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International Laestadius

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Introduction

The sermons of Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861), the vicar of Karesuando and later the vicar of Pajala, divided the parishioners into two groups but at the same time they also generated revivalism which was massively dynamic. The Laestadian revival movement, begun in the years 1845–1846, spread out to the whole region of the Cap of the North already during Laestadius’s lifetime. The movement experienced an exceptionally heavy expansion in the 1870s and 1880s. At the end of the 19th century, the outposts of Laestadian revivalism were Hammerfest in the north, Tallinn in the south, the great city of St. Petersburg in the east and the city of Astoria on the Pacific Ocean.¹

The revival movement, developed in the region of the Cap of the North, spread out in the 19th century across language and national borders. It spread outside Scandinavia, e.g., to North America, Russia, and Estonia. Laestadian missionary work later took place in South America, Africa and Asia. The influence of this special religious movement has been remarkable on the social, cultural and even political life of the northern parts of Scandinavia. In practice, the Laestadian revival movement is the most widespread religious movement to have arisen in the Nordic countries and by far the most international of the revivalist movements as well.²

Dean Laestadius was not just an ordinary pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden in the 19th century. First of all, as a well-known revival preacher, he was the so-called “Trumpet of the North”. But, he was also a scientist who specialized not only in Theology and Philosophy of Religion but in Botany, Zoology and Sami culture as well.³

Quite a large amount of research has been done and a significant number of other texts have been produced on Laestadius in Sweden, Finland, and Norway. Some articles focused on Laestadius have also been published in Denmark.⁴ Some of these are based on historical facts, but some presentations and books belong to popular literature as novels. Dr. Pekka Raittila named about 116 items about Laestadius in 1967.⁵ Since 1967, research concerning Laestadius has advanced significantly.

Laestadius’s jubilee year, 2000, which marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of Laestadius produced a small amount of scientific research. The numerous events held throughout the

¹ Talonen 2014, 20–23.
⁴ Jensen 1928; Wulff (Neutzsky) 1952; Dahlbäck 1961; Raittila 1967, 279–287.
⁵ Raittila 1967, 279–287.
year also aroused new interest in this revivalist man named as “the North Bothnian citizen of the century”. Later, the annual Laestadius week was a tradition in Pajala for many years.\(^6\)

In this article the purpose is to research Laestadius’s texts as well as biographies and research focused on Laestadius outside Scandinavia. At the same time, the article is a documentation of the international legacy of Laestadius. I put emphasis on the Baltic states and Germany.

**Laestadius and French scientists**

Laestadius never travelled outside Scandinavia, although some writers such as P. W. Aurén and Emil F. Nervander have written about a Laestadius trip to Germany. According to them, Laestadius visited Straubing in Bayern in the 1850s and gave a sermon in St. Peter’s Church of the local parish.\(^7\) Norwegian researcher Kristian Nissen has corrected this erroneous information with clear arguments already at the end of the 1930s.\(^8\)

Even though Laestadius never travelled outside Scandinavia, he was an international personality in his time. Compared to the earlier research, the latest research has given more attention to Laestadius’s academic connections abroad. Laestadius was awarded The Medal of Honour of the Legion of Honour of France, which is a sign of his academic connections with France. Between 1838 and 1840, the French Académie des Sciences sent three research expeditions to the arctic areas of Northern Europe. The project was supported by King Louis Philippe I himself. The research group was travelling with the French corvette, *La Recherche*, and it was led by the physician and zoologist Joseph Paul Gaimard. Its destination was Northern Scandinavia and the North Atlantic islands, Svalbard, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Laestadius was one of the five Swedish participants of the expedition, and he was guiding the expedition to northern Scandinavia in 1838. It seems that, among others, Laestadius befriended the researcher Xavier Marmier (1803–1892), and in 1839 they hiked together to the village of Galanito. Laestadius also entertained French guests in his rectory. The classic portrait of Laestadius, painted by the artist Charles Giraud, was also created thanks to the expedition made in 1839. Later, when Emile Lasalle made a lithograph of the portrait, he added the Medal of Honour awarded to Laestadius.\(^9\) This portrait of Laestadius is commonly used in various publications and books. It has also been displayed in public spaces, such as chapels, but in private homes as well.

The artist François-Auguste Biard also painted a picture in which Laestadius is preaching to Lappish people outdoors. This painting is partly quite imaginative, not very realistic.\(^10\)

It must be noted that besides the French researchers, a Hungarian linguist and ethnographer (ethnologist) Antal Reguly (1819–1858) paid a visit to the rectory of Karesuando in July 1840.

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\(^7\) Aurén 1894, 87–88; Nervander 1908, 35–36. See also Castrén 1932, 140–141; 1938, 94–95.

\(^8\) Nissen 1939.


\(^10\) www.hs.fi/kulttuuri/art-2000005095886.html (Mikko-Pekka Hämäläinen); Willers 1949, 52; Marmier 1999, 31.
Reguly and Laestadius discussed Sami mythology. In his diary Reguly noted that during his whole Scandinavian exploration he had learned the most from Laestadius.11

The results of the expedition were reported in the publication series Voyages de la commission Scientifique du Nord from 1840. Laestadius is also mentioned as one of the scientists who wrote the natural history and botanical publications of the series. Laestadius received a subscription of the research about Sami mythology and traditional religions of Lapland, which shows that he was regarded as an expert in these matters. Laestadius wrote a report about the subject between 1840 and 1845, but for various reasons it was never published. For a long time, the manuscripts about Lappish mythology were unaccounted for, but they were later found.12

In 1960, a Swedish pastor, Harald Grunström, published the text of Laestadius’s mythology in Swedish, but it was not the text written by the author himself in extenso but a publication based on original manuscripts. DTh Pastor Nilla Outakoski published a Finnish translation of Laestadius’s mythology in 1994. The translation was based on the original text, which Outakoski had collected from several archives. Finally, in 1997, Laestadius’s text got the recognition it deserved when the research was published in its original language Fragmenter i lappska mythologin in extenso by Professor Juha Pentikäinen. The book was published in Finnish in the jubilee year of Laestadius, in 2000. It was translated by Risto Pulkkinen and likewise edited by Juha Pentikäinen. This scientific translation was republished in 2011.13

