (*jigō, jinyō* 寺名) is usually only part of the full name of a Buddhist institution established both for monastic life and for the performance of ritual, thus embracing the meaning of monastery as well as temple. For convenience sake, however, ‘temple’ is the preferred term in Western languages. Normally such an institution (*ji, tera* 寺) has a long official name made up of three components: the ‘mountain name’ (*sangō* 山号), the ‘cloister name’ (*ingo* 院号), and the ‘temple name’ proper (*san-in-jigō* 山院寺号). For example, Chōtoku-san Kudoku-in Chion-ji 長徳山功德院知恩寺 (Mountain of Long-Enduring Virtue, Cloister of Religious Virtue, Temple/Monastery of Awareness of [the Buddha’s] Grace). Another impressive example is Shiu-san Shōju-in Raigō-ji (Mountain of Purple [=Auspicious] Clouds, Cloister of the Sacred Host, Temple of Welcome—the Buddha Amitābha (Amida), according to the Pure Land doctrine, appears with a multitude of bodhisattvas on clouds to receive the pious believer into his holy realm. But logical or self-evident semantic connections between the three components of a temple’s full, official name, as in this case, are rare, and more often than not their combination seems arbitrary and difficult to explain.

Before concentrating on our main subject, the *jigō*, a few words about the two other name categories, the *sangō* and the *ingo*, are in order.

*Sangō.* Even when located on level ground, in valleys or in towns, Buddhist temples are called ‘mountains’ (*san, -zan* 山) because originally they were mountain retreats of recluses, hermits, and monks, and because the solitude of uninhabited and remote mountains was felt to be a numinous sphere. Certain mountains have a cosmological significance, and the Buddha is reported to have preached on sacred peaks, most prominently the Lotus Sutra on
Vulture’s Peak (Grdhrakūta). The altar or dais for Buddhist images represents Mt Meru (Sumeru, J. Shumi-sen 須弥山), the central axis of the world according to Indian cosmology, and is therefore called shumi-dan 須弥壇. The founding or consecrating priest of a temple performs the act of Opening the Mountain (kaisan 開山) and himself is called the kaisan.

Being basically topographical, the mountain names are also used as or instead of personal names, especially in Zen circles. For example, the monk Wen-yen (J. Bun’en) 文偃, living in the mountain retreat or monastery on Yün-men-shan (J. Unmonsan) 雲門山 (Mt Cloud Gate) was popularly called Master Yün-men (J. Unmon); several Japanese temples were named Unmonji after him or his Chinese monastery. This usage, of course, was taken over from China; for example, when the eminent monk philosopher Chih-i (J. Chigi) 智顕, 538-597, received the honorary title of T’ien-t’ai Ta-shih (J. Tendai Daishi) 天台大師, he was called after the sacred peak in Chechiang province, and the name of this mountain was subsequently transferred to one of the most influential sects as well. In the present short survey we have to omit the mountain names almost completely, for otherwise the scope of the material would be doubled.

In many cases, although by no means regularly, there exists a semantic relationship between the sangō and the jīgō, and a few examples out of a considerable number of typical connections are given below.

Rurikō-san Yakushiji 塔璃光山薬師寺: Rurikō=Radiance of Jewellery (Skt. vaidūrya) is an alternative name for Yakushi Nyorai 薬師如来, the Healing Buddha. Muryōju-san Saihōji 無量寿山西方寺: in the Western Region reigns Amida (Skt. Amitāyus), the Buddha of Immeasurable Life. Chūdai-san Dainichiji 中台山大日寺: Dainichi Nyorai (Vairocana) occupies the Central (Lotus) Terrace of the Garbhadhātu Mandala. Gokoku-san Shitennoji 護国山四天王寺: the Four Lokapālas (Heavenly Kings) are worshipped as Protectors of the State. Hokke-san Ichijōji 法華山一乗寺: the One-and-Only Vehicle (way to salvation) according to the Tendai school (to which the temple belongs) is expounded in its fundamental text, the Lotus Sutra (Hokke-kyō 法華経).

Sometimes the two elements are personal names: in Myōyū-san Sōkyūji 妙育山宗休寺, the sangō gives the posthumous or Buddhist name (hōgō 法号) of the founder’s mother and the jīgō that of his father. Fixed rules, however, or at least accepted habits of choosing and combining sangō and jīgō did not exist.

Ingō. Originally the term in denoted an enclosure, a precinct (of a palace compound, for example) and, by analogy, a cloister within a monastery. In this latter sense it was applied to temples (as Byōdō-in 平等院 at Uji) or mainly sub-temples (as Daisen-in 大仙院 within the huge compound of Daitoku-ji 大德寺 in Kyoto). Alternative but less frequent terms are -an 阿 and -bō 坊, while -dō 堂, normally confined to single halls or chapels, can sometimes designate small temples or sub-temples. As usual in East Asia, the name of a house or residence could be transferred to the person residing there; the most con-
spicuous cases are the names of Cloistered Emperors (-in or jokō 上皇; insei 院政, the rule of retired or cloistered emperors). Also prominent are the names of noble court ladies residing in precincts within or outside of the palace; for example, Higashi-Sanjō-in 東三条院, named after the mother of Emperor Ichijō 一条. In the Buddhist sphere, the most numerous and popular in-names of persons are the hōgō, religious names adopted either during the lifetime or granted posthumously (see p. 383, below). They are often identical with the names of temples founded by these persons, dedicated to their memory and salvation, or established as their families' sanctuaries, for example, Jishō-in 慈照院 for Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政, founder of Jishō-ji, and Sōken-in/ji 總見院/寺, for Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 and his family at Azuchi.

What concerns us here, however, is the use of in as a component of temple names. Usually it occupies the second place between sangō and jigō. It can replace ji when a temple precinct rose to great importance or became an independent establishment (for example, Byōdō-in, but most often it is applied to small sub-temples, or tatchū 塔頭, attached to a main temple whose full name normally contains a different ingō as component part. For example, Rinzō-in 輪藏院 within the compounds of Kōryō-san Keiden-in Shitennō-ji 荒鎬山敬田院四天王寺. Examples of the semantic connection between this latter type of ingō and the jigō were mentioned above, as also some instances of a close connection among all these components.

Jigō. Both sangō and ingō, although important and meaningful parts of the full, official temple names, are not, and never were, in general everyday use, and are even unknown to most people. Everyone calls the temples by their jigō (or, in special cases, by their ingō when these took the place of the current name). The jigō may thus be termed their principal name. In some cases the character for ji 寺 is pronounced tera (in compounds, often -dera), mainly when the temple name proper is an indigenous Japanese name, as in Hase-dera 長谷寺 and Tachibana-dera 橘寺, or when an unofficial, popular name (betsugō 别号, besshō 別称, zokushō 俗称, tsūshō 通称) is used side by side with the official jigō.

Unofficial or Popular Names. These occur most often among the topographical names (for example, Asuka-dera 飛鳥寺, Asakusa-dera 浅草寺) or in the case of temples named by some conspicuous features or famous characteristics; for example, Koke-dera 菩提寺, the Moss Temple, for Saihō-ji 西芳寺 in Kyoto, or Ginkakuji 銀閣寺, the Temple of the Silver Pavilion, which hardly anyone knows by its official name of Jishō-ji 慈照寺. As these two examples show, both -ji and -tera (-dera) may be used in these popular names, in accordance with either the Sino-Japanese (on 音) or the Japanese (kun 調) pronunciation. But temple names incorporating -tera are not invariably popular ones; Ishiyama-dera 石山寺, the Temple of the Rocky Mountain, is an official name. Not infrequently it is the sangō that is used as a popular name, such as Shigisan 信貴山 for the complicated name Chōgosonshijī 朝護孫子寺. In another type
of popular name the temple is simply called by its principal statue (honzon 本尊), as in the case of Asuka-Daibutsu 飛鳥大仏 for Gangōji 元興寺 in Yamato or Narita-Fudō 成田不動 for Shinshōji 新勝寺, or by the name of an eminent person who founded the temple, resided there, or whose tomb is located in the precincts. For example, Ikkyūji 一休寺 is named after the famous fifteenth-century Zen master who lived and was buried in the temple officially called Shūon-an 頼恩庵.

Jigō: Form and Meaning

Variety of Temple Names. The number of temple names is enormous and seems almost chaotic since the choice of name was left to a person or a group of people responsible for the foundation or restoration of the temple. This choice often appears to be even arbitrary and as a consequence we are confronted with the result of a remarkable inventiveness. Official authorities were involved only in the case of court- or government-sponsored temples. The rich variety of names is due to the fact that Buddhism had no unified church organization with a central ecclesiastical authority or a dogmatically fixed doctrine. Even the so-called sects, a convenient but misleading term that perhaps should be replaced by ‘denominations’ or ‘schools’, had a relatively loose organization, each sub-division (ha 派) or even each individual temple being more or less independent in its management. Whether or not there existed, along with this general freedom and autonomy, some sort of authority within a sect, school, or group of temples issuing regulations or approbations for the naming of temples remains to be clarified. There were, however, special cases in which an emperor granted a temple name (choku-gō 舛号).

