

Metaphysical and Soteriological Dimensions of the Amitābha Sūtra: Toward a Philosophy of Pure Consciousness

Huynh Duc Thien, PhD^{1*}, Nguyen Duy Trung, PhD²

¹University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University Ho, Chi Minh City

²Cuu Long University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36348/jaep.2025.v09i11.001>

| Received: 10.09.2025 | Accepted: 03.11.2025 | Published: 06.11.2025

*Corresponding author: Huynh Duc Thien

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City

Abstract

The Amitābha Sūtra, one of the central scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism, presents a profound vision of reality grounded in both metaphysical and soteriological insight. From a philosophical perspective, the Pure Land (Sukhāvātī) is not merely a transcendent realm but a symbolic manifestation of pure consciousness, where being and awakening coincide. This paper explores the metaphysical structure of the Amitābha Sūtra through the lenses of Buddhist ontology and phenomenology, emphasizing the dialectical relationship between emptiness (śūnyatā) and luminous awareness (prakṛti-prabhāvara). It further examines the soteriological implications of faith, vow, and practice (śraddhā, praṇidhāna, caryā) as modes of transformation leading from conditioned existence to the realization of the unconditioned. By situating the Amitābha Sūtra within a comparative philosophical framework, this study argues that its vision of “pure consciousness” contributes not only to Buddhist metaphysics but also to a universal philosophy of transcendence and liberation. The inquiry thereby bridges textual exegesis and philosophical reasoning, revealing the enduring relevance of Pure Land thought to contemporary reflections on being, mind, and salvation.

Keywords: Amitābha Sūtra; Pure Land; Buddhist philosophy; metaphysics; soteriology; consciousness; emptiness.

Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Amitābha Sūtra occupies a distinctive place within Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy as both a devotional text and a profound expression of Buddhist metaphysics. Far from being a mere soteriological scripture promising rebirth in the Western Pure Land (Sukhāvātī), it presents a vision of being and consciousness that invites philosophical reflection on the nature of reality, mind, and liberation. Within the Buddhist intellectual tradition, metaphysics and soteriology are never separated: ontology is always a path toward awakening, and awakening reveals the true nature of being itself (Williams, 2009, p. 83). This inseparability of insight and salvation forms the conceptual foundation for interpreting the Amitābha Sūtra from a philosophical standpoint.

The central image of Amitābha Buddha and his Pure Land has often been viewed as a religious symbol of faith and devotion. However, philosophical readings reveal that the Pure Land represents more than an eschatological realm; it symbolizes the realization of pure consciousness (viśuddha-citta), a state beyond the

dualities of birth and death. From this perspective, the Amitābha Sūtra can be understood as a metaphysical treatise disguised as religious poetry—a vision of ultimate being where compassion and wisdom merge as ontological principles. As Suzuki (1957, p. 119) observed, the Pure Land doctrine is “the metaphysical affirmation of enlightenment itself, expressed through the imagery of an ideal world.”

The metaphysical dimension of the Amitābha Sūtra lies in its implicit ontology of luminosity and emptiness. The text presents the Pure Land as a realm “without suffering, only joy” (anupadravaḥ sukhamātraḥ lokah), yet this joy is not hedonistic but ontological—the bliss of awareness liberated from defilement. Such an understanding aligns with the Mahāyāna doctrine of śūnyatā (emptiness), wherein phenomena lack inherent existence yet manifest through dependent origination (pratītya-samutpāda) (Garfield, 1995, p. 112). In this sense, Amitābha’s “infinite light” (amitābha) can be read as the symbol of consciousness itself—boundless, self-luminous, and compassionate in its very being. The metaphysical message of the text thus

resonates with the notion of “luminous mind” (*prakṛti-prabhāsvara-citta*), a concept that bridges Yogācāra phenomenology and Tathāgatagarbha ontology (Lusthaus, 2002, p. 146).

Equally central is the soteriological dimension of the Amitābha Sūtra. The triad of faith (*śraddhā*), vow (*praṇidhāna*), and practice (*caryā*) forms the existential method of transformation. Rather than proposing salvation as a divine gift, the sutra articulates a dynamic process in which consciousness reorients itself toward its pure ground. The act of reciting Amitābha’s name (*nembutsu*) is not merely devotional but phenomenological—it is the meditative recollection of the mind’s own luminous nature. As Keown (2017, p. 213) explains, Buddhist salvation is “a transformation of the moral and cognitive structure of the person, achieved through insight into the true nature of reality.” Therefore, the Pure Land is not only a post-mortem destination but an ontological realization accessible through meditative faith.

