

FOLLOWING FAXIAN TO KĀŚYAPA’S GATE:
RELOCATING INDIA IN THE 1692 *JIZU SHANZHI*

by

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Abstract

This project examines the stories surrounding the association between Jizushan, a mountain in southwestern China's Yunnan province, and one of Śākyamuni Buddha's earliest disciples, Mahākāśyapa. Using hagiographies and pilgrimage record excerpts from a seventeenth-century Qing-commissioned gazetteer, the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi*, this project examines the strategies through which this text argues for Jizushan's significance not only as a Chinese pilgrimage site, but also how it directly associates the Chinese mountain with early Indian Buddhism. Drawing from existing scholarly work on the formation and maintenance of sacred Buddhist sites and landscapes throughout Chinese history, this project identifies the overlapping strategies present in these gazetteer excerpts: using records of Faxian (337–422), an early Buddhist pilgrim from China to India, to suggest Jizushan has a lengthy Buddhist history, arguing based on these records that Jizushan is actually the same site identified in Indian scriptures, and as a result, making a claim that Jizushan is the site of Mahākāśyapa's body. This constructed argument for the mountain's importance to seventeenth century Chinese Buddhists succeeds because of the continual mythic importance of Indian Buddhism to the creation of new sacred sites in China and for the legitimacy offered by ongoing relic traditions.

Lay summary

This project examines arguments for the importance of Chicken Foot Mountain in Yunnan China to Chinese Buddhist readers in the seventeenth century. Using excerpts from a collection of texts called the *Jizu shanzhi*, I look at how carefully arranged stories of exceptional Buddhist disciples and monks create an argument that this Chinese mountain is actually the same one in India where one of the Buddha's earliest disciples died. I find that records of pilgrimages to India, Buddhist scripture, and local histories all contribute to this claim. A connection to India was especially powerful to medieval Chinese Buddhists looking to create their own pilgrimage sites, and this connection remained an important component of the Chicken Foot mountain's Buddhist history in the seventeenth century, but the argument in the *Jizu shanzhi* was created no earlier than the fourteenth century, suggesting that the India-China connection was an appealing argument for creating this Chinese mountain as an important Buddhist landmark.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Margaret Mitchell.

Translations of material in the appendix is original, with assistance from members of the ASIA 511 graduate seminars with Dr. Jinhua Chen at UBC Vancouver from 2018–2020.

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Introduction: Approaching Kāśyapa's Gate

At the base of the Hall of Universal Light at the peak of Jizushan 雞足山 (Skt. Kukkuṭapāda) there is a stone gate that is a thousand fathoms (8,000 feet) high. This place has barely been trodden. Canonical scripture says: the monk Faxian 法顯 (337–c. 422) from Pingyang 平陽 went to India looking for scriptures, he went beyond the Congling 蔥嶺 mountains and went south. When he was about to arrive at Jizushan, he met an old man on the road, who had thick eyebrows and a remarkable appearance, and Faxian failed to realize he was not an ordinary person.

In an instant a novice monk arrived, and Faxian began to ask: “Who was this old man?” [The novice monk] answered: “He was Kāśyapa.” Faxian then learned that this was the honorable one's spiritual manifestation, and he therefore followed [him] to Kāśyapa's gate. [Since the gate] was barred by a large stone, and could not be entered, [Faxian] left in tears.¹

This story finds us travelling to Jizushan 雞足山, a mountain in today's Yunnan 雲南 province, China. The mountain is a popular hiking and pilgrimage site, overlooking Erhai 洱海 lake and the ancient villages and tourist resorts that line its shores. It is 35 kilometers northeast of the eponymous former capital of the Dali 大理 kingdom, and today, Dali's new city to the south serves as the transportation hub in the area. Though the area surrounding Erhai lake and nearby

¹ Original text from pages 81-82 of the *Jizu shanzhi* 雞足山志 [Chicken Foot Mountain Gazetteer] 10 *juan*. Compiled by Qian Bangzuan 錢邦纂 (1600–1673), revised by Fan Chengxun 范承勳 (1641–1714). 1692. 中國佛教寺廟志數位典藏/Digital Archive of Chinese Buddhist Temple Gazetteers. <http://buddhistinformatics.dila.edu.tw/fosizhi/ui.html?book=g084>

Dali are well connected through tourist buses, bicycle routes, and vans for hire, as of July 2019 Jizushan does not yet have its own direct bus route connecting it to other tourist sites. However, it is accessible via a private car or a public bus that leaves from the nearby county capital of Binchuan 賓川. It is a popular hiking destination in the area, but it is not the primary attraction for foreign and domestic tourists, who most often visit the ancient villages surrounding Erhai lake.

Our story finds us much earlier in the mountain's history. Monk Faxian 法顯 (337–c. 422), the author of the *Gaoseng Faxian Zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 [Records of Eminent Monk Faxian], is traveling west on his way to find Indian sutras. Just before he reaches Jizushan, the monk encounters the spiritual manifestation of Mahākāśyapa (Moheqieye 摩訶迦葉), one of Śākyamuni Buddha's closest disciples. Faxian follows the manifestation to a large stone gate and is unable to enter. What makes this mountain, this old man, and this stone gate so remarkable? I argue that these connections to celebrated monastics and Buddhism's early history lend credibility to Jizushan's status as a sacred site, and as a version of India's Kukkuṭapāda.

This project examines excerpts from the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi*, an early Qing (1644–1912) gazetteer that surveys Jizushan's local and religious history in Chinese. The gazetteer (*zhi* 志) genre, as Marcus Bingenheimer describes it, “combines cultural and topographic description with local historiography” in a “container format.”² In its general, non-Buddhist forms, a gazetteer assisted a government official with local administration, through geographic and demographic data as well as significant literary works from its area of focus. While secular gazetteers included limited entries on the religious landmarks of the area, their Confucian

² Marcus Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin: Mount Putuo and Its Gazetteers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.

compilers frequently edited and limited the Buddhist and Daoist materials.³ Many gazetteers, including the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi*, were compiled with a sacred mountain as their main focus (*shanzhi* 山志). Like their non-Buddhist counterparts, they include a variety of texts from different genres, but temple or mountain gazetteers offer scholars of religious history a much more detailed record of the texts and images—legends, monastic hagiography, temple maps—which account for the development and continuation of religious meaning at that site through text.⁴ This genre is an increasingly popular source for understanding local religious history, and in my second and third chapters, I will use excerpts from the 1692 Jizushan gazetteer to understand how accounts of miraculous lives and deaths made the site.

The texts included in the *Jizu shanzhi* 雞足山志 [Chicken Foot Mountain Gazetteer], from which the above quotation is taken, argue that this site is significant for many reasons. Most powerful among them is the claim that the mountain is home to the body of Mahākāśyapa, disciple of Śākyamuni Buddha. From this initial claim, we also see that excerpts from the *Jizu shanzhi* emphasize Chinese Jizushan's connection to Buddhism's earliest and most authoritative Indian past. This emphasis is trifold: first, the inclusion of a paragraph from Faxian's *Faxian zhuan* places one of China's most notable pilgrims at Jizushan. Second, the explanation attached to this excerpt from Faxian's *Faxian zhuan* explains that Jizushan is actually Kukkuṭapāda, a site traditionally believed to be in Bihar state, India, thereby further connecting the Chinese site to more authoritative Indian Buddhist origins. Thirdly, thanks to Faxian's record and the gazetteer's claim that Jizushan is Kukkuṭapāda, the *Jizu shanzhi* claims to be the site of Mahākāśyapa's body, a powerful claim among a Chinese religious landscape where relics and bodily remains

³ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

attract pilgrims and have remarkable powers. Together, this section of the *Jizu shanzhi* argues for this Chinese mountain's importance because it is closely tied to the earliest Indian form of Buddhism that predates the sectarian divisions present in seventeenth century Central and East Asia. This argument accords with the way that Qing leadership drew from a wide repertoire of multicultural Buddhist practices in the creation and patronage of significant Buddhist sacred sites.

Beyond the *Jizu shanzhi*, scholars of sacred space in China know that the stories of mountains and the stories of the people who visited and inhabited them are deeply intertwined. The growing body of work on sacred mountains in China reveals the complex networks of monastic, lay, and political interests that maintain these mountains as important places. My first chapter will weave the existing scholarship on sacred space in China—and Buddhist mountains in particular—with the themes in the *Jizu shanzhi*'s hagiography sections, showing the many ways that the *Jizu shanzhi* accounts accord with similar collections at other sacred sites within China.

This excerpt of the *Jizu shanzhi* teaches its readers that Jizushan is a site where monastic practice is rewarded, and where visitors can be close to Buddhism's origins. In addition to overlaying the mountain's existing significance in local Yunnan religious practice with accounts of eminent Chinese and Indian Buddhist monastics, the *Jizu shanzhi* parallels other significant sites for the importance it places on dead bodies and relics, which physically mark the mountain as an exceptional site.

In this gazetteer excerpt, Jizushan is marked by its status as a re-creation of Kukkuṭapāda. Copying and relocating sacred sites is a common practice throughout China's religious history. In addition to borrowing elements of iconography or architecture—as in the case of replicated

Wutaishan 五臺山 temples in Japan, or “copying” a site in scripture, as in the case of Putuoshan 普陀山 as the legendary Potalaka—the *Jizu shanzhi* also sets up Jizushan not simply as a copy of Kukkuṭapāda, but as the exact site itself. This is at once a familiar strategy to scholars of sacred mountains in China, but the early-Qing context of the *Jizu shanzhi* presents us with an administration keenly interested in adapting Chinese Buddhism to promote an expansive, multicultural nation.

I approach this project with the intent to expand the scope of studies on Chinese Buddhist mountains. Though there is a vast number of mountains with religious significance within the borders of today’s China, the majority of the academic literature focuses on Wutaishan, Emeishan 峨眉山, and Putuoshan. These mountains are three out of four of the *sida mingshan* 四大名山, a group of mountains that tradition since the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) holds to each be the home of a bodhisattva. Many records testify to the power of these bodhisattvas to intervene in the lives of practitioners, offering visions, teachings, and experiences of miraculous phenomena to fortunate pilgrims and monastics. Evidently, the presence of a bodhisattva is an important element of how and why the *sida mingshan* became significant religious centers from the first millennium to today. Given how many religious sites do not claim a resident bodhisattva, there are many other forces at work that sanctify these sites, and other kinds of stories that allow smaller, lesser-known sites to become celebrated as well, with the landscape dotted with accounts of unusual phenomena or remarkable abilities. Though Jizushan is not as famous and celebrated in Buddhist circles as its more popular counterparts, particularly Wutaishan and Emeishan, the *Jizu shanzhi* offers us evidence of a lengthy Buddhist relationship with the mountain.

Following calls by James Robson and other scholars of religious mountains in China to look beyond the most celebrated sites toward other accounts of religious sites,⁵ I selected Jizushan as a case study: Jizushan is an ideal case study to explore how Ming and Qing China transformed a borderland mountain into a significant Buddhist site, and the *Jizu shanzhi* is an excellent case study to demonstrate how this transformation may have worked at a smaller-scale site. There is already a growing body of literature on how Qing officials interacted with other Buddhist borderlands—such as their relationships with Tibetan and Inner Mongolian Buddhists at Wutaishan, for example—but we know relatively little about religious life along China’s southwestern borderlands. Even Emeishan, much celebrated as one of the *sida mingshan*, remained a relatively remote site through Ming and Qing rule in the far-flung Sichuan mountains, and does not offer significant insight into parallel narratives at Jizushan. The best-documented religious history of Yunnan speaks more to pre-Chinese rule, local traditions, and the independent Dali (937–1253) and Nanzhao (c. 738–902) kingdoms.

This project offers something different: a later Yunnan Buddhist history foregrounding the role of Chinese religious individuals in establishing Jizushan’s status as a significant Buddhist pilgrimage site. It also complicates our understanding of China’s relationship with Indian Buddhism long after the initial push to create uniquely Chinese practices and places distinguished from its origins farther west. A significant body of scholarship addresses how Chinese Buddhists negotiate with this “borderland” complex during the Tang Dynasty (618–907),⁶ for example, but there has been comparatively little scholarship that returns to this

⁵ James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 55.

⁶ See, for example, Antonino Forte, “Hui-chih (fl. 676–703 A.D.), a Brahman Born in China,” *Estratto da Annali del Istituto Universitario Orientale* 45 (1985): 106–134; Tansen Sen, “Introduction” and “Chapter Two,” in *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600–1400* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2003); Jinhua Chen, “The Borderland Complex and the

question of Indian-Chinese relationships later on. Early Qing Yunnan, with its relative proximity to Indian homelands, and more specifically, Jizushan's claim to be the original Indian Kukkuṭapāda, allows us to explore these spatial relationships with Buddhism's distant Indian past. Qing administration was keenly interested in adapting Buddhism to serve a multi-ethnic, geographically expansive population, and the circulation of the *Jizu shanzhi* appears to support this diplomatic technique.

The Qing dynasty had greatly expanded its territory by the time of the *Jizu shanzhi*'s circulation, and the Dali and Jizushan areas were included in these thirteenth-century acquired territories and were now under Qing administration. But this alone does not explain how Jizushan, a Yunnanese mountain, becomes Kukkuṭapāda, traditionally an Indian Buddhist mountain, in its gazetteers. If this change from a little-known mountain near the Dali capital to an Indian pilgrimage site were as simple as a change in administration and the normalization of new religious and cultural practices, we would expect to see an emphasis on Chinese influences and an expression of Qing national character.

Instead, when Faxian's record attests to meeting Mahākāśyapa at Kukkuṭapāda, the 1692 Jizushan gazetteer asserts that Jizushan is the same mountain that Faxian describes. The gazetteer's supplemental text explains this association is due to Jizushan's proximity to India, and the territory's ancient geographic ambiguity before the Dali region made contact with kingdoms in the Central Plains. Faxian's account and its attached explanations strengthen the mountain's connection to India's ancient Buddhist sacred landscape while complicating historical claims to the surrounding territory. On his own, Faxian is a significant figure, and his writing

Construction of Sacred Sites and Lineages in East Asian Buddhism," in *Buddhist Transformations and Interactions: Essays in Honor of Antonio Forte*, edited by Victor H. Mair (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2017), 70.

lends authority and longevity to historical Buddhist accounts. In the *Jizu shanzhi*, however, Faxian's journey is intertwined with Jizushan's status as a significant landmark.

As I will show in this thesis, the gazetteer constructs Jizushan as a mountain of remarkable individuals, beginning with Faxian's visit to Jizushan as an argument for the mountain's importance. We know that Jizushan is marked by the deaths of eminent monastics: beginning with the death of one of Śākyamuni Buddha's closest disciples, Mahākāśyapa, other monastics with remarkable relationships to death continue to appear in the *Jizu shanzhi*. A monk can transport the dead to the Pureland and return them to life; another pair of monks self-immolate. Others experience enlightenment and death at the same moment on Jizushan. To readers of the *Jizu shanzhi*, the mountain becomes marked with the miraculous. In particular, Jizushan is a place where the landscape responds to exceptional deaths, and rewards passage to worthy visitors. Faxian's inclusion in the *Jizu shanzhi* introduces us to the mountain's supposed connection to India and the Buddha's earliest disciples, while at the same time highlighting the site as a place with Chinese conventions.

Chapter One: Building Buddhist Mountains

“Many arhats still live in this mountain. People of the Way from countries in all directions, year after year come here to make offerings [to the arhats]. For those whose hearts are sincere, arhats will [join them and] exchange teachings together at night. Having dismissed their doubts, the arhats will suddenly disappear. The hazel trees on this mountain are lush, teeming with lions, tigers, and wolves, so one should never head for it carelessly.”

Mountains are especially significant religious centers in China. From Maoshan 茅山, home of the Daoist Supreme Clarity school (Shangqing 上清), and from Taishan 泰山, site of millennia-old imperial rituals, to Wutaishan, multi-cultural hub of Buddhist monasticism and patronage, Buddhists in China have understood mountains as centers of religious practice and innovation, as well as sites of political patronage and cross-cultural exchange. It is difficult to overemphasize the enormous role of mountains in China for the evolution of religious life and as places of political and economic vitality. The growing body of scholarship on both the history and contemporary innovations at religious mountains in China attests to the sheer scope and diversity of religious life on Chinese mountains, with an essential role as hosts to lavish temple building, scriptural production, international pilgrimage, and scholarship, and have offered their visitors proximity to the miraculous and sacred.

Given the significance of mountains to religious life in China, it is little wonder that the study of mountains as sites of religious significance has flourished in the last forty years. If work by Chavannes and Schaefer established the foundation for these efforts in Western language scholarship, the publication of *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites* by Naquin and Yü was a catalyst for

the widespread interest in this topic.⁷ The contributors to *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites* demonstrated that there was a rich history of pilgrimage to sacred sites throughout China's religious traditions, and that a site-specific study could offer a new avenue for scholars of Chinese religious history. Yü's own contribution presented a study of Putuoshan's gazetteers, with particular attention to miracle tales and the role of accounts of the bodhisattva Guanyin 觀音 (Skt. Avalokitêśvara) in creating sacred sites and offered a model of how sacred Buddhist mountains developed in China and.⁸ Since the publication of *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites* in 1992, critical studies like James M. Hargett's 2006 Emeishan-focused monograph, *Stairway to Heaven* or James Robson's 2006 Nanyue-focused *Power of Place* have contributed to/expanded this emerging field and demonstrated some methodologies in mountain-centric studies.⁹ Hargett, for example, stepped away from Emeishan's Buddhist fame, opting to contextualize and localize the site through travel diaries, arguing that scholars cannot study religious mountains in isolation from their geographical settings. Robson, on the other hand, opted to complicate scholars' sectarian understanding of religious practice on Chinese mountains, using the location-shifting Nanyue to understand how Buddhists and Daoists negotiated claims for the same sacred spaces.¹⁰ These beginnings of a critical foundation for the field encouraged the use of sources beyond the repertoire of the Buddhist canon—from travel diaries, local gazetteers, murals, architecture, and

⁷ Édouard Chavannes, *Le T'ai Chan, essai de monographie d'un culte chinois* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1910). Edward H. Schaefer, *Mao Shan in T'ang Times* (Boulder: Society for the Study of Chinese Religions, 1980). Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü, eds., *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

⁸ Chün-fang Yü, "P'u-t'o Shan: Pilgrimage and the Creations of the Chinese Potalaka," in *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, edited by Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 191.