The English translation of the book, called Fragments of Lappish Mythology, was published in 2002 by Aspasia Books (Beaverton, Ontario, Canada). It was translated from the Swedish Fragmentar i Lappska Mythologien by Börje Välimäki. The introduction and afterword were written by Professor Juha Pentikäinen.14

Sermons and other religious texts

The first postil, a collection of sermons, of Lars Levi Laestadius was published in Finnish in Luleå in 1876. Since then, several postil volumes have been published in Nordic countries, Estonia and the United States. The publication of sermons in Sami started in 1903.15 The most influential Finnish postil was a tripartite volume, Saarnat I–III, which was published at the beginning of the 21st century. It contains all the known sermons given by Laestadius, and it is based on the primary sources.16

By now Laestadius’s sermons have been published in Finnish, Swedish, Sami, Norwegian, English, German, Russian, Estonian and Latvian. Furthermore, they have been translated into Dutch by Annemieke Pasma from Veenendaal. She has been a Laestadian Christian since 2005 and has translated altogether 87 of Laestadius’s sermons up to 2017.17 And in 1934 one

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17 E-mail of Raimo Airamo on 18 Sep 2017; Peltomaa 1993; RSi 4 / 2008, 27; Talonen 2013, 48.
of Laestadius’s sermons was even published in Chinese in the parish newspaper, *Hsin-J-Pao*, of the Lutheran Church of China.\textsuperscript{18} The Firstborn Laestadians in America – as well as in Europe – have been very active in publishing the sermons of Laestadius because the reading of the Dean’s sermons is an important part of the order of service. The first English collection of sermons of Laestadius, *House Postilla*, was published already in 1894.\textsuperscript{19} Following that, there have also been published *New Postilla* (1925, translation of the Finnish *Uusi Postilla*), *Third Postilla* (1924, translation of the Finnish *Kolmas Postilla*), and the *Fourth Postilla* (1985). New printings have been made since. The small collection of sermons of Laestadius, *The Little Postilla*, with 32 sermons was published in 2010 in Finland.\textsuperscript{20}

As the reading of Laestadius’s sermons has such a vital role in the revival meeting activity of the Firstborn, new fields of international operation have mostly been followed by a publication of Laestadius’s postils in the language of the destination country. The Firstborn Laestadian preachers made a preaching trip to Austria and Germany for the first time in 1977–1978, organized from Finland.\textsuperscript{21} Later, this “European” activity spread to the Netherlands and Great Britain as well. And so, the German version of Laestadius’s postils, *Predigten*, translated by Mr. Jyrki Heinonen was published in 1995.\textsuperscript{22} After the collapse of the Communist system, Finnish Laestadian missionary work also began in Russia, where Laestadianism had already been a well-known movement at the end of the 1800s. Laestadianism spread to St. Petersburg at the beginning of the 1870s. Even though its connections with Finland and other Nordic countries were cut off, Laestadianism remained as a religious group in Soviet Russia during the Communist period (1917–1991). Along with migration, it spread out in the Soviet Union to some places, even to Riga, the capital of Soviet Latvia, in 1947. These so-called “Old Believers” made contact with Finnish conservative Laestadians at the beginning of the 1990s.\textsuperscript{23}

The Finnish Laestadians, especially Firstborns and the Rauhan sana group have also had an important role in the rise and development of the Ingrian Evangelical Lutheran Church. As a result of Firstborn Laestadian activity, a brief Russian collection of sermons, *Сборник проповедей* (1999), has been published. In 2010 a new extended version of the Russian Laestadius postil was published, *Проповеди*.\textsuperscript{24}

A new collection of Laestadius sermons in Russian was published in 2016 in St. Petersburg. The collection, called *Проповеди*, consists of 12 sermons, of which two sermons were also

\textsuperscript{18} HÅ 1934, 83; Talonen 2013, 48. At the beginning of the 1990s Mr. Juha-Lassi Tast translated one of Laestadius’s sermons from 1857 into the Livonian language: Lars Levi Laestadius jutlöks Pajala pivākuodās 1857 (text from 1994). JTA.

\textsuperscript{19} Laestadius 1939; Raittila 1967, 276, Kulla 2004, 101.


\textsuperscript{21} E-mail of Raimo Airamo 18 Sep 2017; Talonen 1983, 107.

\textsuperscript{22} Laestadius 1995.

\textsuperscript{23} Talonen 1989, 13–14; 2013, 54.

\textsuperscript{24} Laestadius 1999; [2010b].
published in the Проповейдей in 2010. Ten sermons are published for the first time in Russian. The sermons were translated by Aino Petrova, who also published the booklet at her own expense.25

From St. Petersburg the movement spread to eastern Estonia in 1886. In Laestadianism’s Great Schism at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Estonian Laestadianism adopted the protest of the New Awakening. Between the world wars, after the exaltation had evened out, the Laestadian New Awakening continued its work in Estonia, which had declared independence in 1918. After the collapse of Communism, three Laestadian groups (SRK-centred Conservative Laestadians, the Firstborn and the Rauhan Sana group) have operated in Estonia since 1990.26

One of the most sophisticated players in the early stage of Estonian Laestadianism was a fisherman-preacher Klaus Huusman (1870—1920) who lived in Narva-Jõesuu and was acting as a priest in Narva during the period of national crisis (1918—1919). He edited and published some religious literature for Estonian Laestadians. The most influential publication of Huusman was a collection of Laestadius’s Estonian sermons, released during 1912—1913. He published the above-mentioned “postil” as separate leaflets part by part. According to a pre-announcement there were supposed to be 18 parts. The last one was meant to be released in January 1914. The plan was not realized to this extent. Thirteen parts were published of Laestadius’s postil. Most of this edition has been preserved.

Parts 1—5, 8—10 and 12—13 are in the records of H. K. Erviö, in the National Archives Service in Finland. In the National Library of Finland there is only one part (part 2). In the department of the archives in the National Library of Estonia (Eesti rahvuraamatukogu arhiiv) only part 10 is preserved. The Academic Library of Tallinn University (Akadeemiline raamatukogu) has only the first part. The most complete record is found at the Estonian Literary Museum (Eesti Kirjandus Museum) in Tartu (parts 1—10, 12—13).