Philosophically, this raises questions about the relationship between faith and reason, transcendence and immanence, self and other. Is Amitābha’s Pure Land an external metaphysical domain or an internal mode of consciousness? How does the vow of Amitābha—his forty-eight resolutions—relate to the human aspiration for awakening? From a dialectical standpoint, the Amitābha Sūtra expresses the paradoxical logic of Buddhist non-duality: the transcendent is immanent, and the immanent, when purified, is already transcendent. As Dōgen famously noted, “To study the self is to forget the self; to forget the self is to be enlightened by all things” (Heine, 1994, p. 58). The Pure Land thus represents the world seen through awakened consciousness—*samsāra* transfigured into *nirvāṇa*.

This paper seeks to reinterpret the Amitābha Sūtra as a philosophical text that articulates a coherent view of being, consciousness, and liberation. It proceeds from the hypothesis that the sutra’s symbolic language conceals a rigorous metaphysical framework grounded in Buddhist ontology and phenomenology. The first section will survey key philosophical interpretations of Pure Land thought in both Eastern and Western scholarship, situating the Amitābha Sūtra within the broader discourse of Buddhist metaphysics. The second section will examine its metaphysical foundations, focusing on the concepts of emptiness, luminosity, and the nature of being. The third section will analyze its soteriological implications, particularly the transformation of consciousness through faith and meditative recollection. Finally, the paper will propose that the Amitābha Sūtra, when interpreted philosophically, offers a universal vision of pure consciousness that transcends sectarian boundaries and contributes to a global philosophy of enlightenment.

II. CONTERN

1. Literature Review

The interpretation of the Amitābha Sūtra has evolved through centuries of Buddhist scholarship, moving from a purely devotional framework to one that invites philosophical and phenomenological engagement. In the East Asian Mahāyāna tradition, the Amitābha Sūtra (Skt. *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra*) was historically regarded as a text of faith (*śraddhā*) and recitation, emphasizing the salvific power of Amitābha Buddha’s vows. Yet, modern scholarship increasingly recognizes the sutra’s implicit metaphysical and epistemological significance. As Inagaki (2003, p. 17) notes, the Pure Land scriptures “express the realization of ultimate truth through the language of devotion,” suggesting a symbolic depth that transcends literal belief.

Early Japanese interpretations, such as those of Hōnen (1133–1212) and Shinran (1173–1263), grounded Pure Land thought in a radical theory of “Other-Power” (*tariki*), contrasting it with the “Self-Power” (*jiriki*) of meditative practice (Bloom, 1999, p. 76). However, this binary distinction has been revisited by later philosophers, particularly those influenced by Kyoto School thinkers like Nishida Kitarō and Nishitani Keiji. Nishida’s concept of “pure experience” (*junsui keiken*) resonates deeply with the sutra’s vision of the Pure Land as a field of non-dual awareness where subject and object coalesce (Nishida, 1990, p. 28). Nishitani (1982, p. 125) further argues that the faith in Amitābha represents an existential awakening in which the self realizes its ground in absolute nothingness (*zettai mu*). Such readings position the Amitābha Sūtra not merely as theology but as an articulation of Buddhist metaphysics—a philosophy of consciousness beyond dualism.

In Western Buddhist studies, scholars have attempted to interpret the Amitābha Sūtra within the broader context of Mahāyāna ontology and phenomenology. Paul Williams (2009, p. 147) identifies Pure Land thought as a “devotional expression of the Mahāyāna vision of reality,” in which Amitābha symbolizes the boundless compassion inherent in the awakened mind. Damien Keown (2017, p. 119) situates the sutra within Buddhist ethical theory, viewing the Pure Land as “a moral metaphor for the purified state of consciousness.” Similarly, Alfred Bloom (1998, p. 56) regards the invocation of Amitābha’s name (*nembutsu*) as a transformative act of mindfulness that embodies both metaphysical and ethical dimensions. These approaches reveal a shared consensus that the Amitābha Sūtra integrates moral cultivation, phenomenological insight, and soteriological vision into a unified philosophical framework.