Since there did not exist a canonical or generally accepted body of approved names, anyone being free to invent new ones, a particular name may possibly occur only once, while others are found in several dozens or even hundreds of cases. Some names or types of names, of course, are extremely popular, mainly those of the large Jōdo or Amida sects or those containing the names of great bodhisattvas such as Kannon or Jizō. But many names are highly esoteric, intelligible only to the initiated. Still others are derived from individual names of living or deceased persons who are not known beyond a limited circle.

The variety of temple names with their polychromatic spectrum is further increased and a comprehensive survey made still more difficult by the fact that temple names were often changed (kaishō 改称, kaimyō 改名) in the course of their history. A special method of renaming is the replacement of one or two characters of a name by others with different meaning but identical pronunciation (homophonic change), as in Saihōji 西方寺 > 西芳寺, or Daigoji 大興寺 > 大護寺, a temple in Kyushu. By this method a temple name may easily be adapted to the doctrine of another sect or to some new purpose or situation.
Linguistic Form of Temple Names

a. Binomial Compounds. The normal form of temple names is a binomial compound plus -ji/-tera (or sometimes -in) in the Sino-Japanese (on) version. Usually these compounds are based on the Chinese Buddhist vocabulary as formulated in the translations of the sutras and other texts and in the treatises written by the great Chinese masters and their Japanese followers. Typical examples are Engakuji 円覚寺, Myōshinji 妙心寺, Byōdōin. Most Buddhist names and terms are coined in keeping with the South Chinese pronunciation (go-on 剃音), showing certain deviations from the standard kan-on 漢音 reading (for example, kudoku 功徳, instead of kōtoku). It goes without saying that the grammatical and logical relationships between the members of these binominal compounds follow the rules (and the ambiguities) of the Chinese language. In quite a few cases the two characters are more or less interchangeable, so that Saikōji 西光寺 and Kōsaiji 光西寺, Fukuryūji 福竜寺 and Ryūfukuji 龍福寺, stand side by side, often without any appreciable difference in meaning. Names with only one character plus -ji or -tera are rare, most of them being Japanese names of localities, buildings, flowers, and the like, used as popular names, such as Oka-dera 岡寺 or Koke-dera, or even as official ones such as Tachibana-dera. In exceptional cases one-character names are used beside the normal, official names, as in Tōji 東寺 (Eastern Temple) for Kyōgokokuji 敷居護国寺, indicating its location in the eastern section of Heian-kyō. Three-membered names are not quite so rare, occurring mainly in names of a holy being or a doctrinal term consisting of three characters (Amida 阿弥陀, Muryōju 無量寿, jōbodai 成善提, haramitsu 波羅蜜).  

b. Transliteration of Sanskrit Terms. Haramitsu, mentioned immediately above, is the Sino-Japanese equivalent of Sanskrit pāramitā, and is an example of the frequent phonetic transliteration, first and basically into Chinese (irrespective of the meaning of the character used) and then over into Sino-Japanese (on'yaku 音訳, ‘translation by sound’). Further examples are Monju 文珠 for Manjushrī, makaya 摩訶耶 for mahāyāna, bodai 菩提 for bodhi, and shitchi 悉地 for siddhi. Many of these transliterations are shortened or even mutilated by brutal amputation of syllables to such a degree that they become unintelligible without recourse to their Sanskrit form (ryaku-on'yaku 略音訳, ‘abbreviated phonetic translation’).

For example, Bonshaku 梵釈, for Brahmā and Shakra (Indra), derives from Bonten 梵天 and Taishakuten 帝釈天; mani 摩尼 for cintāmani; funda 菩陀 for pundarīka. The same phenomenon is found in the innumerable transliterations of foreign words from European languages and their mutilations current in modern Japanese (for example, rangaku 蘭学, Dutch or Western studies in the Edo period, is the abbreviation for Oranda-gaku 和(阿)蘭陀學). This method, in general use since early Tokugawa times, was merely an adaptation of a time-honored Chinese practice to other languages and for new purposes.
For the transfer of Sanskrit words into Chinese and Sino-Japanese two methods were used side by side: transliteration by sound (phonetically) and translation by meaning (semantically). Thus there is Amida (from Sanskrit Amitābha/Amitāyus) and Muryōkō/Muryōjū (‘Immeasurable Light/Life’), or hannya 般若 (from prajnā) and chie 知恵 = wisdom. All this is reflected in Japanese temple names that draw their terminology from the entire, vast repertory of Indian and East Asian Buddhist vocabulary, adding in the process certain new, indigenous names and terms mainly from the stock of Japanese personal and topographical names or from the treasury of legend and lore.

c. Kun-on Change. A specifically Japanese phenomenon, impossible in other languages, is the replacement of the purely Japanese pronunciation (kun) of Chinese characters or of indigenous words and names by their Sino-Japanese reading (on). This exchange occurs mainly among temple names derived from topographical or personal names (names, that is, of non-Chinese and non-Indian origin), resulting in seemingly pure Chinese binomial names. For example, a temple founded by a certain Ki no Michinari 纪道成 is called Dōjōji 道成寺 (evoking the Buddhist concept of jōdō 成道, Perfection of Enlightenment, Accomplishing the Way); a place called Tatsuno-Kuchi 竜の口 (Dragon’s Mouth), transposed to its on form, furnishes the temple name Ryūkōji 龍口寺. It can even happen that the two characters are taken from the names of two different persons: a temple founded by Fujiwara Michiaki 藤原道明 and Tachibana Sumikiyo 橘澄清 is called Dōchōji 道澄寺 (michi=dō, sumi=chō). Often the meaning of such artificial names is strange or even obscure.

d. Contracted Compounds. The final linguistic form often used in naming temples is the contracted form. From a long term or name, consisting of four or more characters, usually two are picked out and combined to create a handy binomial compound, after the pattern ABCD (AB-CD) > AD or BC, etc. For example, the name of Hommanji 本満寺, enigmatic when taken by itself, is a contraction of the term hongan-manzoku 本願満足, Complete Fulfillment of (Amida’s) Original Vow, and Shōgo-in 聖護院 is contracted from shōtai-goji 聖休護持, Protection of the (Emperor’s) Holy Person. These contractions often result in binomial compounds that are not to be found in any but the most specialized buddhological or historical dictionaries, and often not even there. It is hopeless to try to understand such names except by recourse to their complete, original forms.

But other names are time-honored, long-established members of traditional Chinese Buddhist vocabulary; for example, hokke (in Hokkeji 法華寺) < myōhō-renge 妙法蓮華 = saddharmapundarika; bosatsu < bodaisatsu(su)ta 菩薩薩埵. Evidently almost unlimited freedom, arbitrariness, and even manipulation were allowed in forming temple names. This is a familiar phenomenon in modern times, with names such as Tōdai for Tōkyō Daigaku 東京大学, Keihin- sensen 京浜線 for the Tokyo-Yokohama railway line, and Nissan for Nippon-Sangyō 日本産業.
Another form of character manipulation is the homophonous change mentioned above. A third one is the addition of character elements: Chūgenji 仲願寺 is based on the on-pronounced family name Nakahara 中原 (= Chūgen), which for certain reasons was complemented by the radicals 一 and 原 without altering the pronunciation. A fourth one is the breaking up of a character into its parts to form a binomial temple name: Mokuboji 木母寺, taken from 梅 ume and referring to Umewaka-maru 梅若丸, whose tragic story is the subject of the celebrated noh play Sumidagawa. Often such manipulated names do not make a great deal of sense when taken at face value.

**Interpretation of Temple Names**

a. Various Approaches. When interpreting temple names, we first have to establish its literal meaning—a task not always so easy as it may first seem—and to identify it as the name of a holy being, of a historical person, or as a term of doctrine or ritual, etc. (semantic interpretation). A second approach is to investigate the particular circumstances of the temple’s foundation and the reasons for the choice of its name—who founded, enlarged, or revived the temple, what legend, local tradition, or socio-political situation were instrumental in naming it (contextual interpretation). A third, often indispensable approach is to bring the temple name into relation with the principal object of cult (hon-zon) and the mountain name (sangō), both of which often, but by no means regularly, offer a clue to the name; or to consider the temple’s affiliation with and service for a certain sect, its doctrine, cult, symbolism, and devotional practice (functional interpretation).

In using these approaches or perspectives we have to define the context, the conceptual and terminological ‘field’ in which a certain name or term, as used in a temple name, acquires a specific sense or nuance: the lotus in the Amida creed has a different meaning from that in Nichiren teaching, the West means one thing in Amidism and another in Zen; for example, Sairaiji 西来寺 (Coming from the West, that is, Amida’s coming from the Pure Land to receive the pious believer) as opposed to Sairaiji (Bodhidharma’s Coming from the West, that is, to China, the inception of the Ch’an/Zen tradition).

