# CONFERENCE IN MEMORY OF PILLE VALK:

## SPIRITUALITY AND THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE 'OTHER'

Dear friends and colleagues,

You are invited to attend an academic conference in honour of Pille Valk entitled "Spirituality and the Encounter with the 'Other' ". This will take place in Tartu, Estonia on the 10th - 12th of September 2010, one year after Pille's death.

The conference is organised by the Theological Faculty of the University of Tartu in cooperation with the Estonian Association for Teachers of Religious Education, the Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary and the Higher Theological Seminary of the Union of Evangelical Christian and Baptist Churches of Estonia.

Religious Education (RE) in Estonia, as it is organised today, has been very much shaped by Pille. Nowadays it is a subject which takes the religious and cultural context seriously. It is a subject which values narratives, and is concerned with learning about religion, whilst also taking the spirituality of every child seriously.

As you may know from Pille's presentations over the years, the status of RE in Estonia is far from being secure or clear. **The conference is a tribute to Pille, but is also an encouragement for our Estonian RE teachers to be confident in continuing Pille's work, and for teachers, academics and policy makers to take forward the debates Pille started.**

There are many colleagues in various European and international networks to which Pille belonged who shared our love for Pille and our interest in her work. Therefore we would like to invite colleagues from other countries to the conference.

**The topics of different lectures and workshops will focus on the need to build a bridge between people of different religions and worldviews, but sharing a sense of awe and wonder and a desire for purpose and a meaningful life.** We are planning three keynote lectures in the general field of spirituality and religious education, a series of workshops and also a commemoration of Pille's life and work. There will be an opportunity to visit Pille's grave, and to be shown around the city of Tartu, which Pille loved so much.

We kindly ask you to find the necessary finance to cover your travel expenses, the conference fee, and your accommodation (see details below).

With kind regards

(On behalf of the organising committee)

Olga Schihalejev

Faculty of Theology, University of Tartu http://www.us.ut.ee/

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## APPLYING FOR A PLACE AT CONFERENCE

Please read the information below carefully and complete the Application Form attached to the e-mail. You will be send a confirmation e-mail about successful registration to the conference.

## COSTS

The conference fee will be **€60** (see below for what this includes). There is an 'early bird' fee of **€40**) for those who register before the **1st of June**. Registration is open until the **1st of August**. You will pay on Your arrival to Tartu.

## WHAT THE CONFERENCE FEE INCLUDES

- catering from lunch on the 10th of September until lunch on 12th of September
- excursion in Tartu, guides and transportation to and from the graveyard
- the conference pack
- lectures and workshops

## ACCOMMODATION

We have contract with Hotel Dorpat, next to river Emajõgi: http://www.dorpat.ee/ with a special offer of:

single room 666 EEK/ 43 EUR/night
double/twin room 888 EEK/ 57 EUR/night
Price includes breakfast buffet

We will book a room for you and You can pay on arrival.

The hotel situates next to the bus station and on walking-distance from the University.

If You prefer to book a hotel yourself, there are some ohter hotels in a reasonable distanc:

Hotel Hansa: http://www.hansahotell.ee/index.php?id=8&sub=32 rates starting at 900 EEK (58 EUR)

Hotel Tartu: http://www.tartuhotell.ee/reservation-2/, rates starting at 34 EUR

## TRAVEL

There is an airport in Tartu (http://www.tartu-airport.ee/eng) – you can come here via Riga or Stockholm. Alternatively you can come to Tallinn (http://www.tallinn-airport.ee/eng) and then take a bus or taxi to Tartu. We will give you more detailed instructions when you let us know about your travel information.

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## PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

The conference takes place during three days aiming at different target groups. The first day is planned mainly for politicians, stakeholders and students from the University of Tartu and other higher education institutions in Estonia. The second day of conference is targeted for Estonian RE teachers. The third day is planned for academics and people from universities to make furture plans for cooperation.

**You are most welcome to hold a workshop either on the first or the second day of the conference!** In planning a workshop, please keep in mind the theme of the conference (spirituality and/or meeting with the 'other') and the target group!

### 10TH OF SEPTEMBER

12 Workshops for students

15 Lunch for early arrivals

17 Keynote lecture 1: Prof. Dr. Robert Jackson. Meeting the 'Other': Estonian RE in the context of European
Discussion

18 Keynote lecture 2: Dr. Ina ter Avest - Teaching and learning for religiosity: religious and non-religious spirituality
Discussion

19 Social event

### 11TH OF SEPTEMBER:

10 Greatings from the stakeholders

10.30 Keynote lecture 3: Peter Schreiner: The spiritual dimension in holistic education.
Discussion

11.45 Dr. Lea Altnurme: How Estonians understand religiousity and spirituality
Dr. Olga Schihalejev: Spirituality – is it a hindrance or advantage in Estonian schools?
Discussion

13.15 Lunch

14.30 Workshops for RE teachers

16.15 Coffee

16.30 Visit to Pille's grave and a city tour

18 Pille's memorial

20 Dinner

### 12. SEPTEMBER

9 Morning session: Future plans

11 Lunch and departure / Sunday service at Jaani church