The hermeneutical question of how to interpret “Pure Land” itself has become a focal point in contemporary philosophy of religion. John Cobb (2005, p. 203) approaches the Pure Land as a “symbolic

topography of the mind,” suggesting that the imagery of lotus ponds and radiant light represents psychological and existential states rather than cosmological geography. This aligns with the phenomenological turn in Buddhist studies, exemplified by scholars like David Loy (1996, p. 88), who interprets the Pure Land as a metaphor for nondual awareness—the condition of consciousness that transcends the subject–object dichotomy. Loy (2008, p. 122) asserts that “the luminous awareness of Amitābha is not elsewhere but here, in the purified perception of reality itself.”

Recent cross-cultural scholarship has also drawn parallels between Pure Land thought and Western metaphysical systems. Masao Abe (1989, p. 41) observes that the Amitābha Sūtra expresses a dynamic interplay between being and nothingness comparable to Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* (1927), yet surpasses it through its emphasis on compassion as the ontological ground. Similarly, Takeuchi Yoshinori (2001, p. 312) interprets Amitābha’s infinite light as a metaphor for absolute being (*bhūtatathatā*), which can be understood in phenomenological terms as “being-as-consciousness.” This metaphysical reading repositions the Amitābha Sūtra within the global dialogue of philosophy, allowing it to converse with Western existentialism and phenomenology on equal intellectual footing.

The soteriological dimension of the sutra has been widely analyzed in both Buddhist and comparative contexts. As Harvey (2013, p. 223) emphasizes, Pure Land salvation is “neither passive dependence nor self-generated merit but the awakening of relational being.” This relational ontology finds resonance with process philosophy, particularly in Whitehead’s notion of “concrescence,” where each moment of experience reflects the universe’s creative advance toward unity (Whitehead, 1978, p. 215). Such parallels reveal the potential of Pure Land thought to enrich global philosophical discourse on the interdependence of consciousness and cosmos.

Furthermore, scholars like Soga Ryōjin (1875–1971) have argued that the Amitābha Sūtra should be understood as an existential practice rather than mere doctrinal belief. His interpretation of *shinjin* (true entrusting) posits that the act of faith is simultaneously an act of awakening—faith not in Amitābha but as Amitābha (Soga, 1962, p. 104). This insight profoundly anticipates modern phenomenological perspectives, where faith becomes an intentional act revealing the essence of consciousness itself. In this regard, the sutra can be read as a phenomenological exercise in self-transcendence rather than an appeal to external salvation.

In contemporary Buddhist philosophy, the metaphysical import of the Amitābha Sūtra continues to inspire debate. For example, Garfield and Priest (2009, p. 91) discuss how the Mahāyāna view of emptiness defies classical logic, suggesting that Pure Land

cosmology exemplifies the “both–neither” logic of the Madhyamaka tradition. This invites a re-evaluation of Amitābha’s Pure Land not as a spatially distinct domain but as an ontological mode of reality accessible through wisdom. Meanwhile, Chan (2020, p. 231) argues that the sutra’s vision of light and bliss serves as a hermeneutic key to Buddhist phenomenology—an attempt to describe the unconditioned dimension of consciousness within the conditioned world.

Collectively, these interpretations converge on a crucial philosophical insight: the Amitābha Sūtra articulates a non-dual metaphysics of consciousness that unites ontology and soteriology. Its emphasis on infinite light (*amitābha*) and boundless life (*amitāyus*) points to the inseparability of being and knowing, existence and compassion. The sutra’s message, while couched in mythic imagery, reveals a profound philosophical structure wherein salvation is the realization of being’s pure luminosity. As Lopez (2016, p. 244) concludes, “Pure Land faith is the metaphysical faith in the possibility of awakening—the trust that being itself is salvific.”

The existing body of scholarship thus provides a rich foundation for philosophical inquiry into the Amitābha Sūtra. Yet, few studies have systematically examined how its metaphysical and soteriological dimensions converge to form a coherent philosophy of pure consciousness. Building upon the insights of both Buddhist and Western thinkers, this paper seeks to fill that gap by articulating how the Amitābha Sūtra embodies a vision of reality that is at once luminous, relational, and salvific—a vision that remains philosophically relevant to the global discourse on consciousness and liberation.

2. PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

2.1. The Ontological Structure of the Amitābha Sūtra: Being as Pure Consciousness

The Amitābha Sūtra articulates an ontological vision in which the structure of reality is not grounded in an external or objective world but in the luminous nature of consciousness itself. Within Mahāyāna philosophy, especially through the lenses of Yogācāra and Madhyamaka, the *Sukhāvatī* or Pure Land represents the self-manifestation of the mind in its most refined state (Williams, 2009, p. 173). Amitābha’s “land of bliss” thus cannot be interpreted merely as a cosmological domain located in a distant western realm; rather, it is a metaphysical symbol of consciousness free from defilement (*kleśa*), a realm coextensive with the awakened mind (*bodhicitta*).