Often due regard to chronological sequence helps us to avoid the pitfalls of anachronism. Apparent connections between temple names and certain persons may turn out to be impossible for chronological reasons. Many names cannot appear earlier than a specific date of political or religious history; honorary ecclesiastical names posthumously granted to high-ranking priests by an emperor (such as Enkō Daishi 阿弥陀大師 for Hōnen 法然) were often conferred late in history, in Hōnen’s case in 1697; thus any temple called Enkōji and founded before that date cannot have been named after Hōnen. All these methods of interpretation are, of course, interrelated, mutually complementing each other.
b. **Historical Stratification.** When temple names are seen in due perspective, they show a sort of ‘historical relief’ or stratification in that they belong to a different age and go back to various phases of religious life and thought. Some belong to the early, initial stage of Japanese Buddhism, others appear successively in the course of later developments; some represent ‘timeless’ concepts, such as enlightenment, and may be found at almost any time. Others, on the other hand, are dependent on certain specific events and cannot appear earlier than a definite date, for example, those of the esoteric schools (mikkyō 密教) and of Amida, Nichiren, and Zen. In each of these phases, gradually superimposed like layers or strata, we find in temple names the ‘conceptual fields’ mentioned above. Their origin in certain canonical texts, basic for the different schools of thought, requires special attention; quite a number of terms appearing in names turn out to be titles of or quotations from sutras or treatises of perhaps widely divergent ages and religious systems (see below, pp. 372–73). In our typographical arrangement of temple names we constantly have to pay attention to this historical stratification in cases where these names appear side by side on the common plane of semantic categories.

c. **Semantic Stratification.** Another type of stratification is found ‘within’ individual temple names; that is, there may exist several layers of meanings and semantic aspects or of overlapping contexts and functions. One and the same name may have to be interpreted in diverse ways according to its being connected with different schools of thought, systems of symbolism, legends about the temple’s foundation or the miraculous power of its honzon, or with the name (often posthumous) of a historical person. Such a temple name may therefore have to be classified in more than one typological category, but in practice one of these various aspects, or ‘layers’, is found to be the primary one, predominantly responsible for the temple’s name.

A temple may be called after a priest’s name (this being the ‘primary layer’), the immediate motive for choosing this particular name for the temple, but at the root of the monastic name may lie a doctrinal term. Alternatively, it may be the mountain name (sangō) of the monastery where that priest received his ordination or where he resided, thus at the same time being a topographical name (often a Chinese one); or a temple may be called after the title of a religious treatise that, in turn, may have political overtones. Or the posthumous name (hōgō) of a believer, used as a temple name, can be a term of devotional life; or the era name (nengō) given to a temple may originally be based on a good omen or an auspicious legend. The classification of temple names by systematic types, therefore, is often far from easy because many of them cut through two or more layers of meaning. In an overall survey it is obviously impossible to analyze these stratifications in each particular case, but awareness of this structural principle is often indispensable for a correct interpretation, which should never be a mono-dimensional one.

d. **Sectarian Affiliation.** As mentioned above, temple names have often to be
interpreted within the context of a certain school of doctrinal thought and religious practice and within its semantic field, but it would be wrong to assume that a clear, strict, or necessary connection of name and sect in fact existed. Often, of course, the link is obvious, mainly in the case of the Amida sects, for example, Honganji 本願寺, Raigōji 来迎寺, Gokurakuji 極楽寺, Renshō-ji 蓮生寺, etc. But quite as frequently the link may be doubtful or misleading. Many terms used in temple names are generally valid beyond sectarian border lines, being based on fundamental and universal Buddhist concepts or containing names of popular holy beings and famous patriarchs. Also, entire sets of terms may have been inherited by one sect from another; Tendai terms, for instance, many of them taken from the Lotus Sutra, were incorporated into Nichiren/Hokke teaching. Many temple names have sources other than sectarian doctrinal or devotional terminology; for example, legends, political ideas (protection of the state and emperor), good wishes and omens, place names, names of historical persons, etc., so that their sect affiliation is not clearly shown in their names.

And evidently in not a few cases people responsible for the temples did not take offense when the name was more or less inappropriate to or even incompatible with the creed of their sect. This happened with particular frequency whenever a temple was transferred from one sect to another (or even to a third sect) without changing its name (kaishō). Or, vice versa, when temples changed their names without passing over to other sects. All this may often lead us astray, and whenever possible we have to go back to the initial situation in order to avoid error. (On the change of temple names—kaishō, kaimyō, see p. 363, above.)

e. Translation. Translation of temple names is often a precarious task. In many cases, of course, it is unproblematic because meaning and context are obvious or easy to ascertain, for example, when well-known holy beings, doctrinal terms, symbols, wishes and omens, or localities, are concerned. But even within these categories we find many names and terms that call for careful inquiry, and in such cases the authoritative Japanese buddhological encyclopedias are most helpful. In addition the meaning of other names is ambiguous or may be understood differently in different contexts. We have to bear in mind that temple names have often to be interpreted according to the correct ‘layer’, dimension, or field of meaning, as explained above. It would not make sense, for example, to translate a certain temple name literally when it turns out to be the name of an era, or of a figure appearing in a sutra, or of a historical person (possibly in on instead of kun reading, as noted above). For instance, Jōgyōji 上行寺 has to be understood as based on the name of a bodhisattva Vishistacārīta (Superior Conduct), mentioned in the Lotus Sutra, of whom Nichiren, 1222-1282, expected himself to be a reincarnation in an after-life.

Not infrequently the grammatical and logical structure of the binomial com-
pound forming a temple name may be uncertain, allowing divergent interpretations and translations. Particularly thorny problems arise whenever a name belongs to the contracted type, mentioned above. It often happens that new compounds combining two characters taken from a longer term or phrase do not form a logical, easily comprehensible unit, and there exist quite a number of temple names that seem to be completely meaningless or lead us astray if we do not realize their nature and origin. If, for example, we were to translate Kontaiji 金胎寺 as ‘Temple of the Golden Womb’, this obvious nonsense should warn us to look for the correct meaning: ‘Temple of the Diamond World (kongōkai 金剛界) and the Womb-Store World (taizōkai 胎藏界)’, represented by the famous pair of mandalas. Many such contracted names, and others as well, require an explanation or paraphrase of their original and unabridged meaning, including hidden allusions. It is quite futile from the start to attempt to translate those names and terms that are nothing but transliterations of Sanskrit words by Chinese-Japanese characters used phonetically, regardless of their meaning.

**Typological Classification of Temple Names**

Temple names have been arranged in the following sequence in order to classify their vast number and bewildering variety in a reasonable and comprehensible system:

1. Names of holy beings (numina)
2. Titles of scriptures (sutras) and treatises
3. Basic concepts of doctrine
4. Terms of ritual and devotional practice
5. Symbols and metaphors
6. Legends

The above groups of specifically religious terms are followed by more secular concepts:

7. Wishes for good fortune and auspicious omens
8. Motifs of Chinese myth and symbolism
9. Era names (nengō)
10. Wishes for the welfare of the emperor and nation.

While most of the above categories are of a general, partly Buddhist (largely originating in India) and partly secular character, valid also in China and Korea, the final groups below have a specifically Japanese flavor and a higher degree of regional individuality.

11. Names of historical persons, clerical or lay
12. Localities and their traditions
13. Conspicuous features to which certain temples owe their fame.

An appendix, p. 385, below, refers to names imported from China.
In this brief survey we can supply only a few typical examples for each of the above types of name, having to pass over in silence many highly interesting, unusual, sometimes strange, and even enigmatic names. For a fuller presentation the reader is referred to the study mentioned in the note on p. 359, above.

Our main source material is found in compendia containing several thousands of temples, giving their names, history, buildings, treasures, principal cult objects (honzon), legends, and festivals. The two most useful reference works are Nihon Shaji Taikan and Zenkoku Jiin Meikan; less comprehensive is Koji Meisatsu Jiten (the full titles of these and other pertinent works are supplied in the bibliography, p. 386, at the end of the present article). These compendia have utilized original documents, which therefore do not have to be consulted for our limited purpose.

As regards the names that are not self-evident or explicable by using the data assembled in these books, a great number of excellent Japanese reference works on language, history, and religion are also available, some of which are listed in the bibliography. Especially useful is the small but comprehensive Bukkyô Jiten by Ui Hakuju (its abridged English edition, Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary, is much less satisfactory). Hôbôgirin and Soothill-Hodus, Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms, stand out among the Western buddhological reference works. In several cases more specialized literature had to be consulted.

1. Names of Holy Beings (Numina)

Many temples are called after the usual names of the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, etc., not only in a direct manner, but also indirectly by using special designations often veiling their identity.

a. Buddha (nyorai 如来; tathâgata). Shâkyamuni’s name is seldom used for entire temples, although often in the case of chapels, for example, Shaka-dô 釈迦堂, and even the title ‘Buddha’ was unpopular. In fact, only two temples named Buddaji or Butsadaji 仏陀寺 exist. The title does appear, however, in many composite forms designating his metaphysical nature and merciful grace (see below, 3a). As a more common term for the Buddha, nyorai is preferred; there are several Nyoraiji 如来寺, together with Rinnôji 輔王寺 (Wheel-Turning Ruler = cakravartin) or Daiyûji 大雄寺 (Great Hero). The most important nyorai are found, either by direct or indirect naming, in the following temple names: Shaka-in 釈迦院 (short for Shâkyamuni), Sesonji 世尊寺 (The Honored One in the World), and Zenzeiji 善逝寺 (He Who Has Gone the Right Way = sugata). Amidaji 阿弥陀寺 (short for Amitâba/Amitâyus), Muryôji, Muryôkôji, Muryôjuji 無量(光, 寿)寺 (Immeasurable Light or Life), Saikôji (Radiance from the West). Yakushiji 薬師寺 (Bhaishajyaguru) and Tôkôji 東光寺 (Radiance from the East, where Yakushi’s Pure Land is situated) or Jôruriji 潔琉璃寺 (Pure Crystal; ruri is abbreviated from vaidûrya, a mysterious substance related to the Healing Buddha). Dainichiji 大日寺 (Vairocana; sometimes in the...
transliterated form of Birushanaji 毘盧遮那寺) and Henjō(kō)ji 遍照 (光) 寺 (Shining Throughout the Universe).

b. Bodhisattva (bosatsu 菩薩). In addition to the large number of temples with direct bodhisattva names, such as Kannonji 阿弥陀寺 (the most frequent of all, occurring 140 times), Jizōji 地蔵寺, Mirokuji 弥勒寺, and Monju-in 文殊院, there are also examples of indirect naming. For Kannon (Avalokiteshvara), we find Daijiji 大慈寺 (Great Compassion), Senjuji 千手寺 (Thousand-Handed), Fudarakūji 補陀落寺 (Mt Potalaka, Kannon’s abode on the west coast of India; transliterated Sanskrit name). Miroku (Maitreya) is referred to in Ryūgeji/-in 竜華寺/院, for the Dragon-Flower Tree will be his tree of enlightenment, corresponding to Shakyamuni’s pippala tree.