The print run of different parts of the postil edited by Huusman fluctuates between 500 and 2000 copies. It was possible to subscribe to the postil via the editors of the Moravian magazine Kristlik Perekonna leht. It is unlikely that the postil would have spread outside the small Estonian Laestadian community.

The sermons of the above-mentioned postil were mainly from Uusi Postilla (New Postilla) from the year 1897. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries this postil was greeted with gratitude within the rising New Awakening. At the beginning of the 1910s the new postil was also more readily available. Most of the sermons translated by Huusman were thus dated back to the 1850s, from the period of the expansion of the revival, brimming over with elemental religious enthusiasm.27

The new Estonian selection of Laestadius’s sermons, Jutlustekogu, was published in 2014. It is based

25 E-mail of Raimo Airamo on 30 March 2017; Laestadius 2016.
on a new, tripartite postil edition collected by the Finnish Firstborn in 1996–2000,\textsuperscript{28} which contains all the known sermons given by Laestadius. The Estonian edition contains 113 sermons. It is identical to the Latvian and Russian postil editions published earlier because all the editions include the same sermons. At the end of the postil, there is a brief description of Laestadius in Finnish and in Estonian. The Estonian edition was translated by Pastor Urmas Oras. The book was edited by Pekka Rytilä.\textsuperscript{29}

The connections between the Laestadian communities of Riga and Finland were created in the late 1990s. The revival meeting work of SRK (“the Central Association of the Finnish Associations of Peace”) begun in May 1998. The first revival meeting of the Firstborn in Latvia was held in October 1999. From 2000 onward, Finnish Firstborn preachers, invited by Latvians, started regular preaching tours in Latvia. Altogether, revival meetings of the Firstborn Laestadians have been held in 40 places in Latvia since 1999.\textsuperscript{30}

By the time the Firstborn started their preaching work in 1999, the name “Laestadius” was not completely unknown in Latvia. Laestadius’s texts were published for the first time in Latvian in the biographical book \textit{Saucēja balsi} (“The Crying Voice”) written by Ilārs Plūme in 1995. \textit{Inter alia}, Pastor Plūme published a sermon preached by Laestadius in the evening on the second Sunday of Advent in Härnösand in 1843.\textsuperscript{31} In 2001 Juris Jeršovs (Vaive, Vidzeme), the contact person of the Firstborn for the work in Latvia, started to translate Laestadius’s sermons from Russian and German texts. Jeršovs also translated some sermons from the German postil. In 2004 there were already about ten sermons translated. In April 2004 one of Laestadius’s sermons, translated by Jeršovs, was printed for the first time in the journal \textit{Draudzes Vēstis} (“The Message of the Congregation”), which was issued once a month in the Dundaga local parish and edited by Diāna Siliņa.\textsuperscript{32}

After that, at least a few of Laestadius’s sermons were printed in the same magazine before the release of the official postil edition. On 17 September 2011 Laestadius’s sermon and a brief presentation of him were printed in \textit{Svētdienas Rīts} (Sunday Morning), the journal of the LELC. Edīte Didrihsone, a retired architect living in Ventspils, provided the material for the journal.\textsuperscript{33}

The Firstborn included arrangements for the Latvian Laestadius postil in their publishing strategy for the first time in 2007. However, the crucial factor for publishing Laestadius’s sermons was the above-mentioned Edīte Didrihsone, a retired architect living in Ventspils. The publishing of the Russian \textit{Иропове́йде́й} in 2010 also encouraged the translation of the sermons into Latvian. After receiving the book, Didrihsone started to translate a new postil in which the linguistic form was revised from the earlier edition. Jeršovs and some Finns took

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\item \textsuperscript{28} \textit{Laestadius} 1996–2000.
\item \textsuperscript{29} \textit{Laestadius} 2014.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Talonen 2013, 54; Airamo 2016, 76–78.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Plūme 1995, 45–56, 61–68, 76–82. Already at the beginning of the 1990s, Juha-Lassi Tast had translated one of Laestadius’s sermons from 1857 into Latvian and it was distributed in a number of copies. Larsa Lēvi Lestādiusa spēdīķis Pajalas baznīcā 1857 (text from 1994). JTA.
\item \textsuperscript{32} \textit{DV} 52 / 2006, 1–3; \textit{Talonen} 2013, 55.
\item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{DV} 57 / 2006, 1–2; 82 / 2008, 1–2; \textit{SvR} 9 / 17 Sept 2011; \textit{Talonen} 2013, 55–56.
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part in the revision of the publication; some concepts required careful reflection due to cultural differences.\textsuperscript{34}

The collection of Laestadius’s sermons, Ēsprediķi, edited by Raimo Airamo, was published in Finland at the end of 2011. It includes 113 sermons of Laestadius. The printing was 300 copies. The book at issue is specifically a religious book to be used in revival services.\textsuperscript{35} In June 2012 the postil was presented to the Latvian church population by Reverend Armands Klāvs in Svētdienas Rīts.\textsuperscript{36}

How were the sermons selected for the Russian postil volumes in 1999 and 2010? The dogmatic content was one factor when selecting the sermons, but the criteria were fairly practical as well. The sermons had to give a many-sided picture of Laestadius’s teachings, and they must also be addressed to the listeners of today. The baseline was that the sermons were not to be too long because people were meant to follow them in the meetings. They were also supposed to cover broadly enough the texts of the whole church year. Some sermons had already been translated into Russian, which also had something to do with the final selection. The Russian postil provided the basis for the Latvian sermon collection published in 2011 and the Estonian Jutlustekogu volume published in 2014. Those include the same sermons as the Russian volume.\textsuperscript{37}

Besides collections of sermons, there are also some others of Laestadius’s religious texts available to the international forum. The classic work of Laestadius The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness, his periodical published from 1852 to 1854, was published in 1988 in the USA by the Old Apostolic Lutheran church in America.\textsuperscript{38} Some texts of the Dårhusjonet, the most important religious philosophical work of Laestadius, have also been translated into English in the USA. One part was even published, but I do not know the year of publication.\textsuperscript{39} Finally, in 2015 the whole text of Dårhusjonet was published by the Swedish publishing house Biblioteca Laestadiana under the title The Lunatic. The book was printed by Book Concern Printers in Hancock (Michigan). The Lunatic was translated from Swedish by Dr Anders Strindberg, who is also a Lutheran pastor (Missionsprovinsen i Sverige) and lives today in California.\textsuperscript{40} In addition, it is important to note some of Laestadius’s texts in English on the

