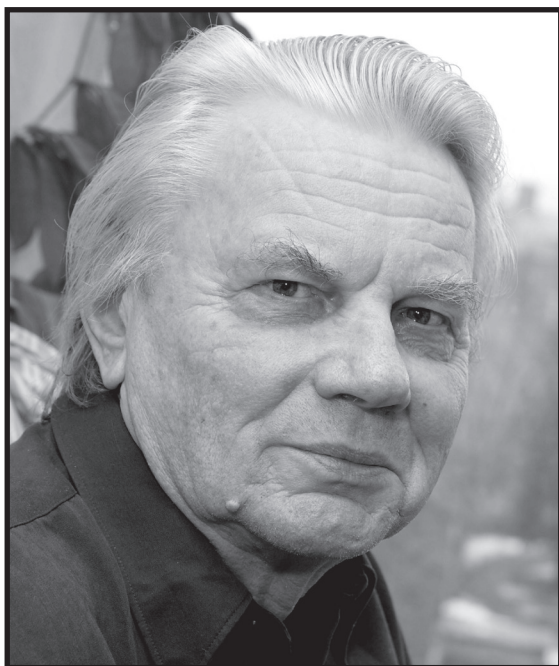


In Memoriam: Rein Vihalemm (1938–2015)



The University of Tartu and the Estonian philosophical community have suffered a huge loss with the passing of our dear colleague, the eminent philosopher of science Rein Vihalemm.

Rein Vihalemm was born on December 9th, 1938, in Pärnu. In 1963, he graduated cum laude from the Tartu State University, specializing in physical chemistry, and obtained a PhD degree in 1969 in Moscow from the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

Rein Vihalemm taught philosophy of science at the University of Tartu for an impressive 49 years. Starting in 1966 as a lecturer, he was elected Professor of Philosophy in 1992. He initiated the establishment of the Chair of Philosophy of Science and served as its head until 2004. From 2005 onwards, Rein Vihalemm worked as professor extraordinarius. Vihalemm supervised many master's and doctoral dissertations; his students came from a number of different areas of science.

Vihalemm's philosophical works have earned international recognition. On the occasion of his recent jubilee, the journal *Problemata* characterized Rein Vihalemm as the most influential philosopher of science in the Baltics. In 2011, he was appointed a member of the Collegium for Advanced Studies at the University of Helsinki.

Since 1979, he was a member of the Estonian Union of History and Philosophy of Science and since 2004 a member of its executive committee. He was one of the founding members of the International Society for the Philosophy of Chemistry (1997).

Rein Vihalemm authored numerous academic articles and books which have served as a valuable guide for many philosophers and scientists. He was the editor of *Estonian Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, which was published in 2001 at Kluwer Academic Publishers, introducing the works of Estonian philosophers of science in the international arena.

Vihalemm's main areas of research were philosophy of science, also epistemology, philosophy and history of chemistry, and the history of philosophy (of science) in Estonia. According to him, in order to understand human cognition, one must study the developmental history of science in its contemporary context. Vihalemm did the latter with chemistry as his main area of interest. However, he also dealt with more general philosophical issues, such as the nature of science. Vihalemm's model of φ -science helps us understand why physics has become an epitome of the sciences.

As an original and profound thinker, Vihalemm encouraged scientists of all fields to reflect on the methodological questions of their areas of study and helped to promote mutual understanding between different disciplines. Vihalemm's own wisdom, tolerance and ethical principles set a good example for the people around him.

With deepest condolences to the family, we warmly remember a great thinker, good colleague and teacher Rein Vihalemm.

University of Tartu
 Faculty of Philosophy of University of Tartu
 Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics of University of Tartu
 Estonian Association for the History and Philosophy of Science