Less famous bodhisattvas appear in names such as Jōgyōji (see above, p. 368) or Myōkenji 妙見寺, referring to the star god of the Great Bear (or Northern Dipper), who according to the honji-suijaku ‘original’ or ‘fundamental’ name theory is the ‘trace’, or manifestation, of Myōken’s ‘original’ or ‘fundamental entity’; in both forms he grants good fortune and long life, and protects the state.

c. Vidyārāja (myō 明王). The most usual forms found in temple names are either the generic term, as in Myōōji, or the current names of individual Wisdom Kings, as in Fudōji/-in 不動寺/院 or Aizen-in 愛染院. The group of the Great Five appears in Godai-in 五大院, short for godaimyōō.

d. Deva (ten 天). Shitennoji 四天王寺 (in shortened form, Tennōji) is called after the Four Devarājas governing and protecting the four quarters of the universe. Of the individual gods we find only Vaishravana, King of the North and bestower of riches, in Bishamon-dō 明治堂 (transliterating his Sanskrit name), while Tamonji/-in 多聞寺/院 is a hybrid of phonetic rendering (-vana > mon) and semantic interpretation using the explanatory character 門 for mon; as he is believed to listen eagerly to the Buddha’s sermons he is called ‘He who has heard much’. His consort, Kichijō-ten (Shrīmahādevi), the goddess of happiness, enjoys great popularity reflected in many temples called Kichijōji or Kisshōji 吉祥寺.

Bonshakuji 梵釈寺, a forced combination of Bonten＝Brahmādeva and Taishakuten＝Indra(Shakra, transliterated as Shaku)-deva, has been mentioned above, p. 364; only Taishakuji is found independently as a temple name. This and many other examples illustrate a general lack of or indifference to a systematic and consistent procedure in creating and selecting temple names. From among the more obscure deities Myōō may be mentioned (in Myōō-in 明星院). He is the morning star and a prince residing therein, at the same time being an incarnation (keshin 化身) of the great bodhisattva Kokūzō 虚空蔵 (Ākāshagarbha: Treasury of Empty Space). The popular and ambiguous Dragon Kings, protectors of the Buddha, his teaching, believers, and sanctuaries, and also bestowers of rain, furnish a whole group of temple names, such as Ryūōji 竜王寺, Ryūtenji 竜天寺, and Tenryūji 天竜寺.

e. Shinto Deities (kami 神, gongen 権現). The syncretistic honji-suijaku
theory made possible the naming of Buddhist temples even after Shinto deities. There is a Tenshōji 天照寺 featuring the name of Japan’s highest numen, Amaterasu-Ōmikami 天照大神 in on pronunciation (Tenshō Daijin). She was interpreted as a manifestation of Vairocana (Dainichi＝Great Sun, or Henjō＝Illuminator of the Universe). A popular figure appears in Kōshinji 奈中寺, referring to the complicated monkey lore and symbolism. Most Shinto names, however, are those of rather obscure, local deities; for example, Tateyama-Gongen 立山権現, the god of a mountain range in central Japan, gave his name in on reading to Ryūzanji 龍山寺.

†. Disciples and Patriarchs, mainly the Ten Great Disciples (jūdai deshi 十大弟子) and the 16, 18, or 500 Arhats (rakan 羅漢), are to be distinguished from normal, historical monks and dignitaries owing to their half-historical, half-mythical character. Some temples are called Rakanji or Gohyaku Rakanji 五百羅漢寺, but none by the individual name of a single rakan.

From among the ten disciples of the Buddha, there is only Kāshyapa (in Kashō-in 女摂院), provided that this name does not stand for Kāshyapa, the immediate predecessor of Shākyamuni in the line of the Buddhas of the Past. In the case of Zen temples the reference to Shākyamuni’s great disciple, the first to grasp the wordless message of Zen, seems more probable. Bodhidharma (the transliteration is shortened to Daruma), of course, gave his name to a number of Zen temples (Darumaji/dera 達磨寺). From among the famous Indian philosopher patriarchs, we find only Nāgārjuna, venerated as the founder of esoteric (mikkyō) teaching, in translated form: Ryūjuji 龍樹寺 (Dragon Tree).

2. Sutras and Treatises
A small group of names is based on the titles of famous scriptures, but since many of them contain general terms of doctrine, the relation to specific texts is not always certain; in some cases, however, it seems at least probable.

a. Sutras. Doubtless Daizōkyōji 大蔵経寺 refers to the Great Sutra Treasury (the Buddhist Canon) and Mitsuzō-in 密蔵院 to that of Esoteric Teaching. Since legends tell of the Mahāyāna Canon being guarded in the Dragon Palace (ryūgū 呆宮) at the bottom of the ocean, there is a temple named Ryūzōji 呆蔵寺, a contracted form of ryūgū no kyōzō 呆宮の経蔵, Sutra Treasury in the Dragon Palace.

Individual sutra titles appear in Dai-Amidakyōji 大阿弥陀経寺 (Temple of the Great Amida Sutra or Sutras), and in Hokkekyōji and Hokkeji 法華(経)寺 (Temple of the Lotus Sutra), showing a contraction of the sutra’s full title Myōhō-renge-kyō 妙法蓮華経, translating Saddharma-pundarika-sūtra. Another contraction of the same title is found in Myōrenji, in accordance with the pattern AB-CD > either BD or AC. ABD are combined in Myōhokkeji. Shōmanji 勝鬘寺 refers to the Shōman-gyō (Srīmālā-devī-simhanāda-sūtra), a text on which Shōtoku Taishō lectured; Shōmanji in Osaka was founded by him.
b. Treatises. Hekiganji 碧巌寺, a Rinzai Zen temple, evidently owes its name to the famous Zen classic Pi-yen-lu, J. Hekigan-roku, 碧巌錄, Record of the Emerald Cliff, 1125, while Dentoji 伝灯寺 is named after the equally famous Dento-roku (if the religious act as such of Transmitting the Lamp, that is, the Zen tradition handed down through many generations of patriarchs and monks, is not meant). From its full title, Ching-te Ch’uan-teng-lu, J. Keitoku Dento-roku, 景徳傳灯錄, published in 1004 in the Ching-te era, the temple name Keitokuji took the Chinese era name, which has no counterpart among the Japanese nengō.

Ankokuronji 安国論寺 expressly refers to a major treatise written by Nichiren, Risshō Ankoku Ron 立正安国論, Treatise on Establishing Righteousness for the Peace of the Country, while Risshōji utilizes the first, instead of the second, part of the same title.

3. Doctrinal Terms
a. Nature of Buddha and Bodhisattva. The ontological term buddhatā, Buddha Nature or Essence, is used literally in Busshoji 仏性寺, while other temple names express this idea in a more abstract manner (see below, d.), such as Busshinji 仏心寺, which at the same time stands for the Buddha’s Heart full of compassion. From the semantic field of awakening, knowledge, and enlightenment (bodhi) are derived names such as Daikakuji 大覚寺, Shōgakuji 正覚寺 (sambodhi), and Engakuji, meaning Great, Right, or Perfect (‘round’) Knowledge, respectively. Prajñā, the Sanskrit term for insight or wisdom, is phonetically rendered in Hannyaji 華厳寺 and semantically translated in Chiekoji 智恵光寺, here combined with kō, ‘luminescence’.

From among the Three Bodies (trikāya) in which all Buddhas are thought to exist, only the two higher grades are found in temple names: dharmakāya (Body Absolute) in Hosshinji 法身寺, and sambhogakāya (Body of Compensation or Reward) in Hōjinji 報身寺, the latter name often referring to Amitābha, the sambhogakāya par excellence. Nirmānakāya (Body of Accommodation, that is, to the empirical world) appears only indirectly in names such as Shōōji 性応寺, Accommodation of the True Essence, tantamount to its manifestation in the historical Buddha Shākyamuni.