⁹ James M. Hargett, *Stairway to Heaven: A Journey to the Summit of Mount Emei* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012). James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ Robson, *Power of Place*, 55.

more—to explore how religious life was created and maintained on Chinese mountains beyond monastic Buddhism. This broad focus is reflected today in the diverse approaches to religious history on Chinese mountains that use, for example, poetry and murals from the Dunhuang grottoes, temple architecture, maps, and local gazetteers.¹¹ We know that there are countless perspectives from which to examine the development of sacred sites in China, and the interdisciplinary nature of these sources. This body of work affirms that people who visited or aspired to make pilgrimage to these places had a vast repertoire of arguments at their disposal to explain why these sites were remarkable and worthy of attention.

Thanks to their preeminent status in Chinese Buddhist life, the *sida mingshan* dominate the literature of religious mountains in China. Mounts Wutai, Putuo, Emei, and Jiuhua in contemporary Shanxi, Zhejiang, Sichuan, and Anhui provinces respectively, are all celebrated as the earthly home of Buddhist bodhisattvas, saviour deities that can intervene in the lives of their followers especially when making pilgrimage to their home mountains. These figures' residence in China all trace their origins to Indian texts—primarily in early translated sutras that identify mythical homes of bodhisattvas, later connected to sites within China's borders. Specifically, scholarship examines how the *Flower Garland Sutra* (*Huayan jing* 華嚴經 T. nos 278, 279, 293) served as the basis upon which the *sida mingshan* became closely connected with specific, this-worldly sites within Chinese borders.¹²

¹¹ Mary-Anne Cartelli, *The Five-Colored Clouds of Mount Wutai: Poems from Dunhuang* (Leiden: Brill, 2013). Wei-cheng Lin, *Building a Sacred Mountain: The Buddhist Architecture of China's Mount Wutai* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012). Wen-shing Chou, "Maps of Wutaishan," *The Journal of the Association for Tibetan Studies*, no. 6 (December 2011): 272–88. Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*; *idem*. "Bibliographical Notes on Buddhist Temple Gazetteers, Their Prefaces and Their Relationship to the Buddhist Canon," *Zhonghua Foxue xuebao* 中華佛學學報 25 (2012), 51–86.

¹² For some of the earliest works on this textual connection, see Etienne Lamotte, "Mañjuśrī," *T'oung Pao* 48 (1960): 32–9, 78–91; Raoul Birnbaum, *Studies on the Mysteries of Mañjuśrī* (Boulder: Society for the Study of Chinese Religions. Monograph no. 2, 1983), 8–11.

Scholars often understand the development of important religious mountains in China through the lens of these four mountains, looking to a shared trajectory of development. In his monograph on Emeishan, James M. Hargett draws on Chün-fang Yü's work and lists the steps in the development of a sacred Buddhist mountain in China. He outlines eight elements in this process: (1) the mountain has an extraordinary quality, (2) it attracts attention from Daoists, (3) Daoist space becomes Buddhist space, (4) a creation story emerges to explain its origins, (5) scripture establishes the mountain as a home of a bodhisattva, (6) the site receives imperial patronage, and (7) stories spread about sightings of the bodhisattva, which (8) continues through the seventeenth century.¹³ Hargett has argued that Wutaishan, as the earliest case of a significant Chinese Buddhist mountain, was a model for the development of Emeishan, Putuoshan, and Jiuhuashan in their own rights, with the presence of a bodhisattva as the inspiration for later popularization and patronage.

Works by Susan Andrews, Chün-fang Yü, and Wei-cheng Lin show that stories of purported encounters with bodhisattvas were a driving force behind creating mountains like Wutaishan and Emeishan as a sacred site, looking to how these records transformed the mountain into a monastic hub. Yü's seminal work on Putuoshan demonstrated how accounts of Guanyin miracles created the island-complex as the earthly home to the bodhisattva, showing the essential role of these accounts in promoting and maintaining the popularity of Buddhist pilgrimage sites. Examining noteworthy Wutaishan miracle tales, Andrews highlights how they were re-imagined for different audiences, taking multiple versions of the same account and examining how these portrayals benefitted diverse parties invested in Wutaishan's status as a

¹³ Hargett, *Stairway to Heaven*, 160–61.

significant pilgrimage site.¹⁴ Both scholars' work highlights how miracle tales were at the forefront of arguments for sacred space as flexible narratives that could be adapted to reach a broad, often international audience. Miracle tales participate in the process of constructing new monasteries: at Wutaishan, encounters with bodhisattva Wenshu 文殊 (Skt. Mañjuśrī) sometimes served as the literal blueprint for new temples, basing the construction on accounts of miraculous conjured temples (*hua si* 化寺).¹⁵ Accounts of Wenshu's miracles created both a textual basis for Wutaishan's importance as well as the inspiration and financial support for physical constructions, showing the power of the miracle tale genre to impact their settings.

This work also demonstrates how miraculous encounters with bodhisattvas helped to negotiate China's relationship with the broader Buddhist world: the *sida mingshan* have all been hosts to significant international visitors, ranging from Japanese Tendai monk Ennin's 圓仁 (794–864) visit to Wutaishan, resulting in a rush of new practices after his return,¹⁶ to Jiuhuashan's 九華山 connection to Korean Silla prince and bodhisattva Dizang 地藏 (Skt. Kṣitigarbha) incarnate Jin Qiaojue 金喬覺 (696–794), to the heavy presence of Tibetan and Mongolian pilgrims and iconography at modern Wutaishan.¹⁷ These sites became even more

¹⁴ See Susan Andrews, "Representing Mount Wutai's Past: A Study of Chinese and Japanese Miracle Tales," PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2013.

¹⁵ For detailed discussions of these *huasi* accounts, see Raoul Birnbaum, "The Manifestations of a Monastery: Shen-ying's Experiences on Mount Wu-t'ai in T'ang Context," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106, no. 1 (1986): 110-37; Daniel Stevenson, "Visions of Mañjuśrī on Mount Wutai." In *Religions of China in Practice*, edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr., 203-22 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); and Susan Andrews, "Tales of Conjured Temples in Qing period Gazetteers," *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 6 (2011): 134–62.

¹⁶ Edwin Reischauer, trans., *Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (New York: Ronald Press, 1995), 228; Daniel Stevenson, "Visions of Mañjuśrī on Mount Wutai," *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. David Lopez, 204 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996)

¹⁷ See, for example: Isabelle Charleux, *Nomads on Pilgrimage: Mongols on Wutaishan (China), 1800–1940* (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Ester Bianchi, "Lama Nenghai's imprint on Mount Wutai: Sino-Tibetan Buddhism among the Five Plateaus since the 1930s," in *The Transnational Cult of Mount Wutai*:

significant as they cultivated international support, framing China as the center of the Buddhist world.

As the case of Jizushan makes plain, these four mountains are far from the only territories of religious importance in China. As work on Zhongnanshan 終南山, Lushan 廬山, and Songshan 嵩山 demonstrates, Buddhists constructed a range of places as important. This happened in multiple ways: through the association with eminent Buddhist figures; compiling Buddhist records; negotiations with local deities and Daoist landmarks; and through the distribution and maintenance of significant relics or deceased bodies.

James Benn's exploration of Daoist and Buddhist interests converging at seventh-century Zhongnanshan finds that Buddhist communities overlaid the pre-existing Daoist significance of the site with additional Buddhist claims. According to Benn, Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), compiler of the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 [*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, T. no. 2060] shows a significant “geographical bias” towards accounts of monks who lived on Zhongnanshan.¹⁸ In bringing together a disproportionate number of Zhongnanshan-related monastics, the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* depicts Zhongnanshan as a distinctly Buddhist site, in direct competition with famous Daoist accounts. Daoxuan's act of textual compilation layered the mountain with enormous Buddhist significance.¹⁹ This is also the case at Lushan, which initially became an important site for its association with Huiyan's career and with the foreign sacred Buddhist objects that were brought to Lushan to sanctify it. Later, these objects became less

Historical and Comparative Perspectives, edited by Susan Andrews, Chen Jinhua, and Kuan Guan, 255–288 (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

¹⁸ James Benn, “One Mountain, Two Traditions: Buddhist and Taoist Claims on Zhongnan Shan in Medieval Times”, in *Images, Relics, and Legends: The Formation and Transformation of Buddhist Sacred Sites*, edited by James Benn, Jinhua Chen, and James Robson (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 2012), 76.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 79.

foreign, and miraculous events associated with these objects placed more emphasis on the physical landscape.²⁰ As we will see with Jizushan, Buddhist communities also layered their interpretation of the mountain's history onto existing local legends of the same sites. The *Jizushanzhi* is part of this Buddhist layer, offering a network of hagiographies and miraculous accounts to explain its connection to revered Buddhist individuals and Buddhist remains.

Bernard Faure found similar layers of significance in his study of Songshan's transformation to a famous Buddhist site. However, in this case, Faure found that there was a struggle to resolve the tension between wanting to build Buddhist significance upon existing Daoist and local religious landmarks, and between denying the original importance of the mountain itself.²¹ James Hargett and other scholars have identified this as an important factor in the successful creation of a Buddhist mountain.²² Faure finds that the initial attempts to overlay Buddhist mythology onto existing sites were relatively unsuccessful compared with the use of relics to create Chan pilgrimage sites at the mountain.²³ Instead, the distribution and promotion of famous monastic relics, as well as sharing records of monastic hagiography marked Songshan as a significant Buddhist centre.

From studies like these, we know that bodhisattvas and their miracle tales are not the only factors that spur the development of religious centers at Chinese mountains. Earlier Daoist or local religious significance, association with the careers and deaths of eminent monastics, and especially the installation of celebrated relics and stūpas all allowed for Zhongnanshan, Lushan, and Songshan (among other significant religious mountains) to become places of distinct

²⁰ Koichi Shinohara, "Literary Construction of Buddhist Sacred Places: *The Record of Mt. Lu* by Chen Shunyu," *Asiatische Studien* 53.4 (1999): 963.

²¹ Bernard Faure, "Relics and Flesh Bodies: The Creation of Ch'an Pilgrimage Sites," in *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, 150.

²² Hargett, *Stairway to Heaven*, 160–61.

²³ Faure, "Relics and Flesh Bodies," 162.

Chinese Buddhist practice and pilgrimage. We will see a similar process taking place in the *Jizu shanzhi*, which cannot claim a resident bodhisattva for the mountain, but offers the body of Mahākāśyapa as an alternative miraculous landmark. Important Buddhist individuals, and especially those with exceptional abilities mark the landscapes in which they practice through the circulation of stories of miraculous events; in the case of the *Jizu shanzhi* we see stone gates and burial caves respond to Mahākāśyapa, an enlightened disciple of Śākyamuni Buddha himself. While the Mahākāśyapa we encounter in Faxian's records as seen in the *Jizu shanzhi* may not impact the landscape and perform miracles with such frequency as bodhisattvas at the *sida mingshan*, he does leave his physical mark on the mountain landscape and offer the potential for more miraculous events.

In many respects, the process at Jizushan accords with how the *sida mingshan* became among the most celebrated Buddhist sacred sites, though it distinguishes itself through the area's distinct history and its connections to early Buddhist India. In the following, I will discuss these significant points of overlap and difference, but I will also suggest how these strategies with which the compilers of the *Jizu shanzhi* used to argue for the site's importance served their specific needs during the Qing. In short, the *Jizu shanzhi* hagiographies mark Jizushan as a place of extraordinary Buddhist deaths. Using the limited Chinese hagiographies from pre-Ming administration, the *Jizu shanzhi* creates an early foundation for a Buddhist mountain with broad appeal, rather than the local pre-Qing forms of Buddhist and indigenous/local practice.

The most significant way that these Jizushan materials overlap with other accounts at sacred mountains is by highlighting miraculous encounters to strengthen the argument that Jizushan is a remarkable site. We find these miraculous encounters both in excerpts related to Faxian and in the hagiography section, which by its biographical nature gives us the accounts of

monastics' remarkable deaths. Though I will highlight some lesser-known cases in my fourth chapter, such as a Nanzhao-era (738–902) monastic with the power to transport people to and from the Pureland, or a devout monastic rewarded for diligent fasting with auspicious clouds appearing upon his death, the death of Mahākāśyapa and the location of his remains at Jizushan serve as the model that other remarkable deaths reference.

How do these kinds of stories relate to place-making at Jizushan? Scholar of early Chinese miracle tales Robert Campany offers us one answer, with a focus on the “sinicization” of Buddhism in the Tang and Song dynasty. Campany argues for miracle tales' essential role of making China a Buddhist place “simply by virtue of constituting a piece of historiography.”²⁴ With these place-based sources we can better understand Buddhism's arrival and continued re-making within China's borders. They show Buddhist practices by Buddhist individuals to be true, effective, and capable of receiving a sympathetic resonance (*ganying* 感應),²⁵ marking the Chinese sites where the response occurs.

If every recording and subsequent re-telling of a miracle tale marks the site where it occurs as a place of Buddhist success, it is no wonder that sites with many documented miracles gain a reputation as a sacred Buddhist site. Studies by Marcus Bingenheimer, Susan Andrews, and Chün-fang Yü show that these accounts and their continued circulation are deeply important—even necessary—to the creation and maintenance of Chinese sacred sites.

²⁴ Robert F. Campany, *Sights from the Unseen Realm: Buddhist Miracle Tales from Early Medieval China*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 37.

²⁵ See the chapter “Chinese Buddhism and the Cosmology of Sympathetic Resonance,” in Robert Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Stone Treatise* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), for a discussion of the term “sympathetic resonance” and its place in Chinese Buddhist accounts of miraculous events.

Though the *Jizu shanzhi* does not align itself explicitly with the miracle tale genre, its monastic biographies often achieve the same ends by demonstrating how the miracles both performed and experienced by Buddhist clergy shaped Jizushan into a landscape marked by monastic achievements. The miraculous events that are recounted throughout the hagiographies in the *Jizu shanzhi* include meeting with a manifestation of Mahākāśyapa, self-immolation that marks that mountain, immovable stone gates that open, revival of the dead, as well as cases of enlightenment at sites scattered around the mountain.

To understand how these accounts fit together, I want to re-introduce the mountain's founding legend, told through the record of Faxian within the *Jizu shanzhi*. We encountered the first segment in the introduction above: Faxian meets a manifestation of Mahākāśyapa while passing near Jizushan. After learning who the strange man really was, Faxian follows him to a stone gate on Jizushan, but Faxian cannot pass through the gate and follow him. This gate appears to have real significance to the site: it is not only enormous, but apparently impassable: only selective visitors can pass through. Here, we can assume that only Mahākāśyapa was able to pass through, due to his remarkable nature. We will encounter this thousand-fathom tall gate again in other *Jizu shanzhi* hagiographies.

The account continues, now drawing directly from monk Faxian's pilgrimage record:

Departing the *pattra* trees and proceeding south for three *li*, I came to a mountain, named Jizu. Kāśyapa was now in this mountain. I tore my way through the mountain and moved downward, and the opening was not big enough to fit one person. It was a long distance going down, until there was another opening, where Kāśyapa lived with his body kept

intact. Outside the cave is “Kāśyapa ’s washing hands soil”, and when people have headaches they will apply the soil to their heads, and become healed.

Many arhats still live in this mountain. People of the Way from countries in all directions, year after year come here to make offerings [to the arhats]. For those whose hearts are sincere, arhats will [join them and] exchange teachings together at night. Having dismissed their doubts, the arhats will suddenly disappear. The hazel trees on this mountain are lush, teeming with lions, tigers, and wolves, so one should never head for it carelessly.²⁶

Faxian has arrived at Jizushan. Climbing through the mountains and caverns, he comes to a cave with Kāśyapa’s whole-body relic, our first claim that the mountain is home to Kāśyapa’s body. This also attests to the cave being a stop for visitors to the site, the outside of which has healing soil. This suggests a connection between the presence of Kāśyapa’s body and the occurrence of extraordinary events. Here, the account also teaches us that Buddhists from foreign countries will come to Jizushan, and the worthy ones will make contact with arhats.

