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Buddhism and Science: A Guide for the Perplexed

By Donald S. Lopez, Jr.

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, USA, 2008.
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 First Edition. Beginning in the nineteenth century and continuing to the present day, both Buddhists and admirers of Buddhism have proclaimed the compatibility of Buddhism and science. Their assertions have ranged from modest claims about the efficacy of meditation for mental health to grander declarations that the Buddha himself anticipated the theories of relativity, quantum physics and the big bang more than two millennia ago. In *Buddhism and Science*, Donald S. Lopez Jr. is less interested in evaluating the accuracy of such claims than in exploring how and why these two seemingly disparate modes of understanding the inner and outer universe have been so persistently linked. Lopez opens with an account of the rise and fall of Mount Meru, the great peak that stands at the center of the flat earth of Buddhist cosmography and which was interpreted anew once it proved incompatible with modern geography. From there, he analyzes the way in which Buddhist concepts of spiritual nobility were enlisted to support the notorious science of race in the nineteenth century. Bringing the story to the present, Lopez explores the Dalai Lamas interest in...



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