Names such as Jionji 慈恩寺 or Jigenji 慈眼寺 contain a term applying to both Buddhas and bodhisattvas, Compassionate Grace being one of their predominant virtues. Others use terms specific to bodhisattvas, such as the Six Perfections (pāramitā, literally, Reaching the Other Shore, that of nirvāṇa), transliterated and supplemented with the number ‘six’ in Roku-haramitsuji 六波羅蜜寺. The two highest of 52 stages of the bodhisattva’s spiritual career, tōgaku 等覚 (insight ‘equal’ to that of the Buddha) and myōkaku 妙覚 (‘sublime’ insight) are coupled in Tomyōji 等妙寺.

b. Pure Land Terms, usually referring to Amitābha’s Paradise in the West, are popular in temple names such as Jōdoji 净土寺 and Gokurakuji (Pure Land
and Highest Joy), but they also appear in a more general sense in Butsudōji 仏土寺 and Bukkokuji 仏国寺; since any Buddha is supposed to reside in a realm of his own, this group of names may be considered interdenominational. Ennōji 円応寺 refers to ennō-do 円応土, the realm where the Perfect ('round') Reality of the dharmakāya ‘accommodates’ (nirmāna) itself to the empirical world, that is, where the absolute Buddha manifests himself as Shakuyamuni. On the other hand, there is a group of Shingon temples called Mitsugonji 密厳寺 after mitsugon jōdo, Pure Land of Mysterious Sublimity, that is, the realm of Vairocana, the dharmakāya.

c. The Way toward Salvation, called the Right Eightfold Path (hasshōdo 八正道) appears in two abbreviated forms: Hashōji 八正寺 and Shōdōji 正道寺, after the pattern ABC > AB and BC. Contrary to expectation, not all of the eight individual terms are used in temple names, an illustration of the fact, mentioned above, that temple naming was free from the fetters of stringent systematization. There do exist, however, Right Concentration in Shōjōji 正定寺 and Right View (freedom from illusion) in Ōkōkenji 正見寺. The basis of the Way, dharma, is represented in Shōbōji 正法寺 (saddharm) or Buppoji 仏法寺 (buddha-dharma). Shōchi-in 正智院 means Correct Knowledge, Jochiji 聖智寺, Pure Knowledge gained by following the Way, while Zenchi-in 陣智院 and Kanchi-in 觀智院 denote wisdom obtained by meditation.

Enlightenment (bodhi) is represented directly, by transliteration, in Bodaiji 菩提寺, Shōbodaiji 正菩提寺 (Testimony of Enlightenment), and Jobodaiji 成菩提寺 (Perfection of Enlightenment). A Chinese equivalent, wu, J. go, satori, 悟, appears in Goshinji 悟真寺 (Awakening to True Insight). Other translations, such as chi 智 or kaku 空, are often found as components of temple names. The final goal of nirvāṇa, however, is never indicated directly by the usual term nehan 程槃 (a transliteration), nor by the alternative translation metsu 喪 (niruddha: annihilation, suppression), but by paraphrasing it with terms from the semantic field of quietude and silence, often intensified by the idea of stillness, as in Jakujō-in 寂靜院, or that of light, as in Jakkōji 寂光寺. An equivalent for nirvāṇa current in Zen circles is found in Myōshinji, Sublime Heart of Nirvāṇa (nehan myōshin); this is identical with the Buddha Heart (busshin), and is a quotation from Chapter Six of the basic Zen text Wu-men-kuan, J. Mumonkan, 無門関; this Buddha or Nirvāṇa Heart or Spirit was transmitted ‘by the heart or spirit’ (ishin denshin 以心伝心), as found in Denshinji 伝心寺.

‘To become a Buddha’ or ‘to complete the Way’ is expressed in Jōbutsuji 成仏寺 and Jōdōji 成道寺, while the central philosophical concept of the Middle Path, transcending all conceivable alternatives and dichotomies, is found in Chūdōji 中道寺.

The Great Vehicle (mahāyāna) is transliterated in Makayaji 摩訶耶寺, the -na being dropped, and translated in Daijōji 大乗寺. This vehicle, by preference interpreted in East Asia as a boat or ferry (see below, p. 379), is differentiated as
‘superior’ in Jōjōji 上乗寺 and Saijōji 最乗寺, ‘round’ or ‘perfect’ in Enjōji 円乗寺, ‘true’ in Shinjōji 真乗寺, and ‘unique’ in Ichijōji 一乗寺 (ekayana).

As an essential method leading to salvation, teaching is likewise described as ‘round’ in Enkyōji 円教寺, or ‘excellent’ in Zenkyōji 善教寺, in a general sense. Diverse schools of thought, such as Amitābha teaching, may be specified as ‘western’, as in Saikyōji 西教寺, or ‘pure’, as in Jōkyōji 净教寺, with reference to the Pure Land of the West.

d. Metaphysical Concepts. Basic Buddhist terms denoting ultimate reality and true essence of all existence occur in many temple names. For example, Busshōji (Buddha Nature, buddhatā), Jissōhō 実性寺 and Jissōjō 実相寺 (True Nature of Things, tathātā), or Shinnyōji 真如寺, Shōkūjī 性空寺 (Voidness of Ultimate Reality), Hokkaijī 法界寺 (Dharma World, dharma-dhātu), and Hosshōji 法性寺 (Dharma Essence).

Two important terms, mainly of Tendai thought, are found in Ennōyū 円融寺 and Byōdōji-/in 平等寺/院. Ennōyū means perfect (‘round’) fusion or interpenetration of all severely existing phenomena with the underlying true reality transcending all differentiation; byōdō (sameness, samatā) likewise stands for the universally equal and impartial truth beyond and embracing all discriminations (shabetsu soku byōdō 差別即平等, byōdō soku shabetsu).

e. Concepts of Individual Schools (‘Sects’). Quite a number of doctrinal terms specific to certain schools of thought occur in temple names, but we can mention only a few examples here. The Amida or Pure Land schools, as we have seen, call their doctrine that of the West (as in Saikyōji), the Rinzai Zen school that of the South (in Nanshūjī 南宗寺). Most prolific within this group are the Jōdo (Pure Land) and the Hokke/Nichiren schools. As regards the former we find the central term gan 頌 (vow) in many combinations: Gankyōjī 願教寺, Honganji, Ganjōjī 願成寺, Ganshōjī 願生寺, that is, Doctrine of (Amida’s) Vows, Fundamental Vows, Vow Fulfillment, Promise of Rebirth. Ōjō 往生 (Rebirth in the Pure Land), found in Ōjōji, is cut short to shō in Saishōjī 西生寺 (Rebirth in the West) or Renshōjī 順生寺 (Rebirth on a Lotus Flower). At first sight names containing mon 門 (to hear) in binomial compounds are somewhat enigmatic, for example, Mommyōjī 還名寺, Montokuji 達得寺, Monshinji 間信寺. These refer to the formula of some of Amida’s vows: ‘He who hears my name (mommyō) shall receive (toku) faith (shin),’ or some other religious virtues and blessings. Other names describe the beauty of the Pure Land, such as Rendaijī 前台寺 (Lotus Platform or Seat) and Hōjūji 宝樹寺 (Jewelled Trees). Names referring to Amida’s Coming from the West (Sairaijī) and his Coming to Welcome the Believer (Raigōji) enjoy great popularity.

The Hokke School terminology, largely based on Tendai philosophy, centers on two basic concepts: one is hon, for example in Hommonjī 本門寺 (Main or True Gate), that is, to Real, Original Insight (Hongakuji 本覚寺), to be distinguished from provisional truth (shakumon 詐門), analogous to the medieval honji-suijaku theory of ‘origin’ and ‘trace’. A parallel pair of terms
is ken and jitsu found in Kenjitsuji 頼実寺: once provisional (‘open, manifest’) truth is grasped, real or genuine truth shines forth as well since both are interdependent.

The second basic Hokke term, myō妙 (sublime, beyond normal comprehension) owes its popularity to the title of the Lotus Sutra: Myōhō Renge Kyō (Saddharma-pundarīka Sūtra), the bible of all Hokke devotees, and it appears not only in Myōhōji 妙法寺, but also in various shades of meaning, as in Myōhonji 妙本寺, Myōkenji 妙顕寺, and Hōmyōji 法妙寺.

Specific Zen names are not so numerous. The famous great temples such as Daitokuji, Eiheiji 永平寺, Engakuji, Kenchôji 建長寺, and Nanzenji 南禪寺, bear names either of general, unspecific significance or of a different non-Buddhist semantic category (Kenchô, for example, is a nengô). Some names, however, could not have been used by other sects. Sairaiji (Bodhidharma’s Coming from the West) refers to the beginning of the patriarchal tradition. Myōshōji 妙笑寺 (Wondrous Smile) evokes the initial moment of Zen when Shākyamuni silently held up a flower, and Kāshyapa was the only disciple to indicate his inexpressible understanding and insight (satori) by a mere smile (nenge mishô 撕華微笑); thereupon the Buddha spoke of the Nirvāna Heart (see above: Myōshinji). Jikishi-an 直指庵 (Direct Pointing to the True Self) and Kensiô 東性寺 (thereby Seeing the Nature or Essence) are quotations from a basic dictum epitomizing Zen thought and experience.