The text continues:

During the Three Dynasties era, the region of Dianzhong originally belonged to the Western Regions, a principality created by King Aśoka. According to Buddhist scriptures and unofficial history, Diancang refers to nowhere but Kukkuṭapāda. It is undoubtable that Jizu mountain is where Mahākāśyapa entered into concentration. Because Jizu mountain

²⁶ *Jizu shanzhi*, page 82. The original text quoted in this section is from Faxian’s *Faxian zhuan*, discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

began communicating with the central plains only after the Han (202 BCE–220 CE), and because Chinese people saw Buddhist texts to be largely filled with nonsense, they reached the conclusion that the Buddha is not part of this real world. Because of this, when people saw for themselves the stone gate of Huashou on the summit of Jizu mountain, they doubted that the honorable one was present in this place. They did not know that Jizu mountain was formerly part of Indian territory during the Zhou. In the area hundreds of *li* around the mountain, there are many marked traces of miracles by bodhisattvas, therefore we know this is a Buddhist sacred site. Discussions for determining [these traces] can be seen in the landscape section of this gazetteer, and readers should examine them carefully.²⁷

This section asserts that Dianzhong 滇中, the area of mountains including and surrounding Jizushan, are the same as Kukkuṭapāda. This is already a significant claim, which appears to defy geographical conventions (Jizushan is over 1500km from the traditional Indian site) as well as re-orientes the sacred landscape of early Buddhism, rich with landmarks of Śākyamuni Buddha's life. The text justifies this connection to India and asserts Jizushan's significance by arguing that Jizushan was in territory ruled by legendary Buddhist King Aśoka, known for his expansive Buddhist kingdom and his distribution of relics across the Buddhist world. This formerly Indian mountain, according to this section, is the site where Mahākāśyapa entered into enlightenment and awaits the future Buddha. The text attributes this to geographic confusion: the area around the mountain was isolated from the Central Plains until the Zhou dynasty (1046–256 BCE), so those who doubted Jizushan to be the location of Mahākāśyapa's body were simply

²⁷ Original text from *Jizu shanzhi*, page 82–83.

misinformed. It points readers to the landscape section of the gazetteer for a full discussion of traces of miracles at Jizushan.

While I will explore the details of this section and others in later chapters, here I want to highlight how this excerpt resonates with other strategies used to create mountains as important religious sites in two prominent ways. Above, I discussed how the cases of Lushan and Songshan demonstrate that creating textual records that overlay onto pre-existing legends was a prominent strategy to write Chinese Buddhist significance onto a mountain. In the case of Songshan, as Bernard Faure argues, this strategy was supplemented by emphasizing the presence of powerful relics—a strategy shared with the *Jizu shanzhi* hagiographies. The *Jizu shanzhi* does not present the pre-Qing mountain as a place of Yunnanese religion, populated by practitioners of local non-Buddhist and Dali Buddhist traditions. Rather, the *Jizu shanzhi* emphasizes Buddhist accounts above all others: of the 107 total biographies, 54 are labeled as Chan monastics.

The materials from the *Jizu shanzhi* also overlap with other accounts at sacred mountains in the way that the mountain is a “copy” of another religious site. The *Jizu shanzhi* claims that the Yunnan-province mountain is the same mountain as Kukkuṭapāda, a location of Śākyamuni Buddha’s retreat and the setting of many of his teachings, traditionally believed to be located in Bihar India. Replication is a familiar strategy to scholars of sacred sites, and we find sites created and recreated throughout the Buddhist world as attempts to establish their own religious centres while strengthening the importance of the original site. Often, as in the cases of Wutaishan, Emeishan, and Putuoshan, this original site is scriptural: the *Huayan jing* describes the locations of bodhisattva’s earthly homes, which later interpreters identified as Chinese mountains. Replication of sacred sites not only occurs on a grand scale, encompassing the entire mountain

and its temples (such as in Andrews' work on the Japanese Wutaishan)²⁸—it also happens on the level of specific monasteries or iconography. Wen-shing Chou has examined how Manchu rulers copied famous Wutaishan iconography and temples to bolster their relationship with their Buddhist population, using a variety of Buddhist iconography to present their emperors as significant players in the Buddhist cosmology (such as a *cakravartin*, *zhuanlun wang* 轉輪王, [dharma] wheel turning king).²⁹ Marcus Bingenheimer has examined the phenomenon of copy and replicating sites at Putuoshan as depicted in the mountain's Qing-era gazetteers. Bingenheimer, speaking to the naming of sites in Putuoshan gazetteers, says that after a site becomes initially replicated, it allows for further copies, as well as deeper, more complex relationships to the site.³⁰ This supports Andrews' argument that replicas of Wutaishan allow new audiences to form relationships with the site and access a Buddhist center.³¹ The growing replication was a common occurrence, both in the form of “replicas” of mythical sites in Indian *sūtras*, as well as its use as a tool to bring the miraculous power of these sites to a wider, more geographically dispersed Buddhist audience.

We know from Chou's scholarship on Qing Wutaishan that Qing leaders, in particular emperors Kangxi (r. 1661–1722) and Qianlong (r. 1735–1796), were highly interested in the replication of sacred sites, integrating images and architecture from celebrated Wutaishan temples, commissioning replica paintings, and making use of a wide variety of Buddhist

²⁸ Susan Andrews, “Transnational Mountain Cult, Local Religiopolitical and Economic Concerns: Mount Wutai and the Kamakura period miracle tales of Tōnomine,” in *The Transnational Cult of Mount Wutai: Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Susan Andrews, Chen Jinhua, and Kuan Guang (Leiden: Brill, 202).

²⁹ Wen-shing Chou, *Mount Wutai: Visions of a Sacred Buddhist Mountain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), see especially Chapter 3 for discussions of the relationship between Wenshu iconography, landscape, and the Qing emperors at Wutaishan.

³⁰ Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*, 26.

³¹ Andrews, “Representing Mount Wutai's Past,” 5.

iconography and practices.³² At the time of the *Jizu shanzhi*'s compilation, we know that Qing officials were interested in replicating Buddhist elements across China and Inner Asia. Though the highest authorities were not likely involved directly in the production of the *Jizu shanzhi*, both local and Qing officials were operating within an empire that emphasized the widespread nature of Buddhism, where replication was a common strategy for demonstrating the importance of a given Buddhist element. Therefore, this replicated Jizushan-as-Kukkuṭapāda would not be a surprising element within the argument for Jizushan's importance: readers would have encountered similar arguments in earlier histories of sacred sites, as well as within the multi-cultural Qing context.

Despite the many ways that the *Jizu shanzhi* is a typical record of a Buddhist site, according with many of the conventions in the making of sacred sites in China, it also differs in significant ways that relate specifically to Jizushan's status as a mountain within Yunnan province on the edges of the Qing empire. Whereas most of the Chinese Buddhist sites we have encountered were "created" as important long before the seventeenth century, the *Jizu shanzhi* is one of only two extant gazetteers that focus on the mountain: both these collections have to do the work of "creating" a sacred Chinese Buddhist site much later than its counterparts in other areas. Scholarly discussions of the early history of Buddhist mountains are interested in how these mountains allowed for uniquely Chinese sites at a time when Indian Buddhism—its texts and objects especially—were authoritative and aspirational. However, by the time the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* was compiled and circulated, these issues were not at the forefront of Chinese Buddhist thought. Rather, we encounter Jizushan at a time when its governing bodies, and specifically the ruling Kangxi emperor, were concerned with how to oversee and administrate the growing

³² For a discussion of these replicas, see Wen-shing Chou, *Mount Wutai: Visions of a Sacred Buddhist Mountain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 17–49.

border areas like Yunnan, a project which had begun many years earlier and resulted in a restructuring of local economy under Ming administration.³³ The Kangxi emperor and his successors were keenly aware of how to use Buddhist iconography, practices, and texts to reach new audiences, and drew from a diverse pool of Inner-Asian, Tibetan, and Chan and Pureland Buddhism to cultivate a different kind of Buddhist national identity.³⁴

There are not yet studies on the broader context of this edition of the *Jizu shanzhi*—though we know earlier versions of a Jizu mountain gazetteer existed, I am uncertain of the exact motivations for publishing the 1692 version. The compiler to whom this project is attributed, Qian Bangzuan 錢邦纂, does not appear in any other record. This is an error in the published gazetteer itself, and the compiler of this edition is in fact Qian Bangfen 錢邦芑 (1602–1673), also known by his dharma name Da Cuo 大錯. After some time as an inspector in Sichuan and Guizhou provinces, and legal entanglements with Qing forces in eastern Guizhou, Qian became a monk in 1654 at Jizushan. Following his discovery and arrest at Jizushan, Sichuan deputy Cao Yangsheng 曹延生 requested that Qian revise and compile a gazetteer for Jizushan.³⁵ According to Qian's preface in the *Jizu shanzhi*, Cao ordered the compilation of the new addition due to a lack of information for visitors to the mountain, comparing the mountain's status to the *sida mingshan* and highlighting the mountain's status as the home to Mahākāśyapa as reasons for increasing the

³³ Christian Daniels and Jianxiong Ma, "Introduction," in *The Transformation of Yunnan in Ming China: From The Dali Kingdom to Imperial Province*, edited by Christian Daniels and Jianxiong Ma (London: Routledge, 2019), 3–4.

³⁴ Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 10.

³⁵ Arthur W. Hummel Sr., ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Qing Period: 1644-1911/2* (Great Barrington: Berkshire Publishing Group, 2018), 717; Timothy Brook, *Praying for Power: Buddhism and the Formation of Gentry Society in Late-Ming China* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 94.

knowledge of Jizushan through a new gazetteer edition.³⁶ After attempts to reject the assignment, Qian complied, and built upon the previous edition compiled by famed traveller Xu Xiake (徐霞客 1587–1641), of which only the introduction is extant.³⁷ Qian's other works mainly consist of his personal writing and poetry, and he did not publish further records on the history of Jizushan.³⁸ From the broad strokes of Qian Bangfen's monastic career, we know that he was not entirely aligned with Qing officials in Western China and was a somewhat unwilling compiler of the 1692 gazetteer. The gazetteer, however, was commissioned by a Qing official, like so many gazetteers of Buddhist mountains during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Because the edition by Xu Xiake is lost to us, I can only speculate on what aspects Qian Bangfen decided to remove, elaborate upon, or what new material he added based on his own experiences living on Jizushan and exploring the mountain range. It is possible that Qian would have placed more emphasis on Jizushan's Buddhist characteristics and the growth of Ming and Qing sponsored monasteries on the mountain. However, we know that Xu Xiake was familiar with Jizushan as a destination for Buddhist pilgrims, as he travelled through Yunnan with monk Jingwen 靜聞 (d. 1637), who was making a pilgrimage to Jizushan with a copy of the *Fahua jing* that Jingwen wrote in his own blood, a significant undertaking of Buddhist devotion. After Jingwen's death, Xu transported the monk's remains to Jizushan and buried him within the

³⁶ *Jizu shanzhi*, 40.

³⁷ The extant introduction is found in Shaotang Chu and Yingshou Wu, eds., *Xu Xiake Youji* (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji, 1980), 1139–48.

³⁸ Qian's written works include: *Ta shan shi xuan* 他山詩選, *Shinian tang shixuan* 十年堂詩選, *Hou Xiaoxiang fu* 後瀟湘賦, *Dazhao shi* 大招詩, *Youyue cao* 遊嶽草. He was the compiler of *Yongzhou fu zhi* 永州府志, *Baoqing fuzhi* 寶慶府志, *Wuxi zhi* 浯溪志, *Jiuyi shanzhi* 九疑山志, and *Jishan zhi* 雞山志.

mountain.³⁹ During the second of his two visits to Jizushan, Xu compiled his edition of the *Jizu shanzhi*.

This is not to say that Xu Xiake was an expert in Buddhist miracle tales of the area, or that Qian Bangfen must have added a great amount of this material to compensate for a non-monastic's accounts of the mountain. Rather, because we are unable to compare these two editions, and because both compilers had meaningful engagements with Buddhism at Jizushan, the entirety of Qian's contributions to the 1692 edition are unclear.

Between Qian's death in 1673 and the *Jizu shanzhi*'s publication in 1692, Fan Chengxun 範承勳 (1641–1714) edited Qian's compilation. Unlike Qian, Fan was directly allied with Qing forces in the Jizushan regions, and became the governor of the Yunnan-Guizhou area in 1686.⁴⁰ Fan's only attributed contribution to the edition is a description of the landscape and temples he encountered during his first visit to Jizushan, noting newly constructed monasteries, interesting water features, a challenging hike, and the tea he shared with monks. He tells us very little about himself or his project to edit Qian's compilation.⁴¹ From this rough sketch of Fan's participation in the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* project, we know that he was a Qing official in the regions, and that his contribution to this gazetteer was very likely aligned with the broader Qing project of gazetteer commissions and support of Buddhist expansion on the mountain.

Overall, we know that this project built upon earlier editions of Jizushan gazetteers that were extant at the time, and that the production of a new edition was commissioned by a Qing official, with the somewhat-reluctant cooperation of an official-turned-monk, Qian Bangfen, to

³⁹ Julian Ward, *Xu Xiake (1586-1641: The Art of Travel Writing* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001) 43, 79–82.

⁴⁰ “Fan Chengxun 範承勳.” Buddhist Studies Person Authority Databases
<https://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A010540>

⁴¹ *Jizu shanzhi*, 595–601.

compile this new 1692 edition. A comparison between these two editions in the style of Bingenheimer's project on the Putuoshan gazetteers would be an exciting project, and if Xu Xiake's version were still extant, we would be able to speculate further about the respective contributions by our compiler and editors.

At the time of the *Jizu shanzhi*'s compilation, Qing emperors were not interested in claiming the mountain to be uniquely Chinese in the same ways we find at the *sida mingshan*. Chou's work cited above points to the fluidity of ethnic categories and a turn towards a Qing imperial "pan Mahayana" presentation of Manchu Buddhism.⁴² We know that Manchu rulers did not have the same relationship to Chineseness and ethnicity as other imperial patrons in earlier dynasties: they were less concerned with Chinese claims to Buddhist territory, devoting more attention to cross-cultural rulership, and adapting to the local political contexts. Grey Tuttle has shown this dynamic present at Wutaishan through Qing editions of Wutaishan gazetteers, finding that Qing-commissioned Chinese language gazetteers emphasized Tibetan Buddhist elements in order to demonstrate imperial support for Tibetan Buddhists, a significant portion of their citizens, and to connect the emperors themselves to Tibetan Buddhist sources of legitimacy.⁴³ The creation of sacred sites in this situation was less about creating China as the centre of the Buddhist world, as scholars have suggested about the creation and maintenance of Wutaishan and Putuoshan. Rather, in a much later dynasty, the compilers of the *Jizu shanzhi* wanted to strengthen the mountain's claim to Buddhism, which served as a tool of inter-ethnic diplomacy for a governing body that was also foreign to the Central Plains. The additional claim that the site had been a part of India furthers, not detracts, from this inter-ethnic diplomacy, emphasizing the

⁴² Wen-shing Chou, "Imperial Apparitions: Manchu Buddhism and the Cult of Mañjuśrī." *Archives of Asian Art* 65, no. 1 (2016): 139-179

⁴³ Gray Tuttle, "Tibetan Buddhism at Wutai Shan in the Qing." *JIATS*, no. 6 (December 2011): 163-214.

broad range of the Qing empire while simultaneously drawing a direct connection to the Buddhist homelands in India.

The Qing administration was not only knowledgeable about Buddhism and keen to employ it as a diplomatic strategy, but it also commissioned religious gazetteers in record numbers.⁴⁴ The *Jizu shanzhi* is a result of this boom in gazetteer production. At the time of compiling the *Jizu shanzhi*, the areas surrounding Dali were very ethnically and linguistically diverse; many layers of meaning were already ascribed to these sites, including an array of local beliefs and religious customs. These pre-existing customs and relationships with the land do not explicitly factor into the *Jizu shanzhi*'s framing of the mountain's history. This is likely a result of the gazetteer's origins: a Qing-associated commission in Chinese (as opposed to other languages and writing systems in the Dali area), composed by a Chinese monk, would likely be limited to Chinese-language sources and would have little need to venture further afield to find non-Buddhist or overlapping accounts of the mountain's history. The *Jizu shanzhi* is, after all, a text born from Qing administration, and these gazetteers served as collated sources of knowledge for administrative, and not just historical or hagiographical purposes. It is not surprising, therefore, that we do not find clear accounts of Jizushan's history divorced from a Qing imperial lens, or that we find little evidence of what stories were combined or overwritten with the legend of Mahākāśyapa travelling to die at the mountain. Ruizhi Lian, scholar of ethnic history in Yunnan province, suggests that there were multiple accounts of the pre-Kāśyapa deities on Jizushan, teaching us that Jizushan was already an important religious site in the area, and was also the site of negotiation between established practices and the construction of new Buddhist monasteries. Rather than removing shrines to local deities and the legends associated with them,

⁴⁴ Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*, 10.

Qing builders used the pre-Buddhist local importance to support the construction and allowed the legend of Kāśyapa to gain prominence.⁴⁵ In examining how prominent Qing officials supported the construction of new temples, Lian suggests that Qing monastery building benefitted by adapting pre-existing legends and deities of Jizushan to the story that we find in the *Jizu shanzhi*: Śākyamuni Buddha's disciple Kāśyapa lays within Jizushan. The main work of transplanting legends of Kāśyapa, Lian argues, was done by gazetteer compilers, who strategically employed their knowledge of Buddhist history and texts to assert Jizushan's importance to the Buddhist landscape.⁴⁶

Lian's work addresses the physical construction of monasteries on Jizushan during the early Qing period, arguing that gazetteer compilation was a key feature of successfully transplanting the Kāśyapa legend to Jizushan. I want to take this exploration further: why was the *Jizu shanzhi* a successful argument for Jizushan's importance in the Chinese religious landscape? Because scholars of other Chinese religious mountains have pointed to hagiography as a key component of making mountains Buddhists, I examine the hagiographies of the *Jizu shanzhi* to find which elements the compilers emphasized, and therefore, the choices behind the representation of Jizushan as a Buddhist site in the *Jizu shanzhi*.

