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A SWEDISH PRINCESS IN KIEVAN RUS'

The Medieval Christian World of St. Anna of Novgorod

One of the most engaging narratives of early Swedish Christianity is the life and connections of a remarkable 11th-century Christian princess, Ingegärd of Sweden. Little is known among Russians and Ukrainians of Ingegärd's Swedish roots, and almost nothing in the West of her life as royal consort over a dynastic federation of towns and cities that stretched from northern Russia to southern Ukraine and Crimea. Raised at the dawn of established Christianity in Sweden, Ingegärd was engaged to one Christian prince, yet wedded another, and spent a vibrant and fascinating married life between Novgorod and Kiev as the daughter-in-law of St. Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Russia. Her husband and sons, inheritors of the Rurik-Rus' dynasty, would rule from the shores of Lake Ladoga in Russia's far north to the Black Sea, and the couple's children and grandchildren married into the most illustrious courts of Europe and Byzantium. And Ingegärd herself? She became a saint.

In a complicated narrative woven from accounts as varied as the Russian Primary Chronicle, Byzantine, Middle Eastern and Frankish historians, as well as the rich Icelandic sagas,¹ it is clear that Ingegärd's marriage was not Sweden's first contact with Christianity. From the end of the eighth century, Swedes had joined in Viking raids in the Christian British Isles and continental Europe, and an active merchant trade brought Scandinavian merchants into contact with Christianity. More importantly, Viking activity in

1. Ed. Note: The Icelandic sagas, written in Old Norse and first collected in the 12th century from older oral traditions, are a vivid and purposeful mixture of history, story and legend. Some sagas include greater elements of fantasy and story-telling, while others are accepted by historians as fundamentally reliable. Often there are elements of both history and fable. While research into the sagas is ongoing, there is no doubt that they are among the earliest and most important texts of medieval Christian Europe.

Opposite: St. Anna of Novgorod.



the East was almost completely Swedish and the famous merchant town of Birka, near today's Stockholm, was the Baltic Sea link in the river and portage route down the Volkhov River to Staraya Ladoga, Novgorod, and on to Byzantine Constantinople and Abassidian Baghdad.

Birka, a trading town on the small lush island of Björkö on Lake Mälaren, was important for both trade and as the site of the first known Christian congregation in Sweden. Founded in 831 by St. Ansgar, Apostle to the North, a Frankish missionary sent by Emperor Louis the Pious, a son of Charlemagne, the mission began tragically enough when the Scandinavian merchant convoy of ships with which Ansgar traveled was pirated by Swedish Vikings. After a fierce battle, the merchants and missionaries were stripped of their possessions and Ansgar and his assistant, Monk Witmar, saved themselves by jumping overboard and swimming ashore. They continued on foot towards Birka with only the clothes on their back, having lost altar supplies, service books, vestments, gifts for the Swedish king, and mission funds. Nevertheless, Ansgar succeeded in obtaining the permission of King Björn to organize a small congregation at Birka, of which Herger, the king's steward, became the mission's most prominent member and funded the building of the chapel that served traveling Christian traders and converts, and ministered to the local Christian slave population. Ansgar departed after eighteen months to become bishop of Hamburg, and later archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen. As an apostolic delegate he continued to play an active part in overseeing missions to Scandinavian lands, including the consecration of Gauzbert (Simon) as Sweden's first bishop, although Bishop Simon's tenure quickly came to an end when he was forcibly exiled from the country by local pagans. Ansgar returned to Sweden for short periods in 848 and 854, but after his departure the mission effort waned and the first Swedish Christian congregations passed from history. It would be 150 years before Christianity took firm root in Scandinavia.

Ingegärd, Daughter of the Swedish King, and Her Two Suitors

In 1001, St. Anna of Novgorod was born Ingegärd Olofsdotter in Sigtuna, Sweden, the eldest daughter of Swedish King Olof Skötkonung ("the Donor") and Estrid of the Obotrites, a west Slavic tribe. In this period Scandinavian kings lived an itinerant life, residing in a series of royal farms or

Opposite: West gallery, St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.



estates called *husbys* through which they traveled to attend regional parliaments (*things*), adjudicate disputes, raise troops and taxes, and secure the loyalty of local communities.