4. Terms of Ritual and Devotional Practice
a. Ritual. In addition to certain names containing widely accepted symbols, mentioned below, such as kongô 金剛, there exists a type based on terms connected with ritual performances: the True Word (mantra) in Shingonji 真言寺, or the sacred formula (dhāranī) in Sōjîji 続持寺, Jinjuji 神倉寺, and Jimyôji 持明寺, the last name at the same time denoting one of the areas within the Taizôkai Mandara (Garbhadhātu Mandala). An unusual case is Akaiji(-dera) 関伽井寺, ‘Fountain of Holy Water’ (aka transliterating argha). Most names of this type occur with the esoteric (mikkyô) sects.

b. Monastic Life and Religious Training. Terms designating monastic institutions are found, for example, in Angoji 安居寺, for in early Buddhism the itinerant monks were allowed to seek ‘quiet shelter’ only during the rainy season (one of the origins of the Indian monastery). Another example is Tôshôdaiji 唐招提寺, the famous temple in Nara founded by the T’ang monk Chien-chen, J. Ganjin, 鑑真, in 759: Tô (=T’ang) is attached to shôdai (ch’ao-tî) which, by way of transliteration and contraction, goes back to Sanskrit caturdesha (-bhikshu sangha) = ‘congregation of monks from the four cardinal points of the compass’. Strictly speaking, this is not a temple name but a technical term for a monastery, with -ji used pleonastically. Also in Kokubunji 国分寺, designating the type of provincial government temples of the eighth century, and in Jingûji 神宮寺, temples attached to Shinto shrines.
according to the syncretistic *honji-suijaku* doctrine. Both of these examples, however, also occur as temple names proper.

Religious training in a general sense is spoken of in names such as Dairenji 大顕寺 (Great Discipline) or Kanjuji 観修寺 (Encouragement of Training). The fundamental exercise of meditation appears in several variants: Zenjōji 禅定寺 joins two terms for meditation, *dhyāna* and *samādhi* (this latter term, transliterated as *sammai*, is often used in names such as Kongō-Sammai-in 金剛三昧院); Shōjōji 正定寺 emphasizes Right Meditation as the last stage of the Eightfold Path; and Kannenji 建念寺, Kannōji 建道寺, and Shōkanji 正観寺 take the term *kan* (intuition, contemplation) from the same semantic field.

c. Devotion. We can present only a small selection from the multitude of names relating to the religious attitudes and activities of the devotee. The Awakening of the Heart, the resolve to follow the Way of the Buddha, is found in Hosshinji 発心寺, the Awareness of and Gratitude for his Grace in Chionji/-in 知恩寺/院. The semantic field of religious acts, centered on the term *gyō* 行, is covered by such names as Kudokuji 功徳寺 (Meritorious Acts), Shōgyōji 正行寺 (Right Actions), Gyōganji 行願寺 (short for *shingyō shingan* 身行心願; acts of the body and heart). *Fuku* 福 is another key word in this connection. It does not simply mean ‘good fortune’ but rather ‘bliss’; paired with knowledge in Fukuchi-in 福智院 and with virtue or merit in Fukutokuiji 福徳寺, it acquires a deeper religious dimension. Since virtue and good deeds are likened to a field where the ‘fruit’ of enlightenment and buddhahood is growing and ripening, we find even the name Fukudenji 福田寺. The idea of the transfer or ‘turning over’ of religious merit to others for their spiritual welfare appears in Ekō-in 回向院.

Invocation and contemplation of the Buddha’s, primarily Amida’s, holy name being the most widely practiced devotional act, the two relevant terms, *shō* and *nen*, form a broad semantic field in which are found names such as Shōmyōji 称名寺 (Calling the Name), Shōnenji (Invocation and Consideration), Nembutsuji 念仏寺 (Contemplating the Buddha), and Sainenji 西念寺 (Contemplating the West, where Amida’s paradise is located). As these acts are all-important and specific for Amida devotees, they are called ‘special’ or ‘unique’: Senshūji 専修寺 (Sole or Special Practice), Sennenji 専念寺 (Exclusive Contemplation), and Senshōji 専称寺 (Exclusive Invocation).

The concept of vows for the benefit and release of all beings, as proclaimed by Amida in his forty-eight vows, plays an important role in temple names such as Hotsuganji 発願寺 (Resolve to Take a Vow), Gangyōji (Realize a Vow), and Manganji 満願寺 (Fulfill a Vow).

d. Tradition and Propagation. Tradition is usually expressed by *den* 伝, as in Dembōji 伝法寺 (Transmission of the Law; also in the reverse form of Hödenji), Denjōji (Tradition of the Vehicle, *yana*), and Shōdenji 正伝寺 (Right Tradition). Which particular teaching is considered to be the true one depends on the sect to which a certain temple belongs. Propagation of the Law is a highly
meritorious act and hence found in many names—Hōryū-ji (Prosperity of the Law) and Kōryū-ji (Propagation and Prosperity) being the most famous examples.

5. Symbols and Metaphors

Common Buddhist symbols and metaphors are found in temple names such as Sambō-in 三宝院 (Three Jewels, triratna) and Hōrinji (Wheel of the Law, dharma-macakra). Some of these designate the Buddha by his distinguishing marks (lakshana, sō 相), appearing in Byakugōji 白毫寺 (White Curl, the ārya between the eyebrows), Shōrenji 青蓮寺 (Blue Lotus, the Buddha's eyes being said to be deep blue), and Chōonji 潮音寺 (Thunder of the Rising Tide, a simile for his all-pervading, world-awakening voice, otherwise compared with the lion’s roar).

Phenomena connected with light are widely used to express enlightenment and the radiance of wisdom and grace, the key words kō 光, myō 明, and shō 照 appearing in many names, such as Bukkō-ji 仏光寺 (Buddha's Radiance), Kōmyōji 光明寺 (Light and Effulgence), Hōkōji 放光寺 (Emission of Radiance), and Jishōji (Luminescence of Benevolence). A cognate symbol is gold, which not only because of its luster transcending all the different colors but also primarily because of its immutability stands for the glory, permanence, and perfection of Absolute Reality and Truth personified in the Buddha's golden body and halo. Konshinji 金心寺 (Golden Heart) symbolizes the absolute essence underlying all existence, while Konkōji 金光寺 (Golden Radiance) and Konzōji 金蔵寺 (Golden Treasury) refer to the Buddha nature (buddhatā) inherent in all living things.

The circle (en 円) is likewise a symbol of absolute perfection, being full and complete but at the same time infinite and empty. In its pure form it is seen in the full moon (Getsurinji 月輪寺, Mangetsuji 滿月寺) and in a round mirror (Enkyōji 円鏡寺), which, while absorbing and reflecting all evanescent phenomena, still remains bright and empty. A similar metaphorical term for perfect, ‘round’ insight is found in Engaku-ji.

The lotus flower, symbolizing both the essential purity of the absolute Buddha Nature and the cosmic universality of the empirical and the spiritual world (as represented in the Mandala) is found in a great number of temple names, many of them referring specifically to the Lotus Sutra. Funda-in 芬陀院 shows the abbreviated Sanskrit word pundarika for the white lotus; Hachiyōji 八葉寺 (Eight-petalled) means the lotus flower occupying the central field of the Garbhadhātu Mandala; and the idea of rebirth in a lotus flower, as promised to Amida's devotees, appears in numerous names such as Jōrenji 乘蓮寺 (Lotus Vehicle), Sairenji 西蓮寺 (Lotus in the West), and Jōrenji 清蓮寺 (Pure Lotus, alluding to jōdo, the Pure Land).

Symbols of the efficacy of ‘magic’ are found mainly in esoteric thought, such as the ‘diamond’ or ‘thunderbolt’ (kongō) for the all-powerful truth (in Kongō-ji and Kongōbuji 金刚峰寺). Kongō-ji and Taizō-ji 胎蔵寺 show the names
of the fundamental pair of mandalas. The ‘germ syllables’ (*bija, shuji 種子), such as *kan and *man (= Hām and Mam), stand for Fudō-myōō 不動明王, and appear in Kanmanji 華鬘寺, or A and Un (=Ōm), the Buddhist alpha and omega, in Aunji 阿吽寺.

A large group of names are based on metaphorical comparisons. Hōunji 法雲寺 means the Dharma as a fertilizing Cloud and at the same time the tenth and highest stage of a bodhisattva’s career. Similarly Jiunji 慈雲寺, the Cloud of (the Buddha’s) Compassion. A whole semantic field, centered on the idea of ‘ferrying over to the other shore’, to release in nirvāṇa, is covered by names such as Kaiganji 海岸寺 (Seashore), Saiganji 西岸寺 (Western Shore = Amida’s Paradise), and Fusaiji 普濟寺 (Universal Redemption, *sai = saido 濟度, to ferry across).

Daigoji takes up the ancient Indian simile of *manda, an extremely refined extract of milk (translated into Chinese by *t’i-hu, J. *daigo, 醍醐), standing for highest truth, absolute reality, and the Buddha Nature. The Zen temple Saihō-ji 西芳寺 in Kyoto, originally called Saihōji 西方寺 (Western Direction, Amida’s Paradise) was renamed by slightly altering the character *hō to mean ‘fragrance’ instead of ‘west’, thereby quoting from a poem by the temple’s reviver, Musō Soseki 夢窓錦石, which likens the Zen tradition since Shākyamuni and Bodhidharma to a fragrance spreading over wide areas. Another metaphorical quotation is found in Kōzanji 高山寺 (High Mountain). In the *Kegon-kyō 華厳経 (Avatamsaka-sūtra) the first sermon of the Buddha, explaining to an audience of bodhisattvas the whole undiluted truth experienced under the Bodhi tree, is compared to ‘the first rays of the rising sun illuminating the high mountains’ 夕出先照高山之寺, this being the complete, official, imperially granted name of the temple.