In many ways, the hagiographies included in the *Jizu shanzhi* make an argument for the mountain's importance that resembles what scholars have seen at other, smaller mountain pilgrimage sites such as Songshan and Lushan. The emphasis on monastics and connections to early Indian Buddhist figures appear to overlay existing sites and stories with a predominately

⁴⁵ Lian Ruizhi, 連瑞枝 “大理山鄉與土官政治——雞足山佛教聖山的形成” [The Politics of Native Officials in the Mountains: Shaping a Buddhist Sacred Site in Southwest China], *漢學研究* 33.3 (2015), 157.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 161

Buddhist flavour in an area that, before Ming dynasty administration in the area, was not a majority Chinese Buddhist region. These hagiographies also attempt to create Jizushan as identical to Kukkuṭapāda, the original site famed for being Śākyamuni Buddha's retreat, as well as the resting place of his disciple Mahākāśyapa. We encounter this kind of replicated claim at other, earlier sites such as Wutaishan or Putuoshan, where its proponents tie a uniquely Chinese location to one mentioned in Indian scripture. Jizushan differs from its counterparts here; as a relatively peripheral site within Qing administration, we encounter the *Jizu shanzhi* and its hagiographies at a time when elite Buddhists were less concerned with staking a Chinese claim to sacred space through a connection to India, and more concerned with using Buddhism as a diplomatic tool. I will explore the ways that the *Jizu shanzhi* makes Jizushan a Buddhist mountain through its emphasis on its claim to be Kukkuṭapāda, and as a result, the home of exceptional relics through the presence of Mahākāśyapa's body.

Chapter Two: Faxian makes Jizushan

As a much-celebrated pilgrim, Faxian's presence in the *Jizu shanzhi* offers the account of Mahākāśyapa's body at the mountain a layer of authority and legitimacy; both as a famous monk with a wide sphere of influence but also as a reliable narrator of Mahākāśyapa's remarkable abilities and the presence of his powerful remains. Faxian's visit to "Jizushan" (via its connection to Kukkuṭapāda, explored below) suggests that it was one of the fifth-century Buddhist world's more exceptional sites. Faxian's connection to India, its texts, and its holy sites provides the framework through which Jizushan becomes not just a significant Buddhist site in its own right, but is the original Kukkuṭapāda celebrated in early Buddhist accounts of Mahākāśyapa's death.

The *Jizu shanzhi* includes a direct quote from the records of Faxian to suggest that Faxian visited Jizushan during his pilgrimage from China to India, and in turn strengthens Jizushan's connection to Buddhism's early Indian history. This claim is the first layer of a tri-fold argument in the *Jizu shanzhi* in which Jizushan is at once both an Indian and a Chinese sacred mountain. To locate Faxian at Jizushan, The *Jizu shanzhi* shares two excerpts that tie Faxian to Mahākāśyapa and Kukkuṭapāda. The first section (beginning with "the monk Faxian from Pingyang went to India looking for scriptures" 平陽僧法顯入西竺求) is from Faxian's biography in the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (T no. 2059), and describes his encounter with the manifested Mahākāśyapa. The second account, (beginning with "Departing the *pattra* trees and proceeding south for three *li*" as already quoted above) was recorded originally in the *Faxian zhuan*, and describes his stop at Kukkuṭapāda, where he visits Mahākāśyapa's remains as recorded in the *Faxian zhuan*. After this section, the gazetteer includes an additional paragraph that explains how Faxian was actually at Jizushan. This section is not part of Faxian's records, and has no

clear author. It could have been based on any number of authors: either Xu Xiake's earlier (no longer extant) edition of the *Jizu shanzhi*, or added by the 1692-edition compiler Qian Bangfen, or included by Fan Chengxun who later revised the compilation.

While there is little evidence that Faxian travelled to Yunnan's Jizushan, we do know that Mahākāśyapa was not associated with Jizushan during Faxian's lifetime. I am less interested in the factual accuracy of this claim and only highlight this discrepancy to demonstrate that the *Jizu shanzhi* intentionally supplements Faxian's account with a geographic explanation that located Jizushan within legendary King Aśoka's Buddhist territory. Aware of this geographical discrepancy, a paragraph follows Faxian's record that contextualizes Faxian's account and locates him at Jizushan and attributes any doubt of this connection to simple geographic misunderstanding. By creating a connection between a celebrated Indian pilgrim and a peripheral religious mountain, the *Jizu shanzhi* uses Faxian's fame to promote Jizushan's significance. Though academic treatments of Faxian typically turn to his textual influence, accounts like those included in the *Jizu shanzhi* demonstrate that early pilgrim-monks still maintained an influence on sacred space, even over a millennium later at seventeenth-century Jizushan. This inclusion of Faxian's text specific to Mahākāśyapa and Kukkuṭapāda connects Jizushan to this renowned Buddhist pilgrim, who in turn lends his authority to the creation of Jizushan as a sacred site.

Taken at face value, Faxian's record places him at the Chinese Jizushan within his lifetime. Given Faxian's broader influence as an early Buddhist pilgrim to the Western Regions, his purported visit to Jizushan suggests that this mountain, like other sites the pilgrim monk patronized, had close connections to Buddhism's origins. In particular, Faxian's record serves as fifth-century evidence that the site is Kukkuṭapāda and the resting place of Mahākāśyapa. Other records of Jizushan from the late Ming and Qing demonstrate that Faxian's connection to

Jizushan was not a fifth-century invention, so I suggest here that Faxian provides a compelling backdrop to the mountain's history, in which it becomes a site closely connected with Indian Buddhism and the earliest efforts to bridge the divide between Indian Buddhism and China. In the Qing context of the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi*, from which these excerpts are taken, Jizushan becomes not just significant for Yunnanese Buddhist history, but a site where significant pilgrims record exceptional events and where visitors can encounter pieces of early Buddhist history. By locating Faxian at Jizushan in the fifth century, and through relying on Faxian's authority as a seminal Buddhist pilgrim, the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* gives Jizushan a 1300-year history as a Buddhist pilgrimage site with the textual records.

Faxian's Legacy

Academic work typically portrays Faxian as the first Buddhist pilgrim to travel from the Central Plains (*zhongyuan* 中原) to the Western Regions (*xiyu* 西域), or contemporary China to India. Having identified a lack of texts related to *vinaya*, the regulations governing Buddhist monastic life, Faxian's original intent for his pilgrimage was to return from India with more of these resources and to enrich Chinese monastic understanding of Indian monastic conventions.⁴⁷ We know little about his background, and biographical studies of his life became increasingly detailed over time, sketching in missing details, and elaborating on the monk's talents.⁴⁸ This earliest record of a Buddhist pilgrimage appears to have multiple authors, and has been subject to

⁴⁷ Yuan-jiu Liu, "Stories Written and Rewritten: The Story of Faxian's Search for The Dharma in its Historical, Anecdotal, and Biographical Contexts," *Early Medieval China*: 22 (2016), 5.

⁴⁸ For an analysis of Faxian's records in translation, see Max Deeg, "The Neglected Pilgrim: How Faxian's Record Was Used (and Was not Used) in Buddhist Studies", *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2.1 (2019): 16–44. For a detailed study of Faxian's various biographies and their evolution, see Yuan-jiu Liu, "Stories Written and Rewritten: The Story of Faxian's Search for The Dharma in its Historical, Anecdotal, and Biographical Contexts," *Early Medieval China*: 22 (2016): 1–25.

centuries of editing and annotations. Beginning a journey through Central Asia and India during the late fourth and early fifth centuries, we do know that Faxian travelled westward in search of Buddhist texts to bring back to China. This search was successful, and Faxian returned east and distributed found texts and translations through his monastic networks. The more famous and impactful among these are the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* 涅槃經 (*Niepan jing* [Nirvana Sutra], T 376; trans. 416–418, with Buddhahadra 佛陀跋陀羅) and forty fascicles of Vinaya material.⁴⁹

We have a handful of texts that document Faxian's fifth-century pilgrimage, his observations about Buddhist life at the time, and records of Indian texts that Faxian brought with him to China: the *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 (*Biography of Eminent Monk Faxian*, T. 2085), which we find excerpted in the *Jizu shanzhi*, also known by other names, including *Foguo ji* 佛國記 (*A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*) and *Faxian dazhuan* 法顯大傳 (*Great Biography of Faxian*); the *Chusanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 (T. 2145; *Compilation of Notes on the Translation of the Tripitaka*) by Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518);¹¹ the *Mingseng zhuanchao* 名僧傳抄 (X. 1523; *Extracts from Biographies of Famous Monks*) by Baochang 寶唱 (ca. 466–ca. 534); and the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (T. 2059; *Biographies of Eminent Monks*) by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554).⁵⁰ Of these Faxian-related texts, the *Jizu shanzhi* includes excerpts from the *Gaoseng zhuan* (specifically, T no. 2059: 0337b19–0346a24) and from Faxian's *Faxian zhuan*.

A large body of work on Faxian and his legacy focuses on the texts that Faxian returned to China, translated, or collaborated with other monks to produce, seeking either to attribute them to Faxian as a translator or to examine his network of fifth-century monastics and elites.

⁴⁹ “Faxian 法顯”, *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*, ed. Charles Muller. Accessed September 9, 2021.

⁵⁰ List provided in Yuan-jiu Liu, “Stories Written and Rewritten: The Story of Faxian's Search for The Dharma in its Historical, Anecdotal, and Biographical Contexts,” *Early Medieval China*: 22 (2016), 4.

Huijiao's biography of Faxian, written less than 200 years after Faxian's life, overestimates the number of texts that the pilgrim-monk translated, already emphasizing Faxian's textual influence within his pilgrimage account.⁵¹ This kind of scholarship has increased in recent years, with a growing body of research exploring Faxian's links to early Buddhist canons, his influence on *vinaya* translations, and the social and political networks surrounding Faxian and his translation projects.⁵²

Faxian and Place

Faxian is rarely the focus of studies that probe the history of pilgrimage and place. This role has been largely filled—both in popular culture and in the English-language academic scholarship—by Xuanzang 玄奘 (fl. 602 – 664), whose enduring fame extends far beyond Buddhist circles and into the broader mythology of travel and place. In addition to a lack of biographic focus in studies of Faxian, we do not see the same kind of mythologization of Faxian as a prototypical monastic pilgrim as we do for other famed Buddhist pilgrims. In contrast to Xuanzang, whose legacy has received countless reinterpretations in both popular culture and academic spheres, Faxian's life and career is not often explored and mythologized. In part thanks to this relative obscurity, Faxian's place-based records, such as his meeting with both Mahākāśyapa's

⁵¹ Yuan-ju Liu, "Stories Written and Rewritten: The Story of Faxian's Search for The Dharma in its Historical, Anecdotal, and Biographical Contexts," *Early Medieval China*: 22 (2016), 1-25.

⁵² For a detailed study of Faxian's impact on Japanese manuscript translations, see George Keyworth, "The Other Great Chinese *Trepiṭaka* in Japan: Faxian as Translator and Pilgrim in Medieval Japanese Manuscript Canons." *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2, no. 1 (2019): 95–132. For an inquiry into Faxian's account and the translation of specific terms see T. H. Barrett, "Faxian and the Meaning of Bianwen

變文: The Value of His Biography to the Study of China", *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2, no. 1 (2019): 1–15.

emanation and bodily remains in the *Jizu shanzhi*, can be transported into a different context with relative ease.

Scholarly interest mainly turns to Faxian for the texts he circulated, or the impact that these texts have in studies of translation or canonical studies. For the purposes of this project, I instead want to consider Faxian's impact through the lens of a proto-typical Buddhist pilgrim, and as the earliest recorded Buddhist pilgrim to India. I also want to approach his legacy from the standpoint of place-based studies because his visit to Kukkuṭapāda/Jizushan plays a significant role in the creation of Jizushan as a mountain with broad Buddhist appeal. In other words, I am less interested in this monastic's life and works, and more in the impression his legacy would have left for a seventeenth-century reader of a Buddhist gazetteer. Keen readers of the *Jizu shanzhi* would recognize not only Faxian's name but also his writing. The *Faxian zhuan* had become an authoritative text on Buddhist geography and culture of early fifth-century Central Asia, and in tandem with his biography from Huijiao's compilation (our two excerpts in the *Jizu shanzhi*), Faxian's presence via these well-documented texts lends legitimacy to the story of Jizushan's close connection with India and Kukkuṭapāda and places Jizushan on the Indian-Buddhist map.

Descriptions of early Buddhist sites in the *Faxian zhuan* offered a rough glimpse of visual Buddhist iconography, Buddhist architecture, and Buddhist visual culture of the fifth century, and established Faxian as a recorder of important Buddhist places. Scholars still use Faxian's accounts of these early Buddhist sites to understand archaeological records: Kim Haewon and Kim Minku both demonstrate the application of Faxian's record as a historical record of Buddhist pilgrimage sites in their respective recent articles, and are among the few

English-language pieces to combine Faxian's record with place-based physical archaeology.⁵³

Faxian's place-based records offered narrative historical accounts of the most notable Buddhist sites at the time and set a precedent for other early pilgrim monks.

Paths are forged and marked by their predecessors, and Faxian's formative journey as a Chinese monastic travelling westward was the first of many subsequent journeys to Buddhist territories in the west. In Chapter 1, I highlighted scholarly work that demonstrated how this movement of Buddhist monastics and Buddhist materials facilitated the transformation of China into a center of Buddhist pilgrimage in its own right; a transformation in which Faxian played a significant role by returning to his homelands with Buddhist texts and records. Additionally, Faxian also demonstrated that a journey to the Buddhist center was possible for other monastics: Ji Yun's recent work shows how Faxian was the first inspiration for a broader pilgrimage ideal that emphasized the search of Indian Buddhist texts over other pilgrimage goals.⁵⁴ Because Faxian's journey in part facilitated a remarkable change of Buddhist culture in China, later pilgrims would celebrate the places he visited or emulate parts of his journey. If, as the *Jizu shanzhi* tells us, he went to Jizushan, this visit highlights the mountain both as an early Buddhist pilgrimage site and as one that was worthy of a visit by this exceptional pilgrim.

Faxian in in the *Jizu shanzhi*

⁵³ Kim Haewon, "Images and Monasteries in Faxian's Account on Anurādhapura", *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2 no. 1 (2019): 133–152; Kim Minku, "Sites of Caṅkrama (*Jingxing* 經行) in Faxian's Record", *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2 no. 1 (2019): 153–171.

⁵⁴ Ji Yun, "Faxian and the Establishment of the Pilgrimage Tradition of *Qiufa* (Dharma-searching)", *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2 no. 1 (2019): 54.

Now, let's turn to the *Jizu shanzhi* and how it inserts Jizushan into excerpts of Faxian's accounts at Kukkuṭapāda. We find two Faxian-related excerpts on pages 80–81 of the *Jizu shanzhi*: one part from Faxian's *Faxian zhuan*, the fifth century account of his pilgrimage that Faxian completed upon his return to China. The other selection is from Huijiao's 慧皎 (497–554 CE) *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (T no. 2049), a much-celebrated collection of early monastic biographies, in which Huijiao includes Faxian's road-side encounter with a vision of Mahākāśyapa. A short explanation by another author (perhaps the gazetteer compiler Qian Bangfen or editor Fan Chengxun) follows these excerpts, providing a geography-based explanation to dismiss concerns that the actual site of Mahākāśyapa's body is within Indian territory at a different site.

By including a wide variety of sources to explain Jizushan's origins as a Buddhist site, the *Jizu shanzhi* is typical of the gazetteer genre, and specifically of a Buddhist mountain gazetteer. Because the genre is compilatory by nature, these collections can include many different authors, pieces of external texts, or images and maps from earlier publications. At the time of the *Jizu shanzhi*'s publication, gazetteer production was flourishing under heavy Qing sponsorship of Buddhist sites. Because many gazetteers are re-published as new editions to adapt the collection to contemporary interests or a shifting political landscape, compilers of new gazetteer editions can choose which elements of older editions they revisit. A new compilation is an opportunity to revisit or reshape their subjects' histories. Given this broad scope of texts and time periods, a seventeenth-century reader of the *Jizu shanzhi* would not be surprised to find a fifth-century Buddhist record among seventeenth century texts and original writing. With so much choice in compilation, I am more interested in how these excerpts were framed to present Jizushan as a special Buddhist place, rather than present Faxian as a celebrated monk.

Beyond Faxian's material, we find throughout the *Jizu shanzhi* clear references and citations to other older texts. Typically, these sources are well cited. For example, the section on monastic biographies makes clear references to other compilations, such as the *Caoxi yidi*, that detail remarkable monastic lives in Yunnan, and the *Dian zhi*, a local history gazetteer on the region surrounding Jizushan. The paragraphs that surround Faxian's accounts, however, do not have a clear author. It is also possible that these supplementary sections to Faxian's record were taken from an earlier gazetteer or other compilation, but that the compiler did not cite this text. Though the exact author is unknown, their writing (or editing) does much of the heavy lifting when it comes to bringing Faxian to Jizushan and drawing the connection between Faxian's visit to Mahākāśyapa's grave and the stone gate (*huashou shimen* 華首石門).

This individual, however, was not the first to connect Jizushan to the site of Mahākāśyapa's body. Research on Ming-Qing Jizushan demonstrates that Jizushan's connection to Mahākāśyapa was a recent creation at the time of the *Jizu shanzhi*'s publication. Formerly a site of local agricultural-related rituals, Jizushan became associated with Mahākāśyapa during the Ming, when Buddhist temple building on the mountain soared, and the sites of agricultural rituals on Jizushan were superseded by these new Ming temples.⁵⁵ I will discuss this subject in my next chapter, but here, it is important to know that the *Jizu shanzhi* is not introducing an entirely new idea. The connection between Mahākāśyapa and Jizushan pre-dated this gazetteer, but it is unclear how wide this narrative had spread, or the extent of the role Faxian's legacy played in Mahākāśyapa's Ming-era association with Jizushan.

⁵⁵ See Lian, "Dali shanxiang yu tuguan zhengzhi."