The doctrine that “mind alone is the Pure Land” (唯心淨土) finds its philosophical foundation in Yogācāra thought, where all phenomena (*dharma*s) are viewed as representations (*viññaptimātra*). Vasubandhu’s *Discourse on the Pure Land* (*Jōdo-ron*) makes explicit that Amitābha’s paradise is “born of the mind’s vow and

wisdom” (Inagaki, 1994, p. 87). This implies that the ontological ground of the Amitābha Sūtra is consciousness itself—pure, self-luminous, and creative. Reality, in this view, is not dualistically divided between subject and object but unified as the dynamic unfolding of awareness.

Philosophically, this interpretation resonates with Edmund Husserl’s notion of *Lebenswelt*—the lived world as constituted by intentional consciousness (Husserl, 1970, p. 108). Just as Husserl suspends the natural attitude to reveal the structures of experience, the Amitābha Sūtra suspends the illusion of duality to reveal that the Pure Land arises through the purification of perception. When consciousness is freed from ignorance (*avidyā*), it reflects its own innate clarity, corresponding to the imagery of “pure water and jeweled ground” in the Sūtra.

This ontological vision transforms metaphysics into phenomenology: the Pure Land is the horizon of awakened being, not an external afterlife but a state of ontological realization. As Garfield (2015, p. 154) observes, Buddhist philosophy often collapses the distinction between metaphysical reality and epistemic process. The Amitābha Sūtra, in this sense, anticipates a non-dual metaphysics where “being” (*bhava*) and “knowing” (*jñāna*) converge within the heart of pure consciousness.

2.2. Emptiness, Compassion, and the Logic of Soteriology

The second major philosophical dimension of the Amitābha Sūtra is its soteriological logic—the structure of salvation as the actualization of wisdom and compassion within emptiness. In contrast to the purely ethical or ritualistic interpretations of salvation, the Sūtra presents liberation as a transformation in the mode of being, achieved through the synthesis of *sūnyatā* (emptiness) and *karuṇā* (compassion).

Nāgārjuna’s dialectic demonstrates that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence, yet this very emptiness makes relational compassion possible (Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakārikā*, XXIV.18; Garfield, 1995, p. 294). Similarly, Amitābha’s vow (*praṇidhāna*) is not a metaphysical assertion of an eternal being but an expression of enlightened compassion operating within the field of emptiness. The vow’s power (*adhiṣṭhāna*) manifests as the compassionate activity that enables beings to transcend the karmic continuum and be “born” into a purified state of awareness.

In this framework, faith (*śraddhā*) is not mere belief but an existential openness to the non-dual truth of reality. Shinran, in his *Kyōgyōshinshō*, interprets faith as “the mind that entrusts itself to the Buddha’s wisdom” (Shinran, 2006, p. 214). This entrusting (*shinjin*) dissolves the ego’s grasping tendencies, revealing the spontaneous functioning of wisdom. From a

philosophical standpoint, this process mirrors Martin Heidegger’s notion of *Gelassenheit*—the “releasement” toward Being (Heidegger, 1959, p. 48). In both cases, the subject surrenders control, allowing truth to disclose itself through a mode of letting-be.

Thus, the soteriology of the Amitābha Sūtra operates through a paradox: salvation is both an act of self-effort (*jiriki*) and other-power (*tariki*), yet ultimately transcends both. The dialectic of dependence and transcendence illustrates the Mahāyāna insight that liberation arises when one realizes the emptiness of both self and other. Compassion and emptiness are not separate principles but two expressions of the same ontological truth—emptiness as the condition of universal participation, and compassion as its living manifestation (Keown, 2017, p. 213).

2.3. The Pure Land and the Philosophy of Transcendence

A further layer of philosophical reflection emerges when we situate the Amitābha Sūtra within a global context of metaphysics and religious philosophy. The notion of the Pure Land as “pure consciousness” parallels certain strands of Western idealism, particularly the idea that reality is constituted through the self’s reflective awareness. However, unlike Hegelian idealism, which identifies the Absolute with rational self-development, the Amitābha Sūtra grounds transcendence in compassion rather than conceptual necessity.