\textsuperscript{34} Laestadius 2010a; 2010b; Talonen 2013, 56.
\textsuperscript{35} RSi 1 / 2012, 23; Laestadius 2011b; Talonen 2013, 56; Airamo 2016, 77.
\textsuperscript{36} SvR 5 / 2012, 15 (Armands Klāvs, Izdoti Lestadiusa sprediķi); 2 / 2013, 17. Many sermons of Laestadius have also been published on the home-page of the Piltene church district of the LELC. www.piltenesiecirknis.lv (svētrunas).
\textsuperscript{37} E-mail of Raimo Airamo 9 Oct 2018; e-mail of Seppo Leivo 2 Nov 2018.
\textsuperscript{39} E-mail of Raimo Airamo on 4 Aug 2017; Laestadius s.a.; 1988. In the collections of Raimo Airamo there are also some copies of Dårhusjonet English translations done by Alma and Arthur Niska in the USA. See also Kulla 1984–1985, 94–96.
\textsuperscript{40} E-mail of Lars-Erik Wikberg on 4 Sep 2017; Laestadius 2015. Book review TA 3 / 2018, 278–279. (Jouko Talonen).
Internet as well. Generally speaking, Laestadius’s message has become more well known internationally since the 1980s.

**Biographies on Laestadius**

The fascinating personality of Laestadius has inspired many scholars and authors to write biographies and fictive tales about him. So, many kinds of biographies, small articles, and even studies on Laestadius can be found published in the Baltic states, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Hungary, and in the United States. Laestadius has also been described in some travel stories from northern Scandinavia. Among others, the above-mentioned Xavier Marmier reported on Laestadius in his travel book *Lettres sur le Nord* (Letters from the North), whose fifth edition was already published in France in 1850. In addition, we can find some descriptions of Laestadius in various languages on the Internet as well.

A Swedish author, Märta Edqvist (née Borgenstierna, 1878–1960), was married to Vicar Carl Edqvist, who was also an author and researcher of Laestadianism and the so-called Readers movement. Carl Edqvist served as vicar in Jukkasjärvi and Vittangi parishes in northern Sweden between 1913 and 1920. That is why he was familiar with the Laestadian awakening movement. In 1917 his wife, Märta Edqvist published a novel *Norrskensflammor*, in which Laestadius was presented as a central figure. Even though the book was a novel, it was based on historical facts. Ten years later this book was published in German. The translator was Maria Kroeger, who in her preface (*Vorwort*) also described Lapland as a geographical area as well as the life of Laestadius, especially his childhood and youth. The German publisher was the publishing house *Licht im Osten* (Light in the East).

In 1933, this book was published in Hungary, translated by Pál Podmaniczky. During the inter-war period and in the 1940s, there was a special interest in Finnish religious awakening movements in Hungary, especially focused on Finnish Pietism. This was a result of the Hungarian-Finnish exchange of students of theology, which began in 1927. After 1939, conservative Laestadians also had some influence in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hungary. Information about Laestadius and Laestadianism was published in Hungary after WWII, especially in the Christian journal *Élő Víz*.

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41 See [www.laestadiustexter.se](http://www.laestadiustexter.se) (Lauri Koistinen).
42 Marmier 1840, 133, 136; Raittila 1961, 25; 1967, 283. For other descriptions of foreign travellers to northern Scandinavia, see Raittila 1967, 279 (Léonie d'Aunet); 287 (André Bellesort); 294 (Bayard Taylor).
45 Edqvist 1917. The book was published in Finnish in 1927 under the title *Revontulen mailta*. Edqvist 1927b.
46 Edqvist 1927a.
47 Edqvist 1933.
49 For example, *Élő Víz* 1 / 1 Jan 1950 (Laestadius Lörinc két karácsonya). See also Koren 1947, 13–17; *Pohjanpää* 1993, 218–220.
In the 1930s, Laestadianism became more tolerated in Finnish society and at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. As for the mission of the Estonian Laestadian New Awakening, it encountered prejudice on the south side of the Gulf of Finland. In Estonia the Laestadian revivalist movement was not known in the way it was known in the Nordic countries. Nevertheless, the Estonian Laestadians strove to publicize outside their own circles. Thus, in the 1930s the operational activity not only strove for its internal mission and revivalism but also aimed at increasing general knowledge of Laestadius and Laestadianism in Estonia. After the beginning of the mission work of the Laestadian Faction of the Finnish Missionary Society (Suomen Lähetyssuurusten laestadiolainen haaraosasto, SLLH) in Estonia, the Association of Peace in Narva (Narva rahuühenduse selts) published a small-scale booklet called Lühike sona L. L. Laestadiuse usuliikumisest (“A few words on the revivalist movement of Laestadius”). It was written by a Finnish preacher called Heikki Karsikas and translated into Estonian by a vicar, Hendrik Kokamägi. It focused on briefly describing the phases of Laestadius’s life and the doctrinal emphases of the revivalist movement.50

In 1936, the Reverend Heinrich Karm wrote an article Lars Leevi Laestadius voimsa ärüütsiikumise isa (“Lars Levi Laestadius – the Founding Father of an Important Revival Movement”) in which he covered the founders of Laestadianism (Laestadius, Raattamaa), the Great Schism of Laestadianism at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and the activity of that time.51

However, the most influential publication of the 1930s was the Estonian translation of the monograph on Laestadius written by a senator, Kaarlo Castrén (1860–1938). The translation task was done by Valve Kogamäki, the daughter of Heinrich Kogamäki. A Master of Theology, Karl Tiit, also read the manuscript before printing. The book was published by the Association of Peace in Narva. The book, Põhjamaa suur ärataja Lars Levi Laestadius, was almost a direct translation from Castrén’s Finnish edition. At the end of the book, Crapula Mundi, Laestadius’s pastoral writing, and two brief articles of his were also published. In Finland, Castrén’s book had gained approval even within the Conservative Laestadians. Kaarlo Castrén, who was acting as the Prime Minister in 1919, was a well-known progressive politician of the Young Finnish Party, later the so-called Progressive Party. His father J. R. Castrén (1828–1894) acted as chaplain of Turtola from 1859 to 1874 and as vicar of Karunki from 1874 to 1894. Kaarlo Castrén received some permanent influence from his Laestadian home.52 In January 1939, a brief presentation of Castrén’s book’s Estonian edition was published in the magazine Eesti Kirik.53