The section that follows Faxian's excerpts frame Faxian's visit as a miraculous encounter with Mahākāśyapa himself. In the original record of Faxian, the *Faxian zhuan*, he only encounters Mahākāśyapa through visiting the cave of his bodily remains: he does not interact with a manifestation of Mahākāśyapa at this time.⁵⁶ The *Jizu shanzhi* makes this addition first through inserting Faxian's meeting with Mahākāśyapa, as later recorded in the *Gaoseng zhuan*, and then by tying these two segments together by locating both events at Kukkuṭapāda, which is further identified as Jizushan. Faxian's encounter (as recorded in the *Gaoseng zhuan*) with Mahākāśyapa before he arrives at the mountain is particularly noteworthy.

These kinds of miraculous encounters, in which a monk encounters a mysterious figure before arriving at his destination feature heavily in place-based hagiographies. This kind of encounter is especially common in the hagiographies of monks on Wutaishan from the eighth century and onwards. As we have seen, Wutaishan is one of the original and most significant models of a sacred site reimagined in China, and a highly patronized site during the early Qing, so parallels between Wutaishan accounts and those at other sites are significant and likely deliberate. Monk Fazhao's 法照 (fl. 8th century) journey to Wutaishan provides us with a parallel narrative to our constructed Faxian account: after experiencing a vision of the mountain, Fazhao travels to Wutaishan. Upon approaching Wutaishan, Fazhao has another vision in which he meets with Wenshu, who leads him through a temple that Fazhao later constructs.⁵⁷ As the *Jizu shanzhi* frames it, Faxian also has a vision of a legendary figure before arriving at Jizushan: he only realizes his mistake after, and then, according to the timeline in the *Jizu shanzhi*, seeks out

⁵⁶ See Chapter 33 in *Faxian zhuan*, or its excerpt in the *Jizu shanzhi* on page 80. Faxian simply visits the site of Mahākāśyapa's grave.

⁵⁷ For more on Fazhao's vision of Wenshu, and for an English translation of the account summarized here, see Daniel Stevenson's "Visions of Mañjuśrī on Mount Wutai," In *Religions of China in Practice*, edited by Donald S. Lopez, 203–222. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Mahākāśyapa's body in the dense forest of Jizushan's hills. In the *Jizu shanzhi* account, Faxian is a worthy monastic who is guided to the mountain by Mahākāśyapa himself, but is not yet worthy enough to follow him through the stone gate. Though an eminent monastic, Faxian is still shown to be unsuccessful, and his abilities pale in comparison to Mahākāśyapa's mastery over his apparitions and successful passage through the stone gate. This suggests that Faxian's encounter here still follows the convention of miracle tales, but he is not the sole individual that makes a mark on Jizushan.

In this sense, the *Jizu shanzhi* is not saying anything new or extraordinary about the monk and his life. What is new however, is that in the *Jizu shanzhi* this remarkable between Faxian and Kāśyapa's encounter becomes located at Jizushan. Faxian provides a layer of authority and legitimacy not only as a famous monk with a wide sphere of influence but also as the earliest Chinese pilgrim to India. His visit to "Jizushan" (via its connection to Kukkuṭapāda, explored below) suggests that it was one of the fifth-century Buddhist world's more exceptional sites. Faxian's connection to India, its texts, and its holy sites is a crucial component in this section of the *Jizu shanzhi*, and provides the framework through which Jizushan becomes not just a significant Buddhist site in its own right, but is identified as the original Kukkuṭapāda.

Chapter 3: Jizushan as Kukkuṭapāda

The *Jizu shanzhi*'s claim to Kukkuṭapāda is the foundation on which the *Jizu shanzhi* can argue it is the site of remarkable monastics' relics and remarkable deaths. This construction of Jizushan as a sacred Buddhist mountain relies on the claim that Jizushan is the same site as Kukkuṭapāda, and in turn, the site of Mahākāśyapa bodily remains. Broadly, most Buddhist traditions understand Kukkuṭapāda as the resting place of one of Śākyamuni Buddha's most important disciples, Mahākāśyapa. However, in the context of early Buddhism, Kukkuṭapāda is traditionally associated with a site in Bihar, India—approximately 1500 kilometers from Jizushan—within a network of other pilgrimage sites related to Śākyamuni Buddha's historical life. The *Jizu shanzhi* asserts that Jizushan is—despite this great geographical discrepancy—the same mountain and, therefore, is a landmark of Buddhism's earliest history and among one of its most significant sites. In addition to connecting Jizushan with this early Buddhist pilgrimage site, this claim also allows Jizushan to become the resting place of Mahākāśyapa remains, allowing the mountain a wider association with important bodily remains—the subject of Chapter 4.

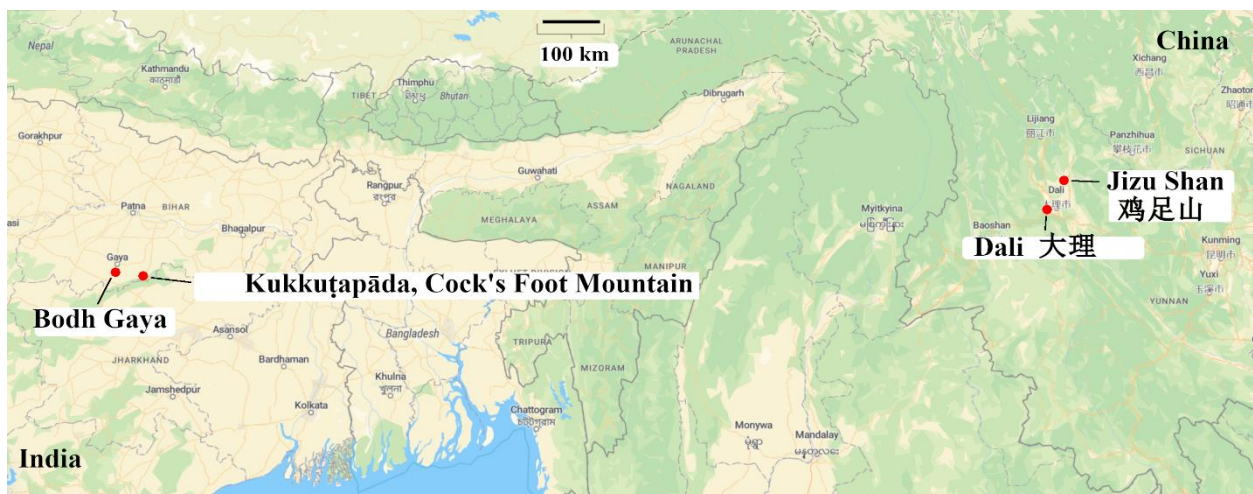


Fig. 1. Map showing distance between Kukkuṭapāda and Jizushan. By author, 2022.

Why was this legend included in the *Jizu shanzhi*, and why did the compilers use it as an argument? Scholarship on sacred sites elsewhere in China demonstrates the importance of a compelling founding legend upon which later, miraculous claims are constructed.⁵⁸ Much of Wutaishan scholarship, and specifically literature on miracle tales and sacred space shows that early foundational stories remain important as a sacred site develops, and that these accounts can be reshaped to serve new agendas over time. In the case of Jizushan and in the account under examination in the *Jizu shanzhi*, this account re-reads a story of early Buddhist India into a Ming-Qing China. More specifically, Ruizhi Lian's work on the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* found that the legend of Kāśyapa successfully supplanted pre-Ming associations with the mountain to allow for the construction of Kāśyapa-specific temples and landmarks.⁵⁹ From this, we know that Jizushan's claim to Kukkuṭapāda is a Ming creation, and that the compilers of the *Jizu shanzhi* opted to introduce this account to their readers. What made this a compelling story to Ming and Qing gazetteer compilers? This chapter demonstrates that Jizushan's claim to be the same site as Kukkuṭapāda connects visitors to Jizushan with Buddhism's earliest origins: its people, landscape, and texts.

In addition to the excerpts related to Faxian, we also see efforts elsewhere in the *Jizu shanzhi* to tie Mahākāśyapa to pre-Qing Jizushan outside of Faxian's record. We find mention of Mahākāśyapa in a Tang-era account of Master Gu/Xiaocheng 小澄 (d.u.) that further strengthens

⁵⁸ Such as previously mentioned work on the *huasi* 化寺 miracle tale genre or on the early legends of Guanyin at Putuoshan; see Susan Andrews, "Tales of Conjured Temples (*huasi*) in Qing Period Mountain Gazetteers." *JIAS*, no. 6 (December 2011): 134–162; Chün-fang Yü, "P'u-t'o Shan: Pilgrimage and the Creations of the Chinese Potalaka," in *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, edited by Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü, pages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

⁵⁹ Lian, "Dali shanxiang yu tuguan zhengzhi," 157.

this claim: this monk is asked by the ruler of Nanzhao to bring the dead to and from the Pureland, and upon returning to his home cloister, he passes through the Huashou stone gate (referred to earlier as “Kāśyapa’s gate”), and the account speculates that this monk was Kāśyapa in a transformed body (*huashen* 化身). In a second account, monk Ciji 慈濟, who prostrated 100 times a day to worship Kāśyapa, meditates and dies on a rock on a peak of a mountain northeast of Erhai lake. These two accounts appear to offer evidence that the Mahākāśyapa connection to Jizushan existed as early as the eighth century in the Nanzhao kingdom. However, it is important to note that both these hagiographies were transplanted from the *Caoxi yidi* 曹溪一滴. This text was compiled by Zhouli 周理 (1591–1648),⁶⁰ a Linji 臨濟 Buddhist monk, and I have not been able to find evidence in the original source that dates these accounts earlier than the Ming dynasty. Though I believe these stories were later creations, based on the Ming-era association of Mahākāśyapa with Jizushan, they are significant in the *Jizushan zhi*, because they demonstrate another way through which remarkable monks achieved success on Jizushan associated with death, with Mahākāśyapa as a powerful object of prayer or death-manipulating powers. In this way, the claim to Kukkuṭapāda is supported both by the founding legend as well as these two early hagiographies, and creates an early Buddhist history for the mountain that begins during Ming administration of Yunnan but appears to pre-date Ming presence in the area, through portrayal of eighth century monastic innovation.

If the readers of the *Jizu shanzhi* understood Jizushan as the much-celebrated Kukkuṭapāda, this account must have succeeded in additional ways that effectively recall early Indian Buddhism as a source of authority early in Chinese Buddhist history in a manner

⁶⁰ Buddhist Studies Person Authority Databases #A000560.

compatible with readers' own understanding of this history. In other words, this account would have to withstand Chinese readers' knowledge of their own religious histories and practices, or at least offer a compelling argument for Jizushan's significance. First, let us turn to original conceptions of Kukkuṭapāda to understand why this is a powerful argument for Jizushan's significance in the Chinese religious landscape.

The pilgrimage records of Faxian and Xuanzang assert that Kukkuṭapāda is the purported location of the body of Mahākāśyapa, who waits in the mountain for the arrival of Mile 彌勒 (Skt. Maitreya) Buddha at the end of the dharma. We have already encountered Faxian's version of the story in its excerpt in the *Jizu shanzhi*; Faxian does not provide us much beyond mentioning the cave containing Mahākāśyapa's body. Xuanzang, on the other hand, introduces us to a rugged forested mountain with three peaks, and tells us of Mahākāśyapa's final moments with his master Tathāgata Buddha, and subsequent journey into a mountain to await the arrival of the future Buddha. As Xuanzang relays it, when Mile arrives in this world to continue the dharma, he will lead doubtful people to Kukkuṭapāda to witness Mahākāśyapa entering Nirvāṇa. The event will be miraculous, and the witnesses' beliefs will be transformed.⁶¹

Outside of these two pilgrim accounts, we know little about the early Chinese Buddhist understanding of this site. There is not yet any scholarly work on this textual appearance of the site of Mahākāśyapa's purported grave, nor on the corresponding physical site in Bihar state, India. Despite the lack of contemporary scholarly interest in this site, Kukkuṭapāda does not need to be a highly popular site in order to make a powerful appearance in the *Jizu shanzhi*. Rather, the flexibility of the original Indian site makes it easy to transport it to Yunnan province, and the

⁶¹ Samuel Beal, trans. *Si-yu-ki, Buddhist records of the Western world*, Volume 2 (London: Trübner, 1885), 13.

sheer temporal distance between its origins and Jizushan's rise as a significant Buddhist site makes these geographic discrepancies, as well as the exact mythology of Mahākāśyapa's resting place, difficult to dispute or confirm with any real authority. The *Jizu shanzhi* compilers anticipated some doubt about the site's location, and offer us a way to ease our doubts that Jizushan is too far from the Buddhist Indian homeland to possibly be the same site that contains Mahākāśyapa's body:

...the region of Dianzhong originally belonged to ... a principality created by King Aśoka. According to Buddhist scriptures and unofficial history, Diancang refers to nowhere but Kukkuṭapāda... when people saw for themselves the stone gate of Hua shou on the summit of Jizu mountain, they doubted that the honorable one [Mahākāśyapa] was present in this place. They did not know that Jizu mountain was formerly part of Indian territory during the Zhou.⁶²

Jizushan, here, becomes part of ancient Indian territory: under the rule of King Aśoka, legendary Buddhist convert patron, there is no distance between China and India. Certainly, King Aśoka's 300 BCE reign over the Maurya kingdom covered vast swaths of territory, and he is known for his distribution of Buddhist bodily relics throughout the Asian continent. Regardless of the veracity of this claim, it demonstrates that the compilers of the *Jizu shanzhi* were prepared to address doubts that Jizushan is the same mountain of Indian fame and make a claim that Jizushan was part of ancient Indian territory.

⁶² *Jizu shanzhi*, 81.

Though it is a relatively unremarkable site by the standards of sacred space scholarship, the Indian Kukkuṭapāda allows us proximity to the wider network of Indian Buddhist pilgrimage sites, many of which are mere kilometers away. These other, more notable pilgrimage sites include Bodh Gaya, forty kilometers from the commonly understood location of Kukkuṭapāda, where the historical Buddha is purported to have reached enlightenment, or the nearby city of Rajgir (historically Rājagṛiha), associated with the historical Buddha's lectures at Vulture Peak, the source of many foundational Buddhist scriptures like the Lotus Sutra (Ch. *Fahua jing* 法華經, Skt. *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*) and Perfection of Wisdom Sutras (Ch. *Bore jing* 般若經, Skt. *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*). Jizushan lets us get close to Tathāgata Buddha's landscape, by imagining the network of other celebrated sites nearby and creating a close connection between Jizushan and these early pilgrimage sites. At the same time that the claim to Mahākāśyapa's body at Jizushan connects readers and visitors to Buddhism's distant past, it also offers a distant, transformative, Buddhist future through the presence of his body, which I will explore further in the next chapter.

The pre-existing importance of Kukkuṭapāda as an Indian site does not detract from Jizushan's claim to the same history. Rather, we have already seen that replication is a familiar strategy at Chinese sacred sites. A sacred site, as we understand it in Chinese religious history, is not static; it can be moved and copied without distracting from its significance or requiring a single original.⁶³ Because these kinds of claims—from Wutaishan as the home of Wenshu in the Avatamsaka Sutra to the location-shifting Nanyue—were well founded at other sites, this claim to Kukkuṭapāda would not have seemed unusual to the early-Qing gazetteer reader

⁶³ See studies featuring “copied” mountains, such as Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*, 26. Andrews, “Representing Mount Wutai's Past”, 5; Wen-shing Chou, *Mount Wutai: Visions of a Sacred Buddhist Mountain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 17–49.

Additionally, Jizushan as Kukkuṭapāda not only hosted significant events in Buddhism's origins, but tradition claims it will play a role in the Buddhist future. Well-informed readers familiar with Mahākāśyapa's connection to Śākyamuni Buddha might also recall his relationship to an additional buddha: tradition holds that Mahākāśyapa waits in the mountain for the arrival of Maitreya Buddha and the end to the decline of the dharma (*mofa* 末法). Jizushan-as Kukkuṭapāda, then, is not only historically significant, but is also a site with a close relationship to Buddhism's future.

We can see, on the one hand, Jizushan as a model of an ideal Indian pilgrimage site, visited by exceptional pilgrims and early monastics. In many ways this is typical of a religious mountain within Chinese borders; we have seen how other sites such as Wutaishan and Putuoshan rely on an early, often scriptural, Indian site for their initial interpretations as significant Chinese Buddhist pilgrimage sites. The *Jizu shanzhi* frames the mountain not only as a site of original Buddhist practices and texts, but as a place with a continued relationship to early Buddhism. Jizushan initially seems to fit well into the narrative of Sinicization and re-centering Buddhism: a site along the borderlands of the Qing empire reframes a previously held claim in order to re-center sacred geography within its own borders.

On the other hand, this pattern of re-centering Indian sites in China was much more common in earlier years in Buddhist history, and by the seventeenth century the "borderland complex" of Chinese Buddhists was long resolved: China now had its own pilgrimage centers, lineages, and doctrinal innovations independent from the former Buddhist center of India. We encounter Jizushan as a replica of Kukkuṭapāda nearly a millennium after this initial push to localize Buddhism within China. This kind of strategy would fit well in the first centuries of the Tang dynasty, for example, when Chinese Buddhists created and copied Buddhist sites to have

their own Buddhist centres of practice. However, we know both from work on Yunnan religious history, as well as Jizushan-specific work that this argument did not occur during this era of Buddhist history: the connection between Jizushan and the Indian Kukkuṭapāda was a Ming construction.