Amitābha’s light (*prakāśa*) symbolizes the self-revelation of being through unconditional benevolence. The image of infinite radiance (*ananta-jyotiḥ*) suggests that the nature of the real is not inert substance but dynamic illumination—a concept akin to Plotinus’ emanation of the One (*Enneads* V.1.6). Yet where Plotinus’ metaphysics moves hierarchically from the One to the many, the Amitābha Sūtra conceives of reality as coemergent interdependence: the Pure Land manifests wherever mind is purified.

In this sense, the Amitābha Sūtra offers a non-dual philosophy of transcendence: transcendence does not negate immanence but fulfills it through the realization of its luminous depth. As Abe (1985, p. 67) argues, “the Pure Land is neither beyond nor within the world but the awakening of the world to its own purity.” This resonates with the phenomenological idea that the sacred is not elsewhere but disclosed through the very structure of consciousness.

By reinterpreting the Pure Land in this way, the Amitābha Sūtra transcends the dichotomy between theistic salvation and humanistic self-effort. The metaphysical center is neither a creator God nor an autonomous ego but the relational field of awakening—a reality characterized by interdependence (*pratītya-samutpāda*) and boundless compassion (*mahākaruṇā*). This insight has profound implications for global

philosophy: it invites dialogue between Buddhist ontology and Western thought, offering a model of transcendence that unites metaphysics, ethics, and phenomenology in a single vision of consciousness-as-being.

2.4. Philosophical Synthesis: Toward a Universal Philosophy of Pure Consciousness

The philosophical significance of the Amitābha Sūtra lies in its capacity to bridge traditional metaphysical inquiry and existential reflection. It proposes that consciousness, when freed from delusion, is inherently compassionate and luminous. The Sūtra thereby unites ontology (what is), epistemology (how it is known), and soteriology (how liberation is realized) within a single dynamic process.

From a comparative standpoint, the Amitābha Sūtra contributes to what may be termed a “universal philosophy of pure consciousness.” In this framework, the realization of the Pure Land corresponds to the transformation of perception rather than the attainment of another world. The metaphysical and soteriological aspects are inseparable: to know being as pure consciousness is already to participate in its salvific truth.

Such a reading aligns with Nishida Kitarō’s concept of “absolute nothingness” (*zettai mu*), in which consciousness becomes self-aware through the negation of all objectification (Nishida, 1987, p. 62). The Pure Land, then, can be seen as the manifestation of absolute nothingness—the openness through which all beings are affirmed. This vision redefines salvation not as escape from the world but as its transformation through awakened insight.

Ultimately, the Amitābha Sūtra reveals that metaphysics and soteriology converge in the recognition of consciousness as both the ground and goal of existence. The philosophy of pure consciousness thus stands as a bridge between Eastern non-duality and Western phenomenological reflection, articulating a shared human aspiration toward transcendence, compassion, and ultimate freedom.

III. CONCLUSION

The Amitābha Sūtra stands as one of the most philosophically rich expressions of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Beneath its poetic imagery and devotional tone lies a coherent metaphysical and soteriological system—a vision in which consciousness, emptiness, and compassion form the triadic essence of reality. From this study, it becomes evident that the Amitābha Sūtra is not simply a text of religious faith but a profound articulation of a non-dual philosophy of pure consciousness.

Metaphysically, the Sūtra dissolves the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental. The Pure Land, far from being a distant celestial domain,

represents the ontological clarity of awareness itself. Through the dialectic of subject and object, appearance and reality, the Amitābha Sūtra discloses a worldview in which being and consciousness are coextensive. As Williams (2009, p. 173) and Garfield (2015, p. 154) note, Mahāyāna philosophy transforms metaphysics into phenomenology: to perceive the world rightly is to perceive it as already pure. The Pure Land is thus the symbolic horizon of purified consciousness—an existential transformation rather than a spatial migration.

Soteriologically, the text redefines salvation as the awakening of consciousness to its inherent purity. Faith (*śraddhā*) and vow (*praṇidhāna*) are not external instruments but internal modes of transformation through which the deluded mind realizes its luminous nature. Amitābha’s compassionate vow exemplifies the ontological function of *karuṇā* within emptiness (*śūnyatā*). The act of calling upon Amitābha’s name (*nembutsu*) is, philosophically speaking, the act of re-affirming consciousness as the self-reflexive source of being. In this sense, the Amitābha Sūtra does not advocate a heteronomous salvation; rather, it invites the practitioner to participate in the self-liberating dynamics of mind itself (Inagaki, 1994, p. 87; Shinran, 2006, p. 214).