The Laestadian revival became known in Germany already in the 19th century. The magazine Neues Zeitblatt für die Angelegenheiten der lutherischen Kirche, published by K. K. Mynkel in Hanover, also provided information about Laestadianism in 1881–1882.54 Later, the information about Lars Levi Laestadius and the revival movement named after him, was

50 Karsikas [1931]; Talonen 1989,64. On Hendrik Kokamägi, see Proos 2002.
51 Karm 1936; Talonen 1989,64.
53 EK 4 / 26 Jan 1939; Talonen 2013, 52.
54 Raittila 1967, 287; see Neues Zeitblatt für die Angelegenheiten der lutherischen Theologie und Kirche 33 / 1881; KK 1882, 143–151 (report written by K. A. Heikel).
offered to the German-speaking public by Ernst Alker (also in Austria), Friedrich Hauss, Jörg Erb and Burkard Krug. It is also important to mention L. J. van Valen’s article in Dutch, Lars Levi Laestadius. De apostel van Lapland, from 2002, published in Terdege, a Christian family paper in the Netherlands.

The intriguing personality of Lars Levi Laestadius has attracted a surprisingly large number of authors. A Swedish author, Harry Blomberg (1893–1950), created a story whose events centred on the revivalist from the northern polar cap. Blomberg’s novel, Det brinner i snön, was published in 1935. Blomberg’s novel was published in Finnish later in 1935, in Norwegian in 1937, in Danish in 1936, in Dutch in 1938 and in German in Switzerland in 1940. The translator of the German edition was Else von Hollander-Lossow.

Again, in 1937, Andreas Markusson (1893–1952), one the most significant novelists in Norway, published a Laestadius-themed novel titled Han som kjempet mot mørket. This novel received international distribution as well. The book was published in Finnish in 1938. Later, many editions of this novel were published in Germany, translated by Konstantin Reichardt.

For the German audience, Laestadius and the revival movement of the northern polar cap have been popularized the most by Alfred Otto Schwede (1915–1987), a Lutheran pastor and author who was living in the German Democratic Republic (Deutsche Demokratische Republik, DDR) after WWII. In many respects, Schwede’s description of the Scandinavian nations and the Arctic church and cultural history is a cultural act, which may have not received the recognition it undoubtedly should have had.

A. O. Schwede studied theology and Swedish at Leipzig University in the 1930s. He was living in Sweden in 1938–1939. He finished his academic studies in 1939. In 1945, he became a prisoner of war because he had acted as a soldier in WWII. After being freed, Schwede worked as a reverend in Haynsburg, Uthleben and Brandenburg-Görden, in the DDR. After 1961, he worked as a freelance writer. Schwede was an exceptionally talented, energetic and active writer and translator. He mastered many foreign languages, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, English, French and Spanish, for example. After studying theology, he was also familiar with the so-called ancient languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

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55 Alker 1930; Raittila 1967, 279.
56 Hauss 1959, 40–43.
60 Blomberg 1935; Saarisalo 1970, 249.
61 Blomberg 1936a.
62 Blomberg 1937.
63 Blomberg 1936b.
64 Blomberg 1938.
67 Markusson 1996.
68 Stüssi 1997, 84–86; Talonen 2002b, 290.
Schwede’s literary activity was exceptionally prolific: 70 titles and 40 translations. His scope was large. He wrote biographical descriptions of Abraham Lincoln, Kaj Munck, Carl von Linné, Gustav II Adolf, Nathan Söderblom, and Paavo Ruotsalainen, just to mention a few. One of his last works was a biographical account of Hallgrímur Petursson, a hymnal poet living in Iceland in the 17th century.

Schwede was without a doubt the best-known author in the Evangelical Church in the DDR. The publishing company Evangelische Verlagsanstalt (Berlin) published over 40 of his books.69

During WWII Schwede had received a book that told about Laestadius. Schwede wanted to learn more about his life’s work.

That man started to intrigue me. I started to search for information about him and I found an academic book about him – unfortunately it was available only in Finnish. Believe it or not, but I started to study Finnish by myself in the evenings to be able to understand the book with a dictionary.70

The book that introduced Laestadius to Schwede was the already-mentioned biography of Laestadius – a classic written by Senator Kaarlo Castrén.71

Dedicated to his cause, Schwede wrote a biographical novel about Laestadius from the pieces he had managed to pull together. Lars Levi Laestadius – der Lappenprophet was published in 1953 by the publishing company Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, which operated in Berlin.72

A new edition of the book was published already in the following year. Schwede’s book was published on the other side of the Iron Curtain, in West Germany, as well. In a few years the book became quite popular. In 1959 there were already 8 editions, and by 1960 as many as 10.73 The book was a prelude to Schwede’s extensive career as an author. Perhaps success as a describer of Laestadius’s life events gave him enthusiasm and strength to keep moving forward.

