

The image features a vibrant green background with a gradient from dark green at the top to a lighter green at the bottom. Several thin, white, slightly curved lines radiate from the top left towards the bottom right. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, stylized circular shape composed of a blue outer ring and a pink inner ring. A bright white light source is positioned at the bottom right edge of this circle, creating a starburst effect with white rays extending outwards.

**SACRED S**

# **SACRED SCIENCE?**



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**On science and its interrelations  
with religious worldviews**

edited by:

Simen Andersen Øyen

Tone Lund-Olsen

Nora Sørensen Vaage



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**ISBN: 978-90-8686-196-5**  
**e-ISBN: 978-90-8686-752-3**  
**DOI: 10.3920/978-90-8686-752-3**

**First published, 2012**

**© Wageningen Academic Publishers**  
**The Netherlands, 2012**

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This book is dedicated to Gunnar Skirbekk,  
founder of the Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities,  
University of Bergen



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## Preface

The Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities (SVT) is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012, and this book is part of the anniversary celebrations. It aims to offer topics of interest to most researchers with a connection to the research profile of the SVT. But the book is also intended to reach a broader readership, outside of academia.

The Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen, originated in a diaspora from the Department of Philosophy. The Centre was established in 1987 as a *permanent institute*, with standard obligations in research, teaching, popularization and dissemination. Due to the definition of “*vitskapsteori*”, the academic profile of the SVT differs from that of “science studies” in the Anglo-American sense: all university disciplines are included as “research objects”. The research profile of the SVT is broad, with a focus on critical reflection over the science-society relationship and the ethical and societal aspects of science and technology. The theme of religion and science in modern society is one of the problems that the SVT finds interesting.

All the chapters in this book have been through an anonymous peer review.

First of all, we would like to acknowledge Shijun Tong’s participation in this book. He was unfortunately prevented from handing in his chapter, which discussed various aspects of scientific research on Chinese spiritual life. It is a great loss to this book.

This book was made possible by the efforts and devotion of many people. We would like to thank all of our contributors. Many thanks also to our eminent scientific advisory board consisting of Paola de Cuzzani, Jonas Jakobsen, Carl Walter Matthias Kaiser, Torjus Midtgarden, Jørgen Pedersen, Rasmus Slaattelid and Jan Helge Solbakk. Without you this book would not have been possible.

The Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities is a very congenial environment to work in, and we would like to give particular thanks to Signe Solberg and Line Nævdal, who have been part of this project since the start. Janne Cecilie Johansen’s contribution to this book in the area of translation, insightful

comments and editing should also be emphasized. We are also grateful to Gordon Lynch, Marianne Bøe, Kjetil Rommetveit and Johannes Servan. Lastly, but most importantly, we would like to thank our publisher Mike Jacobs for the interest and support he has shown throughout the whole of the project.

For any errors or omissions, we accept full responsibility.

Bergen, February 2012

*Simen Andersen Øyen, Tone Lund-Olsen and Nora Sørensen Vaage*





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