



# Island of Guanyin: Mount Putuo and Its Gazetteers

*Marcus Bingenheimer*

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Among Chinese religious sites, Mount Putuo, the "Island of Guanyin," stands out as a fascinating embodiment of China's vibrant Buddhist tradition. A small island in the East China Sea, it has been the single most important pilgrimage site for the worship of Guanyin, the beloved Bodhisattva of Compassion, who is venerated from Sri Lanka to Japan.

Attracting thousands of visitors every year, the site has accumulated a multi-layered historical record, as it appears in different lights in poems, biographies, maps, and legends across the centuries. From its foundation in Mahayana Buddhist scriptures to its descriptions in local histories known as "gazetteers," Mount Putuo's distinctive profile makes it an abiding landmark throughout the checkered history of Chinese Buddhism.

This book, the first monograph on Mount Putuo in any language, follows the structure of a gazetteer as it presents important texts about this sacred site, which are here translated for the first time, groups them according to the individual genres found in the gazetteers, and analyzes their function. This brings out the full meaning of the texts against their historical, geographical, and religious contexts, producing a panoramic view of Mount Putuo through the lens of its textual heritage. Revealing the dense fabric of one deep-rooted devotional tradition, the book will be of interest to all students of Asian Buddhism.

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