In any case, Schwede’s book about Laestadius gave the German readers the basic information about the life events of the revivalist of the northern polar cap. Even though the book was in the form of a novel, Schwede described the beginning of the Kaaresuvanto revival in 1845–1846, Juhani Raattamaa’s (1811–1899) part in the beginning of the revival and also the tragic events of the year 1852 in Kautokeino. The book also contained some quotations, including an extract of the farewell sermon Laestadius gave in Kaaresuvanto in 1849, for

70 Schwede 1977, 266.
71 Schwede 1977, 267; Talonen 2002b, 292.
72 Schwede 1977, 267; Gesamtverzeichnis des deutschsprachigen Schrifttums (GV) 1911–1965. 120, 214; Talonen 2002b, 293.
73 ES 1962, 59 (Esko Häkli); Schwede 1954; 1977, 267; Talonen 2002b, 293.
example.74 Later Schwede also published some other books about Laestadian figures and Lapland.75

Professor Aapeli Saarisalo published a popular biography about Laestadius in 1970 with the title *Laestadius – Pohjolan pasuuna.*76 The book filled a need, since there was no contemporary book about Laestadius’s life available at that time. Saarisalo, a professor emeritus, had written biographies about many influencers within the church and revival movements, and he was especially known for his connections with Israel and his studies concerning the Holy Land, which he had been pursuing for decades. The issue with *Laestadius – Pohjolan pasuuna* was that in his book Saarisalo had used especially large parts from Provost Per Boreman’s book *Laestadianismen* (1954) as well as from the compilation called *Lars Levi Laestadius och hans gärning,* which had been published in 1965 in Sweden and edited by Dr. Gustaf Dahlbäck and Per Boreman. Saarisalo mentioned these books in his prologue, but this procedure cannot be considered advisable. Dr. Pekka Raittila criticized Saarisalo harshly for this conduct in *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* (Finnish Journal of Theology) in 1971. In many parts, Saarisalo’s book was translated quite directly, but not always very successfully from his Swedish authors.77

Mrs. Aila Foltz translated the biography written by Saarisalo into English. The translation was completed in 1992, but it has never been published.78 Later, Saarisalo’s book was also translated into Russian, and a small edition of this book was printed in 2015.79

There are also some small biographies of Laestadius in English. Vicar Aatu Laitinen’s classic *Muistoja Lapin kristillisyydestä* was published in an English version under the title *Memoirs of Early Christianity in Northern Lapland* in 1973 in America. The translator was Mr. Helmar Peterson. Laitinen also wrote a small biography of Laestadius in his memoirs as well.80 Gus Hjalmar Wantaja (1894–1969) was a preacher among the Old Apostolic Lutherans (Firstborns), serving, among other positions, as pastor in Calumet, Michigan. He also made mission trips throughout the USA and Canada.81 He wrote a short biography of Lars Laestadius. The reprinted version of this booklet was published in 2009.82 The Swedish Mrs. Gerda Pehrson wrote a small book about Lars Levi and his younger brother Petrus Laestadius (1802–1841) as a textbook for the use of Swedish schools in 1967. This book, called *Bröderna Laestadius,* includes quite general facts about the life and work of Lars Levi Laestadius. The book was pre-reviewed by theologian Bertil Lunell and published by Bokförlaget Liber.83 Later, Mr. Carl Kulla, Apostolic Lutheran preacher and publisher,
published the English version of this small book in 2006. It was translated by Gordon Rosenlund and edited by Kulla and Mr. Ted Matson.\textsuperscript{84}

American biographies of Laestadius also include an unpublished paper by Mr. Warren Hepokoski. It was published in 1993. A revised and expanded version came out in the jubilee year of Laestadius in 2000.\textsuperscript{85} A biography of Laestadius from 1989 by the Finnish Docent, Pastor Seppo Lohi, was published in English in 2019. It was translated by Mr. Paul Sorvo and edited by Mr. Paul Waaraniemi. The book was published by the Laestadian Lutheran Church, which is church body of American Conservative Laestadians.\textsuperscript{86}

In 2005 was published a collection entitled \textit{A Godly Heritage. Historical View of the Laestadian Revival and Development of the Apostolic Lutheran Church in America}. It was edited by Aila Foltz and Miriam Yliniemi with Rodger Foltz, Jouko Talonen, and Elmer Yliniemi. The monograph is based on scientific research but it belongs mostly to the so-called popular literature. It includes five articles about Laestadius’s life and work from different aspects as well as texts about Laestadianism, and about American Laestadianism. The articles focused on Laestadius were written by Uuras Saarnivaara,\textsuperscript{87} Jouko Talonen,\textsuperscript{88} and Aila Foltz,\textsuperscript{89} who also wrote an article about Mary of Lapland (\textit{Lapin Maria}), an important spiritual woman in the life of Laestadius.\textsuperscript{90} In the book there are also some spiritual texts of Laestadius.\textsuperscript{91}

The above-mentioned article of Uuras Saarnivaara is a short biography of Laestadius. It was translated by Aila and Rodger Foltz from the author’s book \textit{He elivät Jumalan voimassa} (volume 3) ("They Lived in the Power of God") from 1974.\textsuperscript{92} Later this biography was also printed in Saarnivaara’s posthumous work, \textit{They Lived in the Power of God}, in 2011. This book presented Lutheran revival leaders in northern Europe. It was a translation from Saarnivaara’s Finnish texts made by the Foltz couple.\textsuperscript{93} Mark A. Granqvist, Professor of Church History at the Luther Seminary (Minneapolis), has edited the collection of \textit{Scandinavian Pietists} published in 2015 in the USA. This book also includes a short presentation of Laestadius and his sermons.\textsuperscript{94} We must also take into account the Finnish Professor Hannu Juntunen’s article on Laestadius and the “northern revival” in the journal \textit{Lutheran Forum} in 2015.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{84} [Pehrson] 2006.
\textsuperscript{85} Hepokoski 2000.
\textsuperscript{86} Lohi 1989; 2019.
\textsuperscript{87} Saarnivaara 2005.
\textsuperscript{88} Talonen 2005a; 2005b; 2005c.
\textsuperscript{89} Foltz 2005a.
\textsuperscript{90} Foltz 2005b.
\textsuperscript{91} A Godly Heritage 2005, 73–78, 81–85
\textsuperscript{92} Saarnivaara 1975, 365–384; 2005.
\textsuperscript{93} Saarnivaara 2011, 165–187.
\textsuperscript{94} Granqvist 2015, 13, 245–262. On the cover of this book we can see the church of Kvikkjok. Kvikkjok was a small parish in Lapland, Sweden, where Lars Levi Laestadius and his younger brother Petrus Laestadius grew up. Their elder half-brother Karl-Erik (1775–1817) served as pastor in Kvikkjok Parish.
\textsuperscript{95} Juntunen 2015.
These biographies of Laestadius and novels about him can give foreign readers some glimpses of his life and work, including the beginning of Laestadianism. However, from the viewpoint of church history, many of these books are not factual scientific biographies.