We know that pre-Ming mentions of “Jizushan 雞足山” or “Jishan 雞山”, as we find in Faxian’s record do not refer to the Chinese site. Contemporary scholarship has quantified Faxian’s pilgrimage route, using his references to existing settlements or notable sections of landscape to trace his route west through Central Asia. When Faxian or Xuanzang refer to “Jizushan” in Chinese, they are actually referring to Kukkuṭapāda, which has been translated from Sanskrit to Chinese as “Jizushan” or “Jishan” in these early texts. The fact that Kukkuṭapāda and Jizushan share the same Chinese name could, at first glance, suggest that the Chinese Jizushan appears in these early pilgrimage records, and by virtue of this early association, make an argument that contradicts Lian’s assertion that Mahākāśyapa’s connection to Jizushan was a deliberate Ming convention. It is not clear when this mountain was named Jizushan: local languages and past communities would have had their own names for this site, independent of Chinese writing systems or from Buddhist legends. Elizabeth Kindall has noted that Jizushan was officially known as Jiuqu shan 九曲山 (Nine Curve Mountain) until the late sixteenth century, though at the same time, writers still referred to the mountain as “Jizushan” when referring to its Buddhist history and landmarks.⁶⁴ I suspect, though cannot yet confirm, that the shared characters between Kukkuṭapāda and Jizushan are not a coincidence, and that the

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Kindall, *Geo-Narratives of a Filial Son: The Paintings of Huang Xiangjian (1609-1673)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2016), 221.

origins of Jizushan's name could tell us more about the mountain's earliest connections to Indian Buddhist stories.

In her study of Jizushan and Ming officials at Jizushan, Ruizhi Lian argues that the connection between Kukkuṭapāda and Jizushan was deliberately constructed in the gazetteers compiled by Ming and Qing officials to supersede local legends with the legend of Kāśyapa.⁶⁵ Lian suggests that prior to this association, there was a local deity with strong connections to sites around Jizushan, and that there is no evidence for earlier associations in other editions of the *Jizu shanzhi*. With Chinese administration in Yunnan beginning in the Ming, the areas surrounding Dali underwent a restructuring of local economy and religious practice during this era, and Jizushan was no exception. Part of this restructuring, as Lian's study makes explicit, is Ming-Qing sponsorship of temple building on Jizushan, which was aided by the mountain's claim to Kukkuṭapāda.

Kindall has also noted a pre-Qing circulation of Kāśyapa's legend at Jizushan, not from a gazetteer or Faxian's *Faxian zhuan*, but from a 1656-inscription accompanying a landscape painting. Huang Xiangjian 黃向堅 (1609–1673) explains the importance of Jizushan, a central feature of his scroll painting, in a very similar way as the *Jizu shanzhi*'s excerpt:

Mount Jizu is in Dali prefecture in Yunnan. In ancient times, it was part of the Western Regions where Śākyamuni appeared in the world. In the time of King Zhao of the Zhou dynasty, when Kāśyapa became the principal disciple [of Śākyamuni], there was as yet no contact with China. Therefore, Kāśyapa was able to use Mount Jizu as his place of practice. It is called Mount Jizu [Chickenfoot] because the mountain is formed with three

⁶⁵ Lian, "Dali shanxiang yu tuguan zhengzhi."

branches in front and one in the back, exactly like the four toes of a chicken foot. [The Buddhist doctrine] was transmitted from Kāśyapa through a chain of twenty-eight disciples to Bodhidharma, and it was he who brought the robe and begging bowl of Kāśyapa into China. There were then six transmissions to Lu Neng [Huineng], who lived in the mid-Tang dynasty.⁶⁶

From Lian's scholarship and from Huang's record, which is very similar to our *Jizu shanzhi* excerpt, we know that Mahākāśyapa association with Jizushan pre-dated the Qing, and that the *Jizu shanzhi* was not the first to articulate this connection. Even within the *Jizu shanzhi*, the hagiographies that mention Jizushan's connection with Mahākāśyapa can only be traced as early as 1636 to the *Caoxi yidi*, a compilation by monk Zhouli, who appears to have had some connections with Jizushan.⁶⁷ This includes, in particular, the account of the re-incarnated-Mahākāśyapa and death-manipulating Master Gu, whose association with the unnamed Nanzhao ruler places him during the time of the Nanzhao Kingdom (738–902).⁶⁸ Scholar Dao Jian 道堅 claims that this account of Master Gu is the earliest record of Buddhism at Jizushan.⁶⁹ Without an earlier source to prove the dating of this account, this connection to Mahākāśyapa through this hagiography could simply be a 1636 creation of the *Cao xi yidi*. Still, placing the legend of

⁶⁶ Huang Xianjuan as quoted in Elizabeth Kindall, "Experiential Readings and the Grand View: 'Mount Jizu' by Huang Xiangjian (1609—1673)." *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 94, No. 3 (September 2012), 412–436.

⁶⁷ DILA Authority number A000560.

⁶⁸ *Jizu shanzhi*, 382.

⁶⁹ Dao Jian 道堅, "Yunnan Jizu shan gudai Fosi cangshu kaolue" 雲南雞足山古代佛寺藏書考略 [A study on a Collection of Ancient Buddhist Temples on Jizushan, Yunnan]." *Zhongguo Foxue yuan* 中國佛學院 [Buddhist Academy of China], accessed March 20, 2022. <http://www.zgfsy.cn/Item/834.aspx>.

Mahākāśyapa at this site through this Nanzhao-era account lends more weight to the claim that Jizushan has a long history of exceptional Buddhist practice.

In addition to the evidence that Mahākāśyapa was not associated with Jizushan before the Ming, and therefore had no claim to Kukkuṭapāda, we also know that there was rich, local religious practice in this area. These forms of practice did not associate the mountain and its surroundings with the Indian Buddhist Kukkuṭapāda, and it does not appear that religious practitioners around the nearby Dali and Nanzhao Kingdoms were concerned with creating their own sacred sites to assert the centrality of their Buddhist practice, like we have seen at Tang-dynasty Wutaishan, for example.

Instead, Megan Bryson argues that the Nanzhao rulers used Indian Buddhist ideas of kingship to assert their legitimacy to Tang Chinese rulers. Rather than seeking legitimacy through models of Chinese or Tibetan Buddhist rulers, the Nanzhao rulers drew from their proximity to India, which gave their claim to Buddhist kingship more weight.⁷⁰ Bryson points to an account of a manifestation of Guanyin, in which Guanyin brings Buddhism to the Nanzhao court. This is opposed to the narrative that Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang introduced Buddhism to Yunnan. Using Buddhism as a tool of diplomacy, Nanzhao Buddhist rulers connected their practices and rulership to Indian origins to distinguish themselves from their neighbouring kingdoms. While Tang rulers were creating Chinese Buddhist centers to stake their claim as more than a Buddhist “borderland”, Nanzhao rulers were navigating their relationship to neighbouring kingdoms, using their closeness to India to strengthen their own claims.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Megan Bryson, “Tsenpo Chung, Yunnan wang, Mahārāja: Royal Titles in Narratives of Nanzhao Kingship between Tibet and Tang China,” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 24 (2015): 77.

⁷¹ Ibidem.

From this historical understanding of Yunnanese Buddhist heritage, it is unlikely that pre-Ming residents of Jizushan were interested in staking a claim to original Buddhist pilgrimage sites. They were not looking to resolve the “borderland” complex of their Tang Chinese peers of the first millennium CE, as they created their own relationship with Indian Buddhism, framing themselves as inheritors of the tradition directly from an Indian bodhisattva instead of through a visiting Chinese pilgrim. Scholars know little about the local relationships that formed between the years of early Buddhist transmission until the sixteenth century on the mountain. The association between Mahākāśyapa body, Kukkuṭapāda, and Jizushan was a Chinese creation, and appears to be constructed independently from the region’s own earlier Buddhist innovations.

To be successfully reproduced in gazetteers and other sources of local history, this account must have been a successful re-telling of Jizushan’s Buddhist history, compatible both with Qing understanding of Buddhism as well as Yunnanese Buddhists’ own understanding of the region’s Buddhist history. The *Jizu shanzhi* was not the first to articulate this claim, and by this gazetteer’s publication in 1692, the legend of Mahākāśyapa at Jizushan was already circulated.

One way that the Kukkuṭapāda-Jizushan connection would appeal to Ming-Qing gazetteer compilers is the way it argues for Jizushan as a Buddhist site; not a place of Dali or Nanzhao forms of Buddhism, but an early Indian Buddhism that is recognizable to a wide audience. This accords with Wen-shing Chou’s and Patricia Berger’s respective works on Buddhism in the Qing dynasty, where imperial Qing leadership used a broad array of Buddhist practices to put forth a multicultural kind of Buddhism that encompassed the diverse cultural

traditions of the Qing empire.⁷² In the case of the *Jizu shanzhi*, this Qing text emphasizes the Indian past of the mountain, and in this way, connects the mountain to Buddhism's earliest cast of characters, long before branches of other Buddhist traditions spread throughout Central and East Asia. Rather than, for example, draw from the Dali region's own rich Buddhist history, or connect the site to nearby Tibetan traditions (as in the case of Qing promotion of Wutaishan), Jizushan becomes both a Chinese, Yunnanese, and an Indian site. This makes this legend compatible with Ming-Qing Chinese Buddhism, as its inclusion in the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* makes clear.

Even though the text does not elaborate on Yunnanese Buddhist history, this understanding of the mountains history as Indian does not clash with Yunnanese understanding of Buddhist history in the area. This history, as Megan Bryson has elaborated on in her study of Nanazho kingship models, claims a direct transmission from India through a manifestation of Guanyin, and made use of this direct transmission from India to strengthen its regional diplomacy. Because Yunnanese Buddhism already saw itself as distinct from Chinese inheritance, the connection to Kukkuṭapāda appealed to the broader narrative of Yunnan Buddhist history, while at the same time allowing Ming-Qing China to work with a narrative of sacred site replication familiar to a Chinese audience. In addition, Jizushan's relative proximity to original Indian pilgrimage sites would make a claim to an Indian pilgrimage site more geographically plausible, as we see in the *Jizu shanzhi*'s explanation that the area around Jizushan was once part of the "Western Regions" under King Aśoka's reign.

⁷² Wen-shing Chou, *Mount Wutai: Visions of a Sacred Buddhist Mountain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 17–49. Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).

Placing Jizushan in Indian territory is a key strategy in the *Jizu shanzhi* for arguing why this site is important. Jizushan's association with Kukkuṭapāda that began with Chinese administration during the Ming shows that the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* participated in this established practice of layering over local legends with the legend of Kāśyapa. The compilers opt to include this legend because it presents a powerful argument to a widespread audience: this is a place with deep connections to Buddhist origins. This legend is not merely compatible with Ming-Qing conceptions of Buddhist sacred space: by creating Jizushan as Kukkuṭapāda, it also becomes the site of Mahākāśyapa's healing relics. In establishing Jizushan as Kukkuṭapāda and tying it directly to the Indian Buddhist religious landscape, this account lays the groundwork upon which to further develop its status as a Chinese site in the Ming and early Qing eras. This further development hinges on the sites' claim to Mahākāśyapa's remains, relying on the power of relics and remarkable deaths throughout Buddhist traditions to argue that Jizushan is an exceptional Buddhist site, which we will explore in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Mahākāśyapa's Body and Relics at Jizushan

The presence of dead bodies and their remains have long been important components of the creation and maintenance of Buddhist sacred sites throughout the tradition's history in China. In the *Jizu shanzhi*, we find that Faxian's record of his visit to Kukkuṭapāda and its commentary present a claim that not only is Jizushan the place where this venerable Buddhist Mahākāśyapa died, but also that the presence of his body and the soil outside his grave has the power to heal afflictions. Coupled with the presence of the remains of an exceptional Buddhist figure, the *Jizu shanzhi* portrays Jizushan as an exceptional pilgrimage site with a long history intertwined with Buddhism's earliest people and places. This is due to the widespread significance of remarkable deaths and the potential of transformative bodily remains throughout Buddhism's history—especially within China as a part of building sacred sites

Even in Buddhism's earliest iterations, the dead and their remains serve an important role in the spread of Buddhism throughout Asia. The death of Śākyamuni Buddha, as the first of many subsequent Buddhist deaths, created a foundation in later Buddhist traditions in which death marks an accomplishment of a religious leader and their achievement of *nirvāṇa*. The Buddha's death is more commonly discussed not as the death of a human historical figure, but as his achievement of *parinirvāṇa* (*da banniepan* 大般涅槃, often translated as “great extinction” or “perfect awakening”). Though Śākyamuni Buddha achieved enlightenment earlier in his life, his death was a further stage in this accomplishment, in which he was removed from the cycles of life, death and suffering (*samsara*). While the intricacies of this event and its relationship to Buddhist doctrine and exegesis is beyond the scope of this project, the death of the historical Buddha is one, if not the most significant event that allowed the spread of Buddhist doctrine and shaped Buddhist attitudes towards death as a cycle of rebirth and the emergence of the possibility

that one can remove oneself from this cycle through the teachings of the Buddha, culminating in a liberatory death. His passing formed a model of an ideal death among his disciples, and with the passing of Śākyamuni Buddha, his disciples, including Mahākāśyapa, took on leadership in the early Buddhist Sangha.

The departure of the Buddha from the earthly realm and the cycle of rebirth was a source of inspiration, but also a source of deep anxiety. This anxiety afflicted not just his early followers, who mourned the loss of their teacher, but also later generations of Buddhist thinkers who had to wrestle with the fact that they were living in an era without a Buddha.⁷³ Sonya S. Lee, writing about this anxiety around the Buddha's *nirvāṇa* in a Chinese visual context, notes that the image of the reclining Buddha at the moment of his death forced viewers to confront their own mortality and contend with the ways that Śākyamuni Buddha “transgress[ed] various symbolic boundaries of death in order to demonstrate his superhuman power and everlasting presence”.⁷⁴ Images of the Buddha's death, in addition to the presence of the Buddha's relics, offered a way for viewers to consider their mortality in light of Buddhist teachings, while they became physically closer to Śākyamuni Buddha at the same time.

As an original follower of Śākyamuni Buddha and a member of his closest circle of disciples (十大弟子 *shí dà dìzǐ*, ten principle disciples), Mahākāśyapa was most renown for his ascetic discipline in his monastic life. According to records in the *Fo benxingji jing* 佛本行集經

⁷³ Scholars have explored the early ramifications of the death of Śākyamuni Buddha among his close disciples and the resulting doctrinal philosophies that emerged from his departure: see, for example an ontological consideration in Malcom D. Eckel's *To See the Buddha A Philosopher's Quest for the Meaning of Emptiness* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 73—113; or Steven Collins' *Nirvāṇa and other Buddhist Felicities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and *Nirvāṇa: Concept, Imagery, Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁷⁴ Sonya S. Lee, *Surviving Nirvāṇa: Death of the Buddha in Chinese Visual Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 11.

[Skt. *Buddha-carita-saṃgrāha* T. no 190.3.655a–932a], a collection of the Buddha’s biographies, Mahākāśyapa was born to a Brahmin household with the personal name Pippalāyāna after his parents prayed to a Pippala tree. He married a woman name Subhadra (Batuoluo 跋陀羅), who was also committed to ascetic practices. They did not consummate their marriage and instead, both became disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha, remaining committed to the ascetic principles that formed Mahākāśyapa’s legacy. He became a closer disciple of Śākyamuni Buddha and was present for many of the significant events in the Buddha’s life and teachings. Like so many other earlier figures of Buddhism, we have little detail about this mythic figure, sketching his importance to early Indian Buddhism through hagiography and his appearance in teachings of the Buddha.

Various accounts tell us that Mahākāśyapa was not present for the death of the Buddha, but upon hearing of it, returned to participate in the funeral rites and cremation. There is some tension between Mahākāśyapa and Ananda, one of Śākyamuni Buddha’s other closest disciples about the treatment of the Buddha’s body and Mahākāśyapa’s wish to unwrap it: there are a number of variations, but some accounts, such as the *Chuanfa zhengzong ji* 傳法正宗記 (T no. 2078; by Qisong 契嵩 [1007–1072]), record that the Buddha’s feet emerged from the coffin on their own in order for Mahākāśyapa to venerate them a final time. This marks the first miracle following the Buddha’s death and sets the stage for more remarkable events surrounding the Buddha’s remains. For this project, it is not only noteworthy that Mahākāśyapa was part of the Buddha’s funeral—an event that allowed the later widespread use of relics throughout Buddhist Asia—but is also significant because our compiler or editor included this account in the *Jizū*

shanzhi, quoting directly from the *Chuanfa zhengzong ji* and sharing Mahākāśyapa's worship of the Buddha's miraculously moving feet.⁷⁵

Mahākāśyapa's legacy further took shape following the death of Śākyamuni Buddha: he became the head of the monastic community and convened the Buddha's followers in Rājagṛha for the first or fifth council of Five Hundred *Arhats* (第一結集 or 五百結集) with the goal of collecting and recording the Buddha's teaching into a standardized canon. This included the first collection of the Vinaya—rules for monastic living—as well as a collection of the Buddha's lectures in written sutra form (*Dasheng fayuan yilin zhang* 大乘法苑義林章; *T* no. 1861, 45: 268a13). Given the essential nature of these early collections to the spread of Buddhism and their later translation into Chinese by travelling monastics, it is difficult to overemphasize the significance of Mahākāśyapa convening the first council. Early textual records paint this individual as an ascetic devotee, who took leadership of the Buddhist sangha after the Buddha's death and set in motion the first Buddhist canon.

