

In memoriam Juhan Peegel

I did not have the honor of knowing Professor Juhan Peegel personally. But those who knew the now-departed great man of the Estonian nation as a friend, colleague, or student describe him as a bright, modest, and big-hearted person; a man bursting with the canny humor of the islands, who, after you met him left your spirits elated and your thoughts clearer.

Professor Juhan Peegel's long lifework, which was recognized with the Order of the National Coat of Arms, has become part of our history and cultural heritage long ago. After the Second World War, the systematic study of the history of Estonian journalism continued under his leadership; an activity that allowed scientists and university students to discover and study the foundations of being Estonian even during the most repressive years.

Juhan Peegel's numerous scientific papers on the history of language; folk poetry and journalism were crowned by one of the fundamental works on the Estonian language, "The Poetic Synonyms of Nouns in Estonian Runo-Verses".

At Juhan Peegel's initiative, the basis was established at the University of Tartu for professional journalism studies, for the university's Journalism Department—*Academia Pegeliana*—the faculty members and students of which became the leaders for the restoration of Estonian independence during turbulent times. This could not have happened without the teaching, tutelage, and encouragement of Juhan Peegel.

In his writings and recollections, Juhan Peegel avoided the heroic and pompous dimensions of war. In contrast to the style of the time, he honestly communicated the tragic legacy of war, and the experiences and harsh choices of the people pulled into war. This made Peegel a down-to-earth and beloved writer, but primarily a respected person.

President Ilves's statement: In memoriam Juhan Peegel

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I bow my head in mourning with his intimates and friends, in recognition with the entire Estonian nation.

Toomas Hendrik Ilves
President of the Republic