Seven years later, in 1008, tradition says that King Olof was baptized by St. Sigfrid (or Sigurd), a Benedictine bishop from Glastonbury, England, at Husaby in Western Gotland. (As the former court bishop of King Olaf I Tryggveson of Norway from 995-1002, Sigfrid had most likely baptized Leif Erikson.) In his new appointment as the first bishop of Skara, Sigfrid founded three churches in Västergötland and, after St. Ansgar, is called the “Second Apostle to the North.” Olof’s wife Estrid and their children Anund Jacob and Ingegärd were almost certainly baptized with him. As the first king of Sweden to remain a life-long Christian, Olof lived up to his name by donating land and farms to the church to support mission work. Watercourses around the south-west bear Sigfrid’s name and the church-site of the royal baptism at Husaby, along with the original spring, can still be visited.

Around 1015, another royal Olaf, Olaf II Haraldsson (the future St. Olaf of Norway), returned home to Norway from exile in England, Spain, and Normandy, where he had been baptized at Rouen. According to the saga account and skaldic poetry, of which we must be a little cautious, he was a descendant of Harald Fairhair, the first king of Norway, and Olaf’s homecoming followed his leading a seaborne attack in English waters to remove the Danish King Canute from the English throne and restore Æthelred I to power. Once in Norway, Olaf gathered support from local rulers and, after retaking territories recently ceded to Denmark and Sweden, became king of a united Norway.

In 1016, the young Olaf II asked to wed Ingegärd Olofsdotter, partly perhaps to forestall an invasion by her father to reclaim the ceded territories. We don’t know what the young couple felt for each other or if they had even met, but according to the sagas, Ingegärd herself attempted to persuade her father to accept the proposal. It was not until the Thing of 1018, however, when the Uppsala chieftains prevailed upon the king to make peace with the young Norwegian, that Olaf reluctantly agreed. Within the year, however, a new suitor appeared at the Swedish court, and the relieved king annulled the betrothal, giving Ingegärd in marriage to Yaroslav I (the Wise), Grand Prince of Kiev and son of St. Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlight-

Opposite: Husaby spring. Traditional site of baptism of King Olof Skötkonung and his daughter Ingegärd.

ener of Russia.² The prince had fled to Olof's court looking for the support of Swedish Varangians (Vikings) against his elder brother Svyatapolk, who had instigated the murder of their half-brothers—Svyataslav and the Russian Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb. Yaroslav's proposal must have been attractive and his prospects secure enough that Olof Skötkonung confidently broke his promise to the Norwegian Olaf and his own chieftains. Within a short time, however, we find Ingegärd's half-sister, Astrid Olofsdotter, married to the Norwegian king. Some accounts say this was done secretly with Ingegärd's help, though it may well have been at the instigation of their father. In any case, peace accompanied the marital alliance.

The Swedish-Rus' Roots of Grand Prince Yaroslav

It was no coincidence that Yaroslav fled to the Swedish king's court. They were, in fact, distant compatriots, the Rurikid Rus' dynasty having arrived in Russia only a few generations earlier from north of Stockholm. Yaroslav's great-grandmother, St. Olga, Equal-to-the-Apostles, who was also of Rus' parentage, had married a son of Rurik, founder of the Swedish-Russian dynasty and her grandson, the future St. Vladimir, had himself gone into youthful exile in Norway before his conversion.³ The extensive political

² According to the early Russian chronicler Nestor, a monk of the Kiev Caves and traditional author of the *Primary Chronicle*, the Swedish Rus' came to Russia at the invitation of local tribes, who had known them from an earlier incursion in 859 when the invading Rus' had unsuccessfully attempted to gather tribute. The federated tribes "...drove the Varangians back beyond the sea, refused to pay them tribute, and set out to govern themselves, but when their experiment at self-government turned to strife and rebellion, they sent emissaries back to the Variagi (Rus') north of today's Stockholm, saying: 'Our land is great and fruitful, but it lacks order and justice; come and take possession, and govern us!' And three brothers with their followers were selected, and they took the whole of Rus' with them and came. And the oldest, Rurik, took his abode in Novgorod...." This was the beginning of the Rurikid Dynasty and the coming of the Rus', who would give their name to the Russian land. The *Primary Chronicle* was written around 1100, and the author and compilers' familiarity with the events is borne out by the inclusion of over 100 Swedish proper names, which they would otherwise not have known, along with oral accounts of elderly people who had lived through decades of Rurikid rule. The Monk Nestor is thought to have been born in Kiev around 1056, two years after the death of Yaroslav I (the Wise) and five after Ingegärd, so he would have had access to contemporary sources.