Once we leave the earliest generation of Buddhist followers and their relationship to the death of the Buddha, the initial importance of dead bodies, relics and sacred Buddhist place beyond India is largely associated with King Aśoka, legendary ruler of the Indian sub-continent Maurya Dynasty between 268–232 BCE. Following his conversion to Buddhism, Aśoka reportedly ordered the creation of 84 000 stūpas throughout Asia, beginning with a stūpa for Śākyamuni Buddha at the site of his death in Kuśīnagara, Uttar Pradesh. All these small structures commissioned by Aśoka were purported to hold physical remains of Śākyamuni Buddha. They served as places of worship and offering, where disciples could worship circumambulate the structure. The construction of this vast number of structures was significant

⁷⁵ *Jizu shanzhi*, 71–77.

for its use of physical remains in worship, but also for the vast territory that now had sacred Buddhist sites. This early spread of Buddhism relied on physical place-making through the construction of stūpas, and its spiritual significance relied on the presence of physical remains to offer worshippers with proximity to Śākyamuni Buddha. The *Jizu shanzhi* points the reader directly to these early traditions of place-making through the commentary that follows Faxian's account, which tells us that the area was under the control of King Aśoka during the Zhou dynasty, a claim made possible by the vast expanse of Aśoka's territory across Asia.

Beyond Śākyamuni Buddha, there are countless sites throughout Buddhist history that commemorate the death of a venerated individual, and many claim to be the site of the individual's remains. Though the body of Śākyamuni Buddha is the ideal—established in the construction of Aśoka's stūpas—there are other ways that Buddhist place-making gestures towards this ideal death. Other exceptional individuals' physical remains can serve a similar ritual purpose, either in pieces (a tooth or bone fragment, for example) or entire bodies. Objects owned by the Buddha, or even objects as plentiful as “dharma relics”—copied sutras or other texts inserted into objects to sanctify them—can serve this purpose as well. Though the kinds of relics are plentiful and vary in their resemblance to Śākyamuni Buddha's dead body, they all achieve similar ends: sanctifying a place or object, while emphasizing a prestigious lineage or allowing for the possibility of the individual remains or objects to cause miraculous events.⁷⁶ In fact, John Strong argues that all kinds of relics, regardless of their material, are successful objects of worship because they evoke the Buddha's biography and the complete progress to enlightenment.⁷⁷ Mahākāśyapa's whole-body relic, and the healing properties Faxian describes,

⁷⁶ John Strong, *Relics of the Buddha* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 186.

⁷⁷ Strong, *Relics of the Buddha*, 5–7.

is an excellent example of the first-millennia evolution of Buddhist dead. The body itself has remarkable powers, and Mahākāśyapa himself invokes the original disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha and his brief human life.

Relics in any form offer more than just a marker to a sacred site, and the growing body of scholarship on the exceptional deaths shows the wide-reaching impact on the stories and physical remains of remarkable individuals. Beyond Chinese language scholarship, the growth of the study of relics is in large part thanks to the work of Peter Brown on the relics of medieval Christians after the fall of Roman rule in Britain: Brown's research showed how the worship of physical remains, and more importantly, their transportation across Europe, allowed Christian worship in new places and for new, less elite audiences. Brown's work has directly influenced studies of Buddhist relic use,⁷⁸ and in our case, his assertion that relics create landmarks for worship is a crucial point that ties death practices to the creation of sacred space. We find the same connection between relics, landscape, and negotiations of power in instances of medieval Buddhist relic worship as we do in Brown's Christian case studies.⁷⁹ In Buddhist circles, we find the same dynamics in relic worship, the breadth of which extends from the creation of Aśoka stūpas throughout Central and East Asia, to miraculous events in the presence of the dead like we see in the *Jizū shanzhi*, to relics as powerful coveted tools of political power and patronage.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Brian Ruppert, cited below, directly claims influence from Peter Brown and his emphasis on popular religion. See Brian Ruppert, *Jewel in the Ashes: Buddha Relics and Power in Early Medieval Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 1.

⁷⁹ Peter Brown, *Cult of the Saints: Its Rise as Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 38–44 and 75–78.

⁸⁰ Examples of relics as tools of political power are plentiful throughout Buddhism's history, but for a notable Chinese account see Robert H. Sharf, "The Buddha's Finger Bones at Famensi and the Art of Chinese Esoteric Buddhism," *The Art Bulletin* 93, no. 1 (March 2011): 38–59; also see Eugene Y. Wang, "Of the True Body: The Famen Monastery Relics and Corporeal Transformation in Tang Imperial Culture," in *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture*, edited by Hung Wu and Katherine R. Tsiang, 79–118 (Leiden: Brill, 2005). In Japan, relics were often coveted by imperial powers, and Brian Ruppert's

Evidently more than the sum of their parts, the ritual use of relics in Buddhist traditions has always had a philosophical component, and they were more than coveted objects.

The body of Śākyamuni Buddha then, is more than the sum of its parts, and we know that the death of Śākyamuni Buddha was a significant problem both for his immediate disciples, and even more of a loss for later generations of Buddhists, who did not have a living Buddha in this realm from whom they could learn. From this perspective, after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* his followers were living in the final era of the dharma, and this dharmic decline became a weighty concept among Tang-era Chinese Buddhists in the form of *mofa* 末法. Jan Nattier has discussed prophecies of Buddhist decline in her *Once Upon a Future Time*, with attention to Indian origins of these concepts and the philosophical implications for Buddhist doctrine, which undoubtedly shaped some of the early texts in the *Jizuo shanzhi*, such as Faxian's excerpts.⁸¹ However, Nattier intentionally decenters the later Chinese and Japanese developments that were more influential among the Chan Chinese Buddhists we find in the *Jizuo shanzhi*. With attention to the distinct Chinese interpretations of the ideas Nattier explored, Liu Yi has explored origins of the Chinese *mofa* in detail, highlighting this as a uniquely Chinese interpretation and reimagining of Indian Buddhist texts beginning in the sixth century and most popular through the seventh century.⁸² "What is referred to as the 'mofa concept' is not only a Buddhist historical prophecy; it is also part of Buddhism's theory of historical decline" as Liu notes.⁸³ This eschatological dilemma that will be resolved only through Maitreya Buddha's arrival to this realm when a new age begins and

Jewel in the Ashes, details how relics and their related "wish fulfilling jewels" were utilized by imperial powers and their networks to cultivate political power and Buddhist patronage.

⁸¹ Jan Nattier, *Once Upon a Future Time* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1990).

⁸² Liu Yi, "After the Buddha's Nirvāṇa: the Mofa concept of Chinese Buddhism and its rise to prominence," *Studies in Chinese Religions* 4, no. 3 (2018): 280.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 278.

Dharma will once again flourish. *Mofa*, the long age of dharmic decline is preceded by *zhengfa* 正法 (true dharma) and *xiangfa* 像法 (semblance dharma), two additional phases that correspond generally to the time leading up to the Buddha's death and the slow decline of the dharma that follows. While there are many interpretations of the length of these time periods and how many thousands of years or *kalpas* encompass this decline, the age will end with the arrival of Mile, marking a new era for the Buddha's dharma.

This concept of an era of dharmic decline is incredibly important to our account of Mahākāśyapa at Jizushan: legend holds that Śākyamuni Buddha entrusts Kāśyapa with a set of robes to give Mile once he arrives in this realm.⁸⁴ Kāśyapa travels to Kukkuṭapāda/Jizushan to die within the mountain, but his death was not entirely complete—he waits for the arrival of Mile, who will usher in a new era of Buddhism and end the current era of dharmic decline. From this prophecy, we might understand Mahākāśyapa's presence as a whole-body relic at Jizushan (?), and not as the fragmented, portable objects we encounter in stūpas and statuary. While the connection between Mahākāśyapa's death and Mile's arrival is not so explicit in the *Jizu shanzhi*, if Mahākāśyapa's body is located within the mountain, then Jizushan will become the site of a monumentally and cosmologically significant event.

Would this event be significant to the readers of the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi*? For the same reasons that Faxian's fifth-century record matters to its readers, I suspect the image of Mahākāśyapa waiting within the mountain for a new dharmic age would have been a powerful

⁸⁴ T no. 50 300c.11-14, 301a.9-14. John J. Jorgensen, *Inventing Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch: Hagiography and Biography in Early Ch'an* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 232. See also Bernard Faure, "Quand l'habit fait le moine: The Symbolism of the *kāśāya* in Sōtō zen" *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 8 (1995) 335-369 for a discussion of the legacy of these robes given by Śākyamuni Buddha to Kāśyapa, and the debate in Chan and Zen lineage about how and if these robes were passed to the sixth Patriarch Hui-neng with the understanding that it will eventually be passed on, as intended, to Mile Buddha.

concept for Jizushan's legacy going into the eighteenth century. While Mahākāśyapa is our starring figure in the account of Jizushan, he works as an influential figure because of his direct ties with Śākyamuni Buddha and his legacy. As Strong argues about relics and their replicas, the efficacy of relics and bodies as ritual objects always reminds the viewer or worshipper of the Buddha's biography: his past lives, his life as Śākyamuni Buddha, and his passage into *parinirvāṇa*.⁸⁵ Mahākāśyapa is entangled in Śākyamuni Buddha's life and death.

The dead at Jizushan

Hand in hand with the focus on Jizushan's Indian past, dead bodies help build the mountain's status as a place of religious possibility in multiple ways. Stories of unusual deaths and the locations of these unusual deaths mark points on the Jizushan landscape, and contribute to a long tradition of death, hagiography, and geography brought under Buddhist categorization.

We know that Jizushan was not significant to Chinese Buddhists until the area was under Ming administration.⁸⁶ Faxian's pilgrimage to India, and in turn, Jizushan's claim to Kukkuṭapāda and the remains of Mahākāśyapa, was therefore not part of the first-millennium wave of the creation of Buddhist pilgrimage sites in China. However, as we have already seen, by drawing from Faxian's history, the *Jizu shanzhi* stakes a claim to a fifth century Buddhist history that closely ties Jizushan to the sacred landscape of early Buddhist India and the early Buddhist dead.

We do not have to take just the reference to King Aśoka and Faxian's record at Mahākāśyapa's cave as evidence that the dead matter to Jizushan's landscape. On its own, these

⁸⁵ Strong, *Relics of the Buddha* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 186.

⁸⁶ Lian, "Dali shanxiang yu tuguan zhengzhi."

references to early Buddhists and their death practices would suggest that Jizushan was marked as a Buddhist site in distinctly Indian ways through the association with Indian landscape and Indian Buddhist figures: rather, if we look to other stories of the dead at Jizushan later than Faxian's early records, we find Chinese expressions of sacred landscapes and monastic hagiographic conventions. Pre-Ming hagiographies of Jizushan monastics are plentiful in the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi*, and often make note of special circumstances of the individuals' death. These texts appear to predate the 1692 edition and were gathered from local Yunnanese sources. However, the original date for many of these hagiographies is unclear. For instance, the *Caoxi yidi* is the earliest source for hagiographies that claim to be pre-Song and Tang accounts, but it was compiled only in 1636. I highlight this to demonstrate that the history of remarkable deaths of Jizushan may not be as old as the *Jizu shanzhi* would lead us to believe, and that the work to make Jizushan a place of Buddhist death is more likely a Ming-era effort, much like the legend of Mahākāśyapa. One hagiography that supports both a history of remarkable death at Jizushan and its connection to Mahākāśyapa is below:

This master Gu of Jizu, we do not know the place of his origin. His secular name was Xiaocheng and he was informally called Xiaochen. [At one time,] when living with two monks in a cloister, he entered the city to eat, (the ruler of) Nanzhao asked: "What teachings do you know?" Xiaocheng answered: "I can make the deceased be reborn into the world of ultimate bliss." (The ruler of) Nanzhao then gave instructions to the country, that whenever people died, Xiaocheng should be invited to carry the coffin. He did this for ten-odd years. Someone slandered [Xiaocheng] before (the ruler of) Nanzhao, saying: "Xiaocheng is a liar! He said he was able to release the soul of the dead from suffering,

how can this be verified? I wish to enter a coffin [pretending to be dead] and test it". [The ruler of] Nanzhao thus asked Xiaocheng to raise the coffin. When it was carried to the cremation site, the coffin cover was lifted and [the minister was] examined: he was indeed dead. [The ruler of Nanzhao] earnestly asked Xiaocheng to return the minister to life, Xiaocheng performed rituals, achieving the minister's resurrection.

The [minister], who just experienced death, said with remorse: "I already lived in the palace of seven treasures, how is it that I return to this place?" Xiaocheng returned to his old cloister, met the two monks, and asked for food. The two monks said, "you returned back from the city, why did you not bring any food, but are begging for food here?"

Xiaocheng then walked away, knocked on the Huashou stone gate, and there was a sound of a crash and the gate opened. The two monks who followed him arrived at the stone gate, then the stone gate closed. The two monks were remorseful and regretful, and burned their bodies outside the gate. Two cedar trees grew where they burned, a spring named "crying tears" remains there. Someone said, Xiaocheng is Kāśyapa in a transformed body.⁸⁷

This account, one among many death-centric hagiographies, shows us that death at Jizushan behaves in many ways that would be familiar to a seventeenth century gazetteer reader, and that the legend of Mahākāśyapa presented through Faxian's record is not a particularly unusual account. Though this account claims to be an eighth-century text from the Nanzhao era, we see some familiar elements of monks performing miracles, and where the landscape responds

⁸⁷ See Appendix for full version.

to exceptional deaths, via trees growing where Xiaocheng's associates self-immolate—elements we find throughout later Chinese hagiography.⁸⁸

Returning to Jizushan and its gazetteer, we know through the presence of typical Chinese Buddhist hagiography conventions elsewhere in the *Jizu shanzhi* that death works in much the same way as in other points throughout Chinese Buddhist history and geography. In the 1692 edition of the *Jizu shanzhi*, Mahākāśyapa's very special dead body gives Jizushan a long and significant Buddhist history that is closely tied both with an Indian Buddhist past and with a contemporary Qing interest in recreating this Buddhist past for a Chinese Qing audience.

Mahākāśyapa at Jizushan

From records elsewhere in the *Jizu shanzhi*, we know that death and the presence of dead bodies at Jizushan is a sign of successful Buddhist practice, with hagiographies attesting to the site's significance before the Ming dynasty. Whereas Faxian's record in the *Jizu shanzhi* argues that Jizushan was a fifth-century pilgrimage site, the claim to Mahākāśyapa's body dates Jizushan as an even earlier site, one with close connections to the life of the historical Buddha. Jizushan, in this account, is not just a site with a long history—it has a history as long as the historical Buddha himself.

We know from Ruizhi Lian's research that this association between Yunnan's Jizushan and Mahākāśyapa is a Ming construction, and that the claim to Mahākāśyapa's body, too, is a later invention. However, if we set aside the historical possibilities and take this claim at its face value, Jizushan appears to be a sacred site comparable to the *sida mingshan*, with an even longer

⁸⁸ James Benn has written extensively on the practice of monastic self-immolation as an ideal form of death and worship throughout Chinese Buddhist history, with attention to self-immolation and self-harm as ways to emulate eminent figures. See James A. Benn, *Burning for the Buddha: Self Immolation in Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007) for more on this practice.

history and the presence of Mahākāśyapa's thousand-year-old whole body relic. The *Jizu shanzhi* excerpts we have examined make a powerful claim to Buddhism's distant past, the potential of miracles throughout the Ming-constructed Buddhist centuries, and the promise of great cosmological Buddhist change happening at Jizushan in a distant future.

This argument is successful on the one hand because of the trends in Buddhist sacred space I outlined in previous chapters—such as the presence of miracle tales, relocation of sacred sites from India to China, the circulation of mountain gazetteers, and the Ming-era surge in temple construction that would have been familiar to the *Jizu shanzhi*'s readership. On the other hand, it is a successful argument because of Mahākāśyapa's status as both Śākyamuni Buddha's disciple and his status as an arhat, with close ties both to Indian and Chinese traditions through Jizushan's relative proximity to Buddhist homelands, compared to significant religious landmarks farther east. Arhat worship does not take as prominent a place in Chinese Buddhist place-making as does, for example, the worship of Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

While Mahākāśyapa might lack in popular worship, his whole-body relic offers something additional: first, like all relics, the body of Mahākāśyapa is a reminder of the Buddha's biography. John Strong argues all relics, from sutra fragments to bones, evoke the original *parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha and remind their viewers of cycles of life and death. This is especially true in the case of Mahākāśyapa's body; participating in the death rites of Śākyamuni Buddha as one of his closest disciples, and later travelling to die in a mountain (Kukkuṭapāda/Jizushan) to await the next Buddha, Mahākāśyapa becomes a figure of Buddhism's distant past as well as its distant future. Reading the *Jizu shanzhi*, we see how Mahākāśyapa's death makes Jizushan into a place of past remarkable deaths and future transformations, where the mountain is the site of the next Buddha's arrival on earth.

Conclusion

I approached this project on Jizushan knowing I wanted to use a gazetteer to examine a lesser-known Buddhist sacred site and the stories behind its origin and rise to importance. I aimed to demonstrate that the amount of mountain gazetteers at our disposal enables scholars to examine a wide array of sites within China, especially with recent excellent digitization and markup by Dharma Drum Liberal Arts of many mountain gazetteers. In this way, my choice of Jizushan and the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* was somewhat random: a gazetteer from a lesser known location in a multi-ethnic area that had not yet received English-language treatment.

I expected to find that Jizushan, given its remote location on the edges of the Chinese world might offer a different narrative than we find at other significant Buddhist sites, a narrative established by Wutaishan's rise to fame. Given the mountain's proximity to the Nanzhao and Dali kingdom capitals, I thought the *Jizu shanzhi* might point to some instances in which existing local relationships with the mountain might have interacted with newer Qing Buddhist conventions. I also expected that the absence of a resident bodhisattva (as we find at the *sida mingshan*) would drastically alter how the gazetteer excerpts argue that the mountain is important. Instead, I found that while the cast of characters was different in the *Jizu shanzhi* accounts, the strategies at play in the stories of these characters were the same, and that this gazetteer was not the right text to offer an intercultural study of Chinese Buddhists amidst local Yunnan traditions.