Research on Laestadius

Generally speaking, relatively little academic research into Laestadius has been done outside the Scandinavian countries. Instead, we can find research in English done by Scandinavian researchers, especially in the 2000s.96 Because the purpose of this article is focused on the research on Laestadius done or published outside Scandinavia, I do not take into account Scandinavian research, even if this research published in English is available to the international forum.

Of course, in many general overviews on Laestadianism or other texts focused on Scandinavian church history there is some information on Laestadius and his life, work and message. Also, research focused on Laestadianism as the revivalist movement of Arctic areas and a part of Sami culture sometimes includes information about Laestadius as well. These texts give the international forum some glimpses of the life and work of the “Trumpet of the North”.97 However, there are some scientific texts focused specially on Laestadius especially from the 1980s in the Baltics, in Germany, in the Netherlands and in America.

The sole monograph on Laestadius printed in Latvian is a brief book Saucēja Balss (“The Crying Voice”) written by Ilārs Plūme. It was published by a Christian Student Association at the University of Latvia in 1995. The book is based on a work (Bachelor’s thesis) which was completed in 1993 in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Latvia. The printed version covers a brief presentation of the life of Laestadius, description of the beginning of the revival in Karesuando starting from the mid-1840s, Laestadius’s texts and a rundown of their author’s views. Some texts of Laestadius, the author’s review, Lestadiānisms šodien (“Laestadianism today”), and a short biography of Juhani Raattamaa, written by Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara, were also published at the end of the book. Plūme’s book received some attention in Latvia. However, for its level of information the book is quite modest due to the fact that the author, although talented as such, does not know Nordic languages. He was only able to use literature concerning Laestadius and Laestadianism written in English and German.98 In the mid-1990s the American Warren Hepokoski translated Plūme’s work into English, but it was never printed.99

96 For example, Hallencreutz 1987; Kristiansen 2004; Joensuu 2016; Heith 2018.
98 Plūme 1995. The short biography of Juhani Raattamaa was translated into Latvian by Ivo Sildegs.
99 English translation of Plūme’s study. Manuscript. JTA.
A Master’s thesis on Laestadius and the origins of the movement was produced by the German Anke Reiss in Bonn in 1986. The thesis, titled *Lars Levi Laestadius und die Anfänge des Laestadianismus*, was written as Reiss’s pedagogical qualification and supervised by Professor Kurt Schäferdiek. Reiss had become interested in Laestadius and the revival movement bearing Laestadius’s name while living in Sweden, where he spent one year.

I met the name Lars Levi Laestadius for the first time when I was spending a year in Sweden. I was amazed at the level of the intrinsic value the revival movement bearing his name still has in the societal and spiritual life in Northern Scandinavia. Therefore, I became interested in studying Laestadius more deeply.

According to Reiss there was no German literature available in the field, which made studying difficult for him. To make matters worse, the Scandinavian literature was hard to use. Reiss utilized Laestadius’s works, especially his work *Därhusjonet*. He was familiar with the works of the most influential Swedish scholars (Per Boreman, Gustaf Dahlbäck, Olaus Brännström, Carl J. E. Hasselberg, Lennart Lundmark, Gunnar Wikmark). However, he was not acquainted with the Norwegian Laestadian literature, except that of Olof Havdal. Of the German literature, Reiss was familiar with only one article, which was written by Ernst Alker in 1928. However, a couple of Finnish studies have found their way into Reiss’s bibliography: a doctoral thesis written by Hannu Juntunen about Laestadius’s viewpoints on the church and a study about Ostrobothnian Laestadianism written by Erik Wentin.

Some Dutch researchers of cultural anthropology at the University of Groningen were interested in northern Scandinavia and the Sami people as well as in northern Laestadianism in the 1970–1980s. They also did research in northern Scandinavia, not just in their offices in Groningen. A collection of articles called *Laestadianisme vroeger en nu* was published by the Institute of Cultural Anthropology of the University of Groningen (*Instituut voor Culturele Antropologie, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen*) in the Netherlands in 1982. In his large article *Geschiedenis van het laestadianisme* (“The History of Laestadianism”), researcher Jelle Kleistra also wrote a quite large part about the life and work of Laestadius. He used texts of Swedish scholars, such as Per Boreman, Olaus Brännström and Gustaf Dahlbäck. On the tragedy of Kautokeino (1852) wrote Nellejet Zorgdrager. Later she also defended her dissertation on this subject in the Netherlands in 1989. This work by the title *De strijd der rechtvaardigen, Kautokeino 1852: Religieus verzet van Samen tegen intern Noors kolonialisme* (“The Battle of the Righteous, Kautokeino 1852: Religious resistance of Sami People against Norwegian colonialism”) was also translated into Norwegian and published in 1992.

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100 Reiss 1984. Reiss’s study was translated into Finnish by Jyrki Heinonen in 1993. I have one copy in my Research archives. Veronika Jupová wrote a short study about the birth and development of Laestadianism and its situation in Finland at the beginning of the 2000s in the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University in Prague (*Univerzita Karlova v Praze*) in the academic year 2004–2005. She also wrote about the life and work of Laestadius. *Jupová* 2004–2005.

101 Reiss 1984. On Alker’s article, see Raittila 1967, 279.


103 Zorgdrager 1982a.

On Sami problematics we must also note Terry-Lee Marttinen’s study *Lars Levi Laestadius, Sami Women, and Religion in 19th Century Sweden* from 2015. She also uses some of Laestadius’s texts in English as primary sources. The author’s text is available on the Internet as well.\(^{105}\)

Laestadius’s scientific connections with France became the object of research and discussion again in the 2000s. Professor Jan Borm (Versailles) has focused his interest on the French “La Recherche” Expedition (1838-1839).\(^{106}\) Professor (emeritus) Juha Pentikäinen (b. 1941) published especially many texts about Laestadius as a scientist and specialist of Lappish mythology in the 2000s. Many of his texts have been published in English,\(^{107}\) but one even in Hungarian.\(^{108}\) Pentikäinen, who is Professor of Science of Religion (emeritus) at the University of Helsinki, is, among other things, also a specialist in Sami culture and Shamanism as well. His special interest in Laestadius and Laestadianism arises from his own spiritual background in conservative Laestadianism. His parents took him on a trip to Lapland and Laestadius’s paths for the first time in 1949; he wrote his first composition in school about this journey.\(^{109}\)