Our earliest surviving copy of the *Primary Chronicle*, however, is an edited second edition (the Laurentian edition) by an Igumen (Abbot) Sylvester of St. Michael's Monastery in Vydbobichi near Kiev in 1116, who may have compiled his account from several sources including Nestor's. For two centuries after Rurik, the leading men in Russian history bore Swedish names; until 1598 all of the tsars of Russia were descendants of Rurik.

³ According to the dating of the Russian *Primary Chronicle* and forensic evidence, Yaroslav may have been born as late as 988, thus after St. Vladimir's conversion to Christianity and marriage to Anna Porphyrogenita (963 - 1011/12). Thus, he may in fact have been Anna's son, rather than from one of Vladimir's earlier concubines. Anna was the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Romanos II and Empress Theophano and sister of Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII. This Rus-Byzantine connection may also explain why Olaf Skötkonung eagerly accepted Yaroslav I's marriage proposal for Ingegärd. Vladimir's conversion in order to marry Anna, and Anna herself, played a great role in the Christianization of Rus'.

Opposite: Monument of Yaroslav the Wise against background of the Golden Gates of Kiev.



connections of the Middle Ages are well-illustrated by the 11th- to 12th-century matrimonial ties of the Rus' (Russian) princely family with the ruling houses of Scandinavia. Seven such alliances are described in the sagas, taking place between the years 1019 and 1154. From these Norse-Icelandic sources we learn of two Swedish kings' daughters who came to Rus' and became Rus' princesses, as well as five Scandinavian queens of Rus' origin.

That there were scattered individuals and settlements of Swedish-Rus' Christians in Kiev before St. Olga's conversion is now a certainty, and the proto-martyrs of Rus' are two Kievan Viking Christians, Sts. Theodore the Varangian (Viking) and his son John, who were killed in 984 for resisting John's conscription as a sacrifice to Kiev's pagan gods.

According to Russian sources, after defeating his murderous half-brother Svyatopolk and securing the inheritance, Yaroslav gave Ingegärd a marriage settlement that included the town and lands around Aldeygaborg (today's Staraya Ladoga) one of the most important trading towns of Eastern Europe. Aldeygaborg was not far from the present-day city of St. Petersburg and bordered the famous Lake Ladoga with its already active Valaam Monastery (believed to have been founded some decades earlier by Sts. Sergius and Herman). The area was later known as *Ingria* or *Ingerinmaa* in Finnish, meaning "Ingegärd's land." The young bride sent her Swedish relative and retainer Jarl Ragnvald Ulfsson to rule the dowered lands in her stead, for after her wedding to the Grand Prince, Ingegärd would live far to the south in Kievan Rus'.⁴

At the time of her marriage in Kiev in 1019, eighteen year-old Ingegärd took the Greek name Irene, meaning "peace," and from that time on, with remarkable foresight and wisdom, was an excellent advisor to a husband twenty-five years her elder. Along with Swedish she may have already spoken the west Slavic dialect native to her mother Estrid, for Icelandic narratives tell us that Ingegärd was a shrewd negotiator and was once able to make peace between Yaroslav and one of his brothers even as their armies were poised to attack.

⁴ By taking Jarl Ragnvald Ulfsson out of Sweden, Ingegärd may have literally saved his life. As a relative on her mother's side, it was Jarl Ragnvald who (along with pressure from the Thing's chieftains) had induced her father to wed Ingegärd to King Olaf II. According to one account, after the betrothal was broken off he quietly arranged her sister Astrid's marriage to Olaf II with Ingegärd's aid, incurring the wrath of Olof Skötkonung, who allegedly swore to hang him at the following Thing.