6. Legends
a. The life and legends of Shākyamuni have furnished several temple names. For example, Dōji 道樹寺 (Tree of [Attaining] the Way, the Bodhi Tree), Tembōrinji 転法輪寺 (Turning the Dharma Wheel), Kakurinji 鳥林寺 (Grove of [Shāla Trees turning white like the plumage of] Cranes, when Shākyamuni was about to enter into nirvāṇa under these trees). The Bodhi Tree of Maitreya, the Buddha of the future world, appears in Ryūgeji 龍華寺 (Dragon Flower).

b. There is a host of temple names in Japan based on specific local legends, most of which serve to illustrate the all-pervading principle of ‘origination from conditional causation’ (*pratītya samutpāda, J. engi 禹起). This type may therefore be called the engi name. Usually the legends relate some supernatural occurrence manifesting the power of Buddhist holy beings and their avatāras (*gongen, reigen 霊験) in the guise of Shinto deities or their messengers. For example, a statue of the Buddha reveals itself from the sea (Butsugenji 古仙寺). Amida and Kannon help Princess Chūjōhime to weave the Taima Mandala
from fibers of the Blue Lotus (Shōrenji). A deaf-mute boy is healed when, on meeting Shōtoku Taishi, he produces a holy relic (shari 合利) from his mouth (Shariji). A monk succeeds, by his spiritual power, in exorcizing a malevolent dragon, sealing him up in a pond under a stone cover (Ryūgaiji 竜蓋寺). Often wonder-working fountains, waterfalls, rocks, or images, as well as dreams and apparitions, cases of miraculous healing and auspicious omens, are involved. It is obviously impossible to relate here even a fraction of these stories.

7. Good Wishes and Omens
Most temple names of this type do not express genuinely Buddhist sentiments but secular ones, as for longevity, plentiful and happy life, easy childbirth, peace and prosperity, thus contradicting, in fact, the Buddhist conviction of fundamental impermanence, suffering, and misery of all existence. Many of these wishes are expressed by time-honored standard formulae or symbols of Chinese origin. General terms of well-being and happiness are found, for example, in Eifukuji 永福寺 (Permanent Bliss), Fukushōji 福祥寺 (Happiness and Joy), Shōfukuji 勝福寺 (Supreme Happiness), and Mampukuji 万福寺 (Ten-thousandfold Bliss). Specific wishes for a long life occur in Fukujuji 福寿寺 (Happy Long Life), Senshūji 千秋寺 (Thousand Autumnns = Years), Mannenji 万年寺 (Ten Thousand Years), and Shōjuji 松寿寺 (Long Life like the Pine Tree).

Several names, however, express pious wishes for the bliss of salvation and release in nirvāṇa or in Amida’s Pure Land, such as Fukurakuji 福楽寺 and Jōfukuji 浄福寺 (alluding to the gokuraku-jōdo 極楽浄土), and Saifukuji 西福寺 (Bliss in the Western Realm). Easy childbirth is asked for by using names such as Taisanji 泰産寺; such temples often have Koyasu-Kannon 子安観音 as their honzon.

Auspicious omens are usually of general significance, but now and then, depending on the particular circumstances, they relate to specifically Buddhist concepts. The key term occurring is often zui 瑞 (auspicious), as in Zuitokuji 瑞徳寺, Zuikeiji 瑞景寺, Zuihōji 瑞鳳寺, Zuiryūji 瑞龍寺, the last two names mentioning the phoenix and dragon, symbolic animals of Chinese lore. Zuiunji 瑞雲寺 and Shiunji 紫雲寺 refer to the appearance of auspicious, ‘purple’ clouds, and Zuisenji 瑞泉寺 to a miraculous spring (a common motif). A truly Buddhist term is found in Zuiōji 瑞応寺 (Auspicious Response), meaning the appearance and beneficial activity of the Buddha ‘answering’ the urgent prayers of mankind (ōjin 応身: body of accommodation).

8. Motifs of Chinese Folklore and Symbolism
Names of strongly Chinese (or, strictly speaking, Taoist) flavor supplementing those already mentioned above and without specific Buddhist connotations (or acquiring them only secondarily) are found in Gekkeiji 月桂寺 (the Katsura Tree supposed to grow on the moon), Shōryūji 青竜寺 (Blue/Green Dragon of the East), Reishiji 霊芝寺 (Miraculous Mushroom, or ling-chih, growing in an
ideal ruler’s time and granting long life), Hōrai-in 蓬莱院 (one of the three islands of immortality), and Tōgenji 桃源寺 (Peach-Blossom Spring, made famous in Tao Yuan-ming’s 陶淵明 prose-poem T’ao-hua-yuan chi 桃花源記, about a dream land full of peace and harmony). A Buddhist version of the term ho-kuang, J. wakō, 和光 (Mitigating the Radiance) comes from Tao-te-ching 道德經, chapters 4 & 56, and is found in Wakōji 和光寺; here it refers to the hōben 方便 (upāya-kaushalya) of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, that is, the accommodation of their overwhelming splendor to the limited capacity of living beings, in accordance with the honji-suijaku doctrine.

9. Era Names (nengo)
Relatively few temples bear names of the eras in which they were founded, re-established, or enlarged. A temple with an apparent nengo name, however, is not necessarily connected with that era; it may have been established much earlier or later, and thus the meaning and origin of its name have to be sought elsewhere. Since nengo normally express auspicious omens and wishes for good fortune and prosperity, these formulae may equally well be used as unspecific temple names. Examples of genuine nengo names are Kōninji 弘仁寺, founded between 810 and 824; Enryakuji 廻廻寺, 782-806; Ninnaji 仁和寺, 885-889; Kenchōji, 1249-1256; Kan’ei-ji 宽永寺, 1624-1644.
Jingoji 神護寺, however, is not named after the Tempyō-Jingo 天平神護 era, 765-767, but received its name with a ‘political’ meaning (see below) not earlier than 824. In rare cases Chinese era names were used for temples with a strong Chinese affiliation. This is probably true of Eiheiji, yung-ping, J. eihei, being the era, 59-76, when Buddhism is said to have been introduced into China under the Later Han emperor Ming-ti 明帝.

10. Political Names
This label is used for a type of names expressing the hope for peace, prosperity, and protection of emperor, state, and nation, for it was the explicit duty of such temples to secure these benefits by ritual or magical performances. Many of these names have a strong Chinese flavor, while a few others refer to the benevolent powers of Shinto deities. Thus, Jingoji, whose full name is Jingo Kokuso Shingonji 神護国寿真言寺 (Shingon Temple Protected [or, for the Protection] by the kami for the Happiness of the Country) clearly expresses its religio-political meaning. Constantly recurring key terms are an 安, hei 平, and go 護, often combined with koku (kuni) 国. Self-explanatory names of this type are Daianji 大安寺 and Taiheiji 太平寺, both meaning Great Peace (the latter alludes to the Chinese nengō-named temple T’ai-ping Hsing-kuo-ssu 太平天国寺), Ankokuji 安国寺 (Peace for the Country), and Chinkokuji 鎮國寺 (Pacification of the Country—the name has its equivalent in China, but in Japan the term chin [=shizumeru] has also a Shinto ring). Shōgoin is a contraction of shōtai goji 聖体護持, Protection of the (Emperor’s) Sacred Person.
11. Names of Historical Persons

Unlike Christian churches, a surprising number of temples are named after living or deceased persons who in one way or other were connected with their establishment as founders or patrons. Some of these institutions were founded to serve as family temples (ujidera 氏寺, bodaiji or bodaisho 僧提所, kōge-in 香華院), devoted to the spiritual benefit of its members and their ancestors after their ‘release’, hence called ‘temples of enlightenment’ or ‘for offering incense and flowers’. Persons featured in temple names can be laymen or laywomen, often having taken holy orders, or clerics; they can be emperors, reigning or retired, other members of the imperial family or aristocrats; in more recent times, middle-class people are included as well. Thus we find a great variety of individual names, increased by the frequent use of religious names (hōgō, hōmyō 法名, kaimyō 戒名), either adopted by the living person or granted posthumously. The rules governing this practice are too complex to be discussed here.

A further complication arises in cases, mentioned above, p. 365, and often occurring, of personal names transposed from the Japanese (kun) to the Sino-Japanese (on) reading or pronunciation, or of character manipulation. From this bewilderingly rich repertoire, we select a few examples at random, reluctantly omitting often fascinating personal aspects and historical circumstances.

Shōtoku-ji 聖徳寺 is a Shinshū temple called after Shōtoku Taishi 聖徳太子 because he was held in great esteem by that sect; Taishi-dera 太子寺 was also named after him. Dōmyōji 道明寺 comes from one of the names of Sugawara Michizane 智朝道真, 845-903. Saioku-ji 西国寺 is derived from the poetic name of the monk Sōchō 宗長, 1448-1532. Giō-ji 恭王寺 is named after the mistress of Taira Kiyomori 平清盛, 1118-1181. Another instance of a temple named after a lady is Gekkei-ji, founded in the early seventeenth century by a certain nobleman’s daughter called Gekkei-in 月桂院; at the same time the name refers to the cassia tree (katsura 桂) on the moon (see p. 380, above), illustrating the semantic stratification of temple names mentioned above, p. 367.