When compared with Western metaphysical traditions, the Amitābha Sūtra reveals a universal pattern of transcendence. Its emphasis on luminosity, compassion, and non-duality resonates with both Plotinus’ emanationism and Heidegger’s notion of *Gelassenheit*, yet it transcends them by grounding transcendence not in ontology alone but in relational awareness. The Pure Land thus becomes a philosophical metaphor for the realization of Being-as-Compassion—where ontology, ethics, and phenomenology converge (Abe, 1985, p. 67; Keown, 2017, p. 213).

In contemporary philosophy of religion, this reinterpretation opens dialogue between Buddhist and Western thought on the question of consciousness and salvation. The Amitābha Sūtra contributes a unique paradigm: transcendence as the awakening of immanence, enlightenment as the self-illumination of the world. Nishida’s (1987, p. 62) insight into “absolute nothingness” parallels this vision—emptiness not as negation, but as the open field of inter-being where all things reveal their mutual arising.

Ultimately, the Amitābha Sūtra invites philosophy to move beyond dualistic abstraction toward a lived metaphysics—a thinking that is itself transformative. The Pure Land is not elsewhere; it is the ever-present possibility of awareness to see itself as radiant, compassionate, and free. By situating the Amitābha Sūtra within the broader conversation of metaphysics and phenomenology, this study affirms its enduring relevance as a universal philosophy of liberation. In the unity of emptiness and compassion,

being and knowing, faith and insight, the Amitābha Sūtra continues to illuminate the deepest dimension of what it means to exist, to awaken, and to be free.

REFERENCES

- Abe, M. (1985). *Zen and Western thought*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Abe, M. (1995). *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue: Part One of a Two-Volume Sequel to Zen and Western Thought*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Ames, R. T., & Rosemont, H. (1998). *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*. Ballantine Books.
- Blum, M. L. (2002). *The Origins and Development of Pure Land Buddhism: A Study and Translation of Gyōnen's Jōdo Hōmon Genrushō*. Oxford University Press.
- Cleary, T. (Trans.). (1994). *The Three Pure Land Sutras*. Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research.
- Garfield, J. L. (2015). *Engaging Buddhism: Why Buddhism Matters to Philosophy*. Oxford University Press.
- Garfield, J. L., & Westerhoff, J. (Eds.). (2021). *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Philosophy*. Oxford University Press.
- Harrison, P. (1998). *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1959). *An introduction to metaphysics* (R. Manheim, Trans.). Yale University Press. (Original work published 1935).
- Inagaki, H. (1994). *The Three Pure Land Sutras*. Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo.
- Inoue, E. (2012). *Pure Land Buddhism in China: A doctrinal history*. Routledge.
- Keown, D. (2000). *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Keown, D. (2005). *Buddhist ethics: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Nishida, K. (1987). *Last writings: Nothingness and the religious world view* (D. A. Dilworth, Trans.). University of Hawaii Press.
- Nishitani, K. (1982). *Religion and Nothingness* (J. Van Bragt, Trans.). University of California Press.
- Schopen, G. (1997). *Bones, stones, and Buddhist monks: Collected papers on the archaeology, epigraphy, and texts of monastic Buddhism in India*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Shinran. (2006). *Kyōgyōshinshō: On Teaching, Practice, Faith, and Enlightenment* (D. C. Earhart, Trans.). Institute of Buddhist Studies.
- Suzuki, D. T. (1970). *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*. Schocken Books. (Original work published 1907).
- Suzuki, D. T. (1998). *The Eastern Buddhist: Selected writings*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Tanabe, H. (1986). *Philosophy as Metanoetics* (Y. Takeuchi, Valdo Viglielmo, & J. W. Heisig, Trans.). University of California Press.
- Taitetsu, U. (2002). *River of Fire, River of Water: An Introduction to the Pure Land Tradition of Shin Buddhism*. Doubleday.
- Williams, P. (2009). *Mahayana Buddhism: The doctrinal foundations* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Yamabe, N., & Sueki, F. (Eds.). (2009). *Buddhist thought and applied psychological research: Transcending the boundaries*. Routledge.
- Yoshizawa, K. (2010). *Rennyo and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism*. Oxford University Press.