Opposite: St. Vladimir the Great (top) and St. Yaroslav the Wise as portrayed on Ukrainian currency.



The Golden Age of Rus'

Thus began the Golden Age of the Rus' Dynasty. Grand Prince Yaroslav (later known as Yaroslav the Wise) built an entirely new district in Kiev surrounded by an embankment several kilometers long and eleven feet high. Three gates led into the countryside, the finest of which was the Golden Gate (*Zolota Vorota*). The city was loosely modeled after imperial Constantinople, and Yaroslav brought in Greek priests, architects, and artisans. Ingegård herself had a hand in initiating the building of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, and also perhaps the St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod, overseen by her son, Vladimir II of Novgorod and his wife, a second Anna of Novgorod, who is buried there with him.

As the Grand-Prince of Novgorod and Kiev, Yaroslav ruled lands west of the Dnieper River, from the Black Sea to the far north of Russia. After the death of his brother Mstislav, his territories included lands east of the Dnieper; today's European Russia, Ukraine, and Crimea. He also began the codification of administrative customs and princely decrees which he would publish as Russia's first legal code, the *Rus'skaya Pravda*, which was noted for its substitution of fines, instead of capital and corporal punishment.

In his 1018 *Chronicles* after visiting the city, the Saxon bishop Titmar of Merzeburg characterized Kiev as "a great city... and ornament of the Greek world... with more than 400 churches, 8 marketplaces, and an uncountable number of citizens." At the time, the population of Kiev was fifty thousand while the population of London was twenty thousand, and Paris, after repeated invasions, was little more than a large village. The medieval German historian, Adam of Bremen, writing around 1070, called Kiev, "the competitor of the scepter of Constantinople, the most charming gem of Greece...."

Yaroslav was not only a governor and builder; he and Ingegård were also noted patrons of Christian literature and the arts. As the *Russian Primary Chronicle* relates:

Yaroslav loved religious establishments, and was devoted to priests, especially to monks. He applied himself to books, and read them continually day and night. He assembled many scribes, and translated from Greek into Slavic. He wrote and collected many books through which true believers are instructed and enjoy religious education.

Opposite: Cupolas and vaults of St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.



For as one man plows the land, and another sows, and still others reap and eat food in abundance, so did this prince. His father Vladimir plowed and harrowed the soil when he enlightened Rus' through baptism, while this prince sowed the hearts of the faithful with the written word, and we in turn reap the harvest by receiving the teaching of books... Thus Yaroslav, as we have said, was a lover of books, and as he wrote many, he deposited them in the Church of St. Sophia which he himself had founded. He adorned it with gold and silver and churchly vessels, and in it the usual hymns are raised to God at the customary seasons. He founded other churches in the cities and districts, appointing priests and paying them out of his personal fortune. He bade them teach the people, since that is the duty which God has prescribed them, and to go often into the churches. Priests and Christian laymen thus increased in number. Yaroslav rejoiced to see the multitude of his churches and of his Christian subjects....⁵

In 1051, Yaroslav assembled the sobor of bishops that proclaimed a scholarly hieromonk, Hilarion, the metropolitan of Kiev, thus ending the reign of Byzantine Greek hierarchs on Rus' territory. Metropolitan Hilarion's famous "Sermon on Law and Grace" is frequently cited as the first work of Old Russian literature, and here he praises Ingegård-Irene for her virtue and piety. Using the literary device of writing to St. Vladimir the Great (who had already reposed), the hierarch observes: "Look at your daughter-in-law Irene, look at your grandchildren and great-grandchildren, how they live, how God keeps them as they keep the faith that you have bequeathed to them as they praise the Name of Christ."

The Kievan Exile of King Olaf II of Norway

Within a decade of her marriage, Ingegård's former suitor and now brother-in-law, the Norwegian King Olaf II, spent two years in exile in Novgorod and Kiev after an unsuccessful 1028 campaign with Anund Jacob, Ingegård's brother, against the Danish King Canute. From Kiev, Olaf returned to Norway in 1030 to reclaim his throne, but was killed in battle against a combined Danish and Norwegian army at Stiklestad