I identified three overlapping strategies at play to create Jizushan's history as a Chinese Buddhist sacred site with a lengthy history. The use of Faxian's record first offers legitimacy: the

gazetteer claims that one of the earliest and well-known Buddhist pilgrims to travel to India travelled to Jizushan in the fifth century. Faxian-related quotations tell us that he encountered an apparition of Mahākāśyapa on a mountain, and later visited the cave containing his body. If we encountered this sections in their original format, we would have no strong reason to connect Faxian's visit to Kukkuṭapāda, an Indian mountain, to the site in China, aside from the Chinese characters their names share.

Here is where the gazetteer format shines and makes new kinds of stories possible: one of the *Jizu shanzhi* contributors inserts an explanation to link Jizushan to India, and points to ancient history to assure the reader that the area around the mountain was actually under Indian administration at the time, attempting to alleviate any doubts that Faxian was at Yunnan's Jizushan. Faxian's pilgrimage record to India, subject to edits and compilations in the *Jizu shanzhi*, now is a record of a visit to Jizushan.

From this claim emerge two other important layers for the argument of Jizushan's importance. If Faxian visited Jizushan, two more pieces of Jizushan's story can be true: first, that Jizushan is the same site as Kukkuṭapāda, traditionally believed to be an Indian mountain, close to a network of other sites related to early Buddhism and Śākyamuni Buddha's life and death. We often find that mythological Indian Buddhist sites are copied further afield, much like how Emeishan and Wutaishan look to the *Huayan jing* to claim that they are the Potalaka, home of Guanyin, and the "cool and clear mountain" home of Wenshu. Kukkuṭapāda, too, appears in Buddhist scripture, and this pre-existing importance allows for the next layer of Jizushan's portrayal in the *Jizu shanzhi*: Jizushan as Kukkuṭapāda becomes the site of Mahākāśyapa's death, who was entrusted by Śākyamuni Buddha to wait for the arrival of the next Buddha.

This project shows that a case study of a lesser-studied sacred site through an under-studied gazetteer is not only possible, but offers many avenues of future study. I addressed only a few small sections of this gazetteer in this project, mainly working with its hagiographies and legends surrounding the history of the mountain as a sacred site. I did not address the monasteries built on the temple when the area came under administration and what texts or images they may have used to establish themselves, nor did I address the lineages of the mainly Chan monastics that populate the hagiography sections of the *Jizu shanzhi*, as these topics deserve a treatment that is beyond the scope of this project. There are significant gaps in our scholarly understanding of Jizushan, particularly before the area was under Ming administration, and prior to its association with Mahākāśyapa. Unfortunately, we cannot compare the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* to earlier gazetteer editions in the style of comparative work by Susan Andrews or Marcus Bingenheimer on Wutaishan and Putuoshan gazetteer excerpts respectively,⁸⁹ as this edition is the earliest extant version.

A possible avenue of future exploration is to find when and under what circumstances Jizushan received that name. What were its names before Jizushan appeared on Chinese maps? We know it was called Jiuqu shan at times, but it certainly has names in other languages, and perhaps different Chinese names at different points in its history. Knowing the earliest instance of the mountain under the name “Jizu shan” would indicate to us in greater detail when this site began to be associated with Kukkuṭapāda, its Indian counterpart of the same Chinese name. Ruizhi Lian’s work begins this process, identifying that the Mahākāśyapa connection was a Ming creation, and discusses some of the temple building efforts and their patrons. It is possible that this shared name was once a coincidence, predating Ming-era efforts to associate the

⁸⁹ Andrews, “Tales of Conjured Temples in Qing period Gazetteers.” Bingenheimer, *Island of Guanyin*.

mountain with Mahākāśyapa, but the obvious shared Chinese name calls any coincidence into question.

Though there is little work on Jizushan's history, there is even less work on the original Indian site, claimed to be in Bihar, India (the contemporary site is also known as Gurpa Mountain). Outside of canonical texts, it does not appear that Kukkuṭapāda occupied a central place in Buddhism while the tradition flourished in India. Faxian and Xuanzang visited the mountain, but they do not linger on the details of the site beyond some remarks on the landscape and the presence of Mahākāśyapa's body. It was a known site during Faxian and Xuanzang's pilgrimages, but not well known or highly remarkable to these individuals.

However, study of the "original" Kukkuṭapāda may not reveal anything worthwhile to our understanding of the creation and maintenance of sacred sites in China. In the cases of Putuoshan or Wutaishan, these sites are aligned with mythic sites in scripture, and though these mythic sites are "real" in the sense that they matter for these mountains' legends, attempts to identify or make claims of veracity related to physical sites do not offer much for our understanding of how these sites relate to their origins.

In the case of Jizushan in the *Jizu shanzhi*, its relationship to India and its distant past is also mythic. However, in the *Jizu shanzhi* we see an effort to supplement its mythic origins (Mahākāśyapa's body) with more concrete details. Appeals to very early Chinese history make an argument that Jizushan was once Indian territory, and those that are doubtful that Jizushan is really the same site are misinformed. This appeal to history and geography is a surprisingly concrete way to explain the location of something as ineffable as an encounter with an apparition of Śākyamuni Buddha's disciple. It directly addresses readers' concerns of the account's

veracity: in the gazetteer there is no doubt that the events around Faxian's visit to Mahākāśyapa's grave really occurred, but if Jizushan was the true location of these events.

Bodhisattvas make frequent appearances in the miracle tales of sacred mountains in China, but the presence of an Indian Buddhist monk as the sanctifying force of a Chinese sacred site is more unusual. Chinese monks are familiar characters, as are pilgrims who visit India and return like Faxian. What do sites founded by arhats offer that sites of bodhisattvas do not? This avenue of research may take us away from Mahayana traditions and into schools of thought where arhats like Mahākāśyapa take a more prominent role, and perhaps scholars of South Asian Buddhism sacred space would offer insights into how individuals affect the founding narratives without the presence of bodhisattvas or other eminent beings.

This project has addressed an imagined fifth-century Jizushan as it appears in the seventeenth-century *Jizu shanzhi*. Elsewhere, scholars have shown how gazetteers were useful tools of facilitating administration in new areas, and how these documents served Chinese interests. Why would the individuals working on the *Jizu shanzhi* want to make such a strong connection to India, given that China had long been a source of Buddhist authority in its own right? We know that Indian connections were immensely important from Buddhism's introduction in China in the first several centuries of the common era, and many Buddhist innovations drew on Indian origins for legitimacy, including the construction of sacred sites. But once China became a center of Buddhism on its own, do we find the same Indian strategies at new sites built after the Tang dynasty? We see many early site-building strategies used in the *Jizu shanzhi* that would better suit eighth-century gazetteers, and this is an intentional use of this genre's conventions, especially in the case of Buddhist mountain gazetteers.

A growing body of scholarship, such as work by Chou, Tuttle, and Berger discusses how Qing rulers interacted with the many cultures of their citizens, with a particular focus on their relationship to Tibetan, Mongolian, and other Buddhist traditions. We know that Qianlong and Kangxi's patronage of Tibetan Buddhism had direct influence on the imperial patronage of Buddhist sacred sites in China, and that the imperial interest in a vast array of Buddhist traditions was a successful appeal to multiculturalism and legitimate rulership. Their relationship to India and its kingdoms is less clear, especially as it relates to Buddhism in the seventeenth century. Though a diverse and expansive territory, China did not have a claim to territory with primarily Indian citizens, and given that there was little indigenous Buddhism in India at this time, the empire had less of a vested interest in portraying themselves in alignment with Indian Buddhist traditions, as they may have when compared to their large numbers of Tibetan Buddhists and Tibetan Buddhist institutions. Evidently, India still mattered to Buddhist legitimacy at the time, either to local Yunnanese groups or to the more recently arrived Chinese Buddhists. If India did not matter to the gazetteer's audience, the compilers of the *Jizu shanzhi* would not have devoted so much of Jizushan's mythology to an Indian site and an Indian monastic. These stories of Indian sacred sites continued to be shared as legitimate legends of sacred sites throughout the Qing, but portrayals of India do not appear to be of immediate concern for cultivating legitimacy among their subjects.

Gazetteers like the *Jizu shanzhi* offer us vast amounts of textual material relating to a mountain's past and the ways that it has been reshaped through various retellings and compilations. They do not often tell us about a Buddhist future: in articulating the claim to Mahākāśyapa's body and in turn, the *Jizu shanzhi* indirectly claims that Jizushan will be the location of Maitreya's arrival on earth and a new Buddhist era. This is not explicitly spelled out

in the *Jizu shanzhi*, but those familiar with the scriptures on Śākyamuni Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* would be familiar with the accounts of the Buddha instructing Mahākāśyapa to wait for the arrival of Maitreya Buddha. Much like the way that the imagined Indian Buddhist past of Jizushan is very distant to a seventeenth century audience, this Buddhist future is also very distant. However, the arrival of Maitreya and a new Buddhist era is an issue of momentous cosmological importance, where a new kind of dharma begins at Jizushan.

The case of the 1692 *Jizu shanzhi* shows that stories of Indian Buddhism, its landscape, and its eminent individuals still mattered to a seventeenth century audience. Even more so, we see how these connections to Indian Buddhism becomes a tool in which a fifth-century pilgrimage record through India is reshaped as a visit to Jizushan through Faxian's inclusion in the gazetteer. Jizushan does not have the same body of historical text and scholarship as its counterparts to the east, like the *sida mingshan*, but the *Jizu shanzhi* shows that work to create narratives around sacred sites in China using Indian legitimacy was not a strategy that ended with the establishment of Wutaishan as a pilgrimage center in the eighth century. Rather, we see the same narrative techniques employed across gazetteers at geographically disparate sites in China, and we also find that Indian sacred sites are still copied and reshaped through the seventeenth century in many of the same ways as they were a millennium earlier.

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Appendix

Pages 81–84 from the *Jizu shanzhi*:

A record of Famous and Excellent Sites

At the base of the Hall of Universal Light at the peak of Jizu Mountain (Skt. Kukkuṭapāda). There is a stone gate that is a thousand fathoms (8000 feet) high. This place has barely been trodden. Canonical scripture says:

The monk Faxian from Pingyang went to India looking for scriptures, he went beyond the Congling Mountains and went south. When he was about to arrive at Jizu Mountain, he met an old man on the road, who had thick eyebrows and a remarkable appearance, and Faxian failed to realize he was a not an ordinary person.

In an instant a novice monk arrived, and Faxian began to ask: “Who was this old man?” [The novice monk] answered: “He was Kāśyapa.” Faxian then learned that this was the honorable one's spiritual manifestation, and he therefore followed [him] to Kāśyapa's gate. [Since the gate] was barred by a large stone, and could not be entered, [Faxian] left in tears.

鷄足山大頂普光殿腳，有石門千仞。人跡罕至。藏經雲：⁹⁰

平陽僧[法顯]入西竺求經，踰蔥嶺而南。將至鷄足山，路遇老人，龐[眉]偉貌，顯不悟其為神人。頃有一沙彌至，顯始問：「耆老為誰？」荅曰：「大迦葉也。」顯始知即是尊者顯靈，乃追至迦葉門，為大石所橫，不得入，遂流涕而去。⁹¹

Faxian's record

⁹⁰ This section appears to be original to the *Jizu shanzhi*.

⁹¹ This section of the *Jizu shanzhi* is from Faxian's biography in the Gaoseng zhuan (T. no 2059: 0337b19–0346a24).

Departing the *pattrā* trees and proceeding south for three *li*, I came to a mountain, named Jizu. Kāśyapa was now in this mountain. I tore my way through the mountain and moved downward, and the opening was not big enough to fit one person. It was a long distance going down, until there was another opening, where Kāśyapa lived with his body kept intact. Outside the cave is “Kāśyapa’s washing hands soil”, and when people have headaches they will apply the soil to their heads, and become healed.⁹²

Many arhats still live in this mountain. People of the Way from countries in all directions, year after year come here to make offerings [to the arhats]. For those whose hearts are sincere, arhats will [join them and] exchange teachings together at night. Having dismissed their doubts, the arhats will suddenly disappear. The hazel trees on this mountain are lush, teeming with lions, tigers, and wolves, so one should never head for it carelessly.

[法=法]顯傳

從貝多樹南行三裡，到一山，名鷄足。大迦葉今在此山中。劈山下入，入處不容人。下入極遠，有旁孔，迦葉全身在此中住。孔外有迦葉洗手土，彼方人若頭痛者，以此土塗之即差。

此山中，故有諸羅漢住。彼方諸國道人，年年往供養。心濃至者，夜即有羅漢來共言論。釋其疑已，忽[狀=然]不見。此山櫟木[茂=茂]盛，又多獅子、虎、狼，不可妄行。⁹³

During the Three Dynasties era, the region of Dianzhong originally belonged to the Western Regions, a principality created by King Aśoka. According to Buddhist scriptures and unofficial history, Diancang refers to nowhere but Kukkuṭapāda. It is undoubtable that

⁹³ This section is from Chapter 33 of Faxian’s *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 T 2085.

Jizu mountain is where Mahākāśyapa entered into concentration. Because Jizu mountain became began communicating with the central plains only after the Han, and because Chinese people saw Buddhist texts to be largely filled with nonsense, they reached the conclusion that the Buddha is not part of this real world. Because of this, when people saw for themselves the stone gate of Huashou on the summit of Jizu mountain, they doubted that the honorable one was present in this place. They did not know that Jizu mountain was formerly part of Indian territory during the Zhou. In the area hundreds of *li* around the mountain, there are many marked traces of miracles by bodhisattvas, therefore we know this is a Buddhist sacred site. Discussions for determining [these traces] can be seen in the landscape section of this gazetteer, and readers should examine them carefully.⁹⁴

三代之時，滇中原屬西域之地，爲阿育王所封。[攷=考]之佛典、野史，點蒼卽靈鷲。則此鷄山爲迦葉尊者入定之處無疑矣。緣鷄足山至漢以後，始通中國，而中原人覩佛書，哆大多荒唐語，遂以佛爲非復人世所有。故親覩鷄山華首石門，而反疑尊者未必在此。蓋不知鷄山當周時原在天竺幅員之內。具此山前後數百里之間，諸佛菩薩靈蹟顯著者甚多，其爲佛地可知。⁹⁵

Biography selection: Pages 382–384:

Meditation Monk Master Gu of the Tang

⁹⁵ This section appears to be original to the *Jizu shanzhi*, for commentary on Faxian's preceding *Faxian zhuan* excerpt.

This master Gu of Jizu, we do not know the place of his origin. His secular name was Xiaocheng and he was informally called Xiaochen. [At one time,] when living with two monks in a cloister, he entered the city to eat, (the ruler of) Nanzhao asked: “What teachings do you know?”

Xiaocheng answered: “I can make the deceased reborn into the world of ultimate bliss.” (The ruler of) Nanzhao then gave instructions to the country, that whenever people died, Xiaocheng should be invited to carry the coffin. He did this for ten-odd years. Someone slandered [Xiaocheng] before (the ruler of) Nanzhao, saying: "Xiaocheng is a liar! He said he was able to release the soul of the dead from suffering, how can this be verified? I wish to enter a coffin [pretending to be dead] and test it". [The ruler of] Nanzhao thus asked Xiaocheng to raise the coffin. When it was carried to the cremation site, the coffin cover was lifted and [the minister was] examined: he was indeed dead. [The ruler of Nanzhao] earnestly asked Xiaocheng to return the minister to life, Xiaocheng performed rituals, achieving the minister’s resurrection.⁹⁶

The [minister], who just experienced death, said with remorse: "I already lived in the palace of seven treasures, how is that I return to this place?" Xiaocheng returned to his old cloister, met the two monks, and asked for food. The two monks said, “you returned back from the city, why did you not bring any food, but are begging for food here?” Xiaocheng then walked away, knocked on the Huashou stone gate, and there was a sound of a crash and the gate opened. The two monks who followed him arrived at the stone gate, then the stone gate closed. The two monks were remorseful and regretful, and burned their bodies outside the gate. Two cedar trees grew where they burned, a spring named “crying tears” remains there. Someone said, Xiaocheng is Kāśyapa in a transformed body. (See the "Cao xi yidi")⁹⁷

禪僧〔唐〕古和尚 鷄足古和尚，不知何許人也。名小澄，俗呼爲「小沈」。與二僧同住一庵。入城吃食，南詔問：「識何法門？」小澄答雲：「我能使死者生極樂世界。」南詔遂令國中，但有死者，請小澄起棺。如此十餘年。有讒于南詔者曰：「小澄妄人也！雲能超度死覓，何所證驗？臣願入棺試之。」南詔如其言，請小澄起棺。將至化骨處，起棺蓋視之，誠死矣。懇之求生，小澄又作法，遂甦。死者悔曰：「我已生七寶宮殿中，如何復來此？」小澄遂還舊庵，見二僧，問食。二僧曰：「汝從城中來，乃不[裹=裹]糧，却至此索食耶？」小澄遂走，叩華首石門，門忽然中開。二僧追呼至石門，則石門閉矣。二僧悔恨，焚身門外。焚處生栢二株，有泣淚泉存焉。或雲，小澄卽迦葉化身也。

Ciji

We do not know his origin, he used to worship Kāśyapa on a rock of the summit of the lofty mountains in the northeast of Er Hai lake, and made one hundred prostration per day. People named the rock “worship rock”, which was on the edge of an unknown deep valley. He stood on the stone and passed away, and since then, no one has stood on the stone.

慈濟：不知何許人，嘗在洱海東北青巔山峻石上禮迦葉，日課百拜。人名其石爲禮拜石，下臨不測之淵。濟後立化於石，今無有躡其石者。出《滇志》