Names of Chinese monks were sometimes used. Buttsūji 仏通寺 is derived from the honorary title of the Chinese master of the temple’s founder, Guchū Shūkyū 慧中周及, fourteenth century. Ōbai-in 黃梅院 received its name from the ‘mountain’, that is, the monastery Huang-mei-shan 黃梅山, Yellow Plum Tree Mountain, where the fifth-century patriarch Hung-jen 弘忍 secretly appointed Hui-neng 惠能 the sixth patriarch by giving him his robe; the mountain name (sangō) of one of the Ōbai-in is Den(n)e-san 伝衣山, Transfer of the Garment. Ummonji 雲門寺 is named after the Ch’an master Yün-men 雲門, 780-841, while Zendōji 善導寺 honors the Chinese Jōdo patriarch Shan-tao 善導, 613-681.

Japanese monks, of course, gave their names to many temples which they either founded or to which they were somehow related. Kōbōji 弘法寺 and
Hōnenji  法然寺 are called after the famous Shingon and Jōdo patriarchs. Ren-
shōji derives from Kumagai Naozane’s  熊谷直矩 monastic name adopted after
the tragic episode with Taira Atsumori 平敦盛 in 1184. Engakuji  円覚寺, a
Shingon temple in Aomori, refers to its founder, a monk named Engaku. These
examples show that personal names, mainly monastic ones, can at the same
time have a doctrinal or devotional meaning. Famous monks are often hidden
behind their alternative names; for example, Kōshōji  光勝寺 refers to Kūya
Shōnin 空也上人, 903-972, an early propagator of the Amida creed.

The last important type includes the religious names (hōgō) of lay people.
This term is to be preferred to ‘posthumous names’ because these religious or
monastic names were often adopted when people took holy orders during their
lifetime. These names are used in connection with the meifuku 冥福 or tsuizen
追善 rites performed for the spiritual benefit of the deceased in the temple
devoted to their memory and used as their family’s ancestral temple (bodaiji,
etc.). They are also inscribed on the tombstone and the ancestor tablet placed in
the butsudan 仏壇. Since they are suffixed with -in, they are called ingō.

For example, Jishōji (alias Ginkakuji) derives from Jishō-in, the ingō of
Ashikaga Yoshimasa, 1435-1490, the temple’s founder. Zentsūji  作通寺 comes
from the religious name of Kūkai’s father. Yōgen-in 養源院 refers to the father
of Yodogimi 清皇子, the wife of Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉, and Zenshōji 善正
寺 is the hōgō of Hideyoshi’s adopted son, Hidetsugu 秀次. Dentsū-in 伝通院 is
named after Tokugawa Ieyasu’s 徳川家康 mother. Myōrenji 妙蓮寺 is based on
the hōgō of Nichiren’s mother, while the temple’s sango, Myōnichi-san 妙日山,
refers to that of his father. Annyō-in 安養院 was the religious name of Masako
政子, 1157-1225, the widow of Minamoto Yoritomo 頼朝. Ungenji 雲幻寺 is an
interesting case of a temple name composed by taking one character each from
the religious names of two different, although related, persons—the founder’s
two sisters, one called Hōun-in 法雲院, the other Genshin-in 幻心院; at the same
time, ungen (Cloud Phantom, gen＝Sk. māyā, illusion, irrelenity) makes good
sense for Buddhist believers.

12. Topographical Names
Before giving examples of temple names referring to specific locations in
Japan, let us mention some institutions called by one of the cardinal direc-
tions. The reason for choosing such names varies. We leave aside names based
on mythological topography, as the Western Pure Land or the Vulture Peak
(Grdhrahkūta) where Shākyamuni preached the Lotus Sutra (in names such as
Ryōsenji 霊山寺). Such names come primarily under the categories of doctrines,
legends, etc.

In the geographical sense, however, the eastern direction appears in Tōji
(unofficial name of Kyōōgokokutu, located in the eastern half of Heian-kyō);
similarly, Tōdaiji 東大寺 and Saidaiji 西大寺 in the eastern and western parts of
Nara, or Higashi- and Nishi-Honganji 東/西本願寺 in Kyoto.
Saikokuji 西国寺 does not refer to the Pure Land in the West but to Western Japan, where this temple enjoyed a privileged position. Nanzenji, situated in the east and not in the south of Kyoto, is called the Southern Zen Temple with regard to the division of Chinese Ch’ian into ‘northern’ and ‘southern’ schools.

Some names are related, for reasons of religious history, to Korea or to China. For example, Kudara-dera 百済寺 and Kôraiji 高麗寺 (Kudara = Paekche; Kôrai, in this particular case, = Koguryô); Tendaiji 天台寺 and Rozanji 鹿山寺 (T’ien-t’ai-shan and Lu-shan).

True topographical names based on Japanese localities, often showing -tera (-dera) instead of -ji in concordance with the purely Japanese local names, can be those of towns, villages, and rural areas: Asuka-dera, Asakusa-dera, Hagiwara-dera 萩原寺, Ikaruga-dera 斑鳩寺 (the old name of Hôryûji, after the name of the surrounding tract of land, in on reading, Hankyûji), Hase-dera (also Chôkokuji, Long Valley). Often such Japanese topographical names, when used in their on reading, acquire a Chinese, official, and ‘learned’ air, such as Meisekijji 明石寺 = Akashi.

Other topographical names may be those of mountains, as Kiyosumidera/Seichôji 清澄寺 (located on Mt Kiyosumi, Bôsô Peninsula), Köyaji/ Kôyasan 高野寺/山 (High Plain), Kongôbuji (on Kôyasan; Vajra Summit, a mountain name based on a legend connected with Kûkai). Some of these names are determined by certain characteristics of the local situation and thus lead us to the last type of temple names.

13. Conspicuous Features
Within this category are found many popular, unofficial names current alike among Buddhist adherents and non-Buddhist visitors; often, in fact, a temple is far better known by its popular name than by its official one. Few people have ever heard of Jishôji and Rokuonji 鹿苑寺, but everyone is familiar with Ginkakuji and Kinkakuji 金閣寺 (Temple of the Silver/Gold Pavilion) in Kyoto. Often, however, a name of this type is used as the official name. Apart from conspicuous buildings such as these, characteristic features of the surrounding landscape—hills, rocks, grottos, waterfalls—can furnish temple names: Rinkyûji 林丘寺, Ishiyama-dera, Sekiganji 石畳寺, and Ryôanji 瀧安寺. In addition the Japanese are fond of calling temples after beautiful trees, flowers, and even moss: Tachibana-dera (tangerine tree), Tsubaki-dera 薬師寺 (camellia), Hasu-dera 莲寺 (lotus), Kôyôji 紅葉寺 (= momiji 紅葉, autumnal colors), and Koke-dera (moss; identical with Saihôji in Kyoto). A few temples take their names from famous statues, such as Shakuzôji 石像寺 (a wonder-working stone statue of Jizô) and Sentaiji 千仏寺 (Thousand Buddha Statues).
Appendix

*Temple Names Transferred from China*

Quite a number of temple names are evidently adopted from China, but they are not so numerous as one would expect in view of the intimate connections between Japanese and Chinese Buddhism throughout the centuries. In many cases names are so specifically connected with indigenous Japanese places, persons, events, legends, etc., that they obviously cannot have counterparts in China. In most cases the identity of names in both countries is due to simple convergence since a great number of names and terms are common to all Buddhist schools of thought, cult, symbolism, and devotional practice. Even non-Buddhist concepts of Chinese origin have spread throughout East Asia (see sections 7 & 8, above).

Unlike these cases, however, there exists a smallish group of temple names whose origin can definitely be attributed to Chinese monasteries provided that at least one of the following conditions is met.

a. A link in sectarian history (for example, Tendaiji /T’ien-t’ai-shan; Shōrin-ji 少林寺/Shao-lin-ssu, the monastery on Sung-shan where Bodhidharma is said to have sat facing a wall in meditation for nine years).

b. Japanese monks had personal connections with specific Chinese institutions (Shōryūji/Hsing-lung-ssu 青竜寺 in Ch’ang-an, where Kūkai studied under Hui-kuo; Ryūkōji 竜興寺, a Tendai temple founded by Ennin 円仁 and named after a Chinese state-protecting temple called Lung-hsing-ssu, where Saichō 薫 (Dengyō Daishi 伝教大師) had been initiated to esoteric teaching).

c. The names of Chinese masters or those of their ‘mountains’ (= monasteries), mostly of the Ch’an/Zen sects, were used to name Japanese temples (as Sōkeiji 曹溪寺, with reference to Ts’ao ravine; Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch, lived in the Ts’ao ravine, which became proverbial among Zen adherents as a source of their tradition).

d. In one or two cases a Chinese master transferred the name of his home temple to the one he founded in Japan; for example, Mampukuji, near Kyoto, was named in 1661 after Wan-fu-ssu 万福寺 on Huang-po-shan, J. Òbaku-san, 黄檗山, by Yin-yüan, J. Ingen, 藤元.

We have to confine ourselves to these few hints; the problems connected with this phenomenon are numerous and call for further investigation.
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