It is also important to note Professor Mika Vähäkangas’s short article, *Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861) – A Hybrid of Enchantment and Disenchantment*, in the collection of articles called *Creation and Salvation* from 2012. This book was the sixth volume in the series Studies in Religion and the Environment edited by Ernst M. Conradie. The collection of texts written by different authors contains descriptions of various Nordic theologians including, among others, Laestadius. According to Vähäkangas, Laestadius took northern natural, cultural, and linguistic realities into account in his preaching and writing.\(^{110}\)

**Conclusions**

Dean Lars Levi Laestadius never travelled outside Scandinavia, but he was an international personality in his time. Compared to the earlier research, the latest research has given more attention to Laestadius’s academic connections abroad. Laestadius was awarded The Medal of Honour of the Legion of Honour of France, which is a sign of his academic connections with France. Between 1838 and 1840, the French *Académie des Sciences* sent three research expeditions to the arctic areas of northern Europe. The research group was travelling with the French corvette, *La Recherche*. Its destination was northern Scandinavia and the North Atlantic islands, Svalbard, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Laestadius was one of the five Swedish participants of the expedition, and he was guiding the expedition to northern Scandinavia in 1838.

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\(^{105}\) Marttinen 2015.

\(^{106}\) Borm 2014.

\(^{107}\) Pentikäinen 1998; 2000c; 2002a; 2002b; 2014; s.a.


\(^{109}\) Pentikäinen 2002a, 11.

\(^{110}\) Vähäkangas 2012, 148–151.
One result of this scientific activity of Laestadius can be seen in his work, *Fragments of Lappish Mythology*. This important study was recently also published in English in 2002 in Canada. It was translated from the Swedish version *Fragmenter i Lappska Mythologien*.

Laestadius’s sermons have been published in Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Sami, English, German, Estonian, Latvian and Russian. Some sermons have also been translated into Dutch, but not published. The Firstborn Laestadians have been especially active in publishing the sermons of Laestadius because the reading of the Dean’s sermons is an important part of the order of their services. Some others of Laestadius’s religious and theological texts have also been translated into English. Besides collections of sermons there are also some other religious texts of Laestadius available to the international forum. The classic work of Laestadius, *The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness*, his periodical published between 1852 and 1854, was published in 1988 in the USA by the Old Apostolic Lutheran Church in America. *Därhusjonet*, the most important religious philosophical work of Laestadius, has also been translated into English and published by the Swedish publishing house Biblioteca Laestadiana in 2015.

Quite a large amount of research and other work has been done on Laestadius in Sweden, Finland, and Norway. Some texts focused on Laestadius have even been published in Denmark. Some of these are based on historical facts, but some presentations and books belong to popular literature as novels. Dr. *Pekka Raittila* listed about 116 items about Laestadius in 1967. Since 1967, new books have been published on Laestadius as well.

Novels, biographies and other texts about Laestadius can be found published in the Baltic states, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Hungary, Russia and in the United States from 1927 to the 2000s. Many of the novels and biographies of Laestadius are translations from Finnish or Scandinavian languages. Among the authors of these books we can mention Märta Edqvist, Harry Blomberg, Andreas Markusson, A. O. Schwede, Kaarlo Castrén, and Aapeli Saarisalo. These popular biographies of Laestadius and novels about him can give foreign readers some glimpses of his life and work, including the beginning of Laestadianism. However, from the viewpoint of church history, many of these books are not factual scientific biographies.

In addition, some small studies and articles, including a Master’s thesis, on Laestadius have been published outside Scandinavia as well. Laestadius’s connections with France became an object of research and discussion again in the 2000s. Professor *Juha Pentikäinen* has been especially active in describing Laestadius’s role as a scientist and his contacts with France. Some Dutch researchers of cultural anthropology at the University of Groningen were interested in northern Scandinavia and the Sami people as well as northern Laestadianism in the 1970–1980s. The collection of articles called *Laestadianisme vroeger en nu* was published by the Institute of Cultural Anthropology of the University of Groningen in the Netherlands in 1982. In his large article *Geschiedenis van het læestadianisme* ("The History of Laestadianism") researcher *Jelle Kleistra* also wrote a quite large part about the life and work of Laestadius. The tragedy of Kautokeino (1852) has been researched by Dr. *Nellejet Zorgdrager* (University of Groningen).
In 2005 a collection of articles, *A Godly Heritage. Historical View of the Laestadian Revival and Development of the Apostolic Lutheran Church in America*, was published. The monograph is based on scientific research but it belongs mostly to so-called popular literature.

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**Abbreviations and terms**

- **DDR** Deutsche Demokratische Republik
- **DTh** Doctor of Theology
- **JTA** Jouko Talosen tutkimusarkisto (Research Archives of Jouko Talonen)
- **LELC** Evangelical Lutheran church of Latvia
- **NJ** New Jersey
- **NNF** Nordic Network of Folklore
- **SKB** Suomen Kansallisbiografia (National Biography of Finland)
- **SKHST** Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran toimituksia (Publications of the Finnish Society of Church History)
- **SKHSV** Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran vuosikirja (Yearbook of the Finnish Society of Church History)
- **SRK** Suomen rauhanyhdistysten keskusyhdistys (the Central Association of the Finnish Associations of Peace)
- **SLLH** Suomen Lähetyssеuran lestadiolainen haaraosasto (the Laestadian Faction of the Finnish Mission Society)
- **STKSJ** Suomalaisen Teologisen kirjallisuusseuran julkaisuja (Publications of the Finnish society for theological literature)
PICTURES

1. The classic portrait of Lars Levi Laestadius painted by the artist Émile Lasalle. The basic for this painting was a lithograph by Charles Giraud. Picture: Wikipedia Commons.


3. The former Prime Minister of Finland, Kaarlo Castrén (1860–1938), published the biography of Laestadius in 1932. It was also published in Estonian in 1938.


I would like to thank theologians Tanja Vallivirta and Anna Ruokamo for translating this article. I also want to thank Mr. Raimo Airamo (Lahti), Mr. Seppo Leivo (Vantaa) and Mr. Lars-Erik Wikberg (Haparanda) for their help in the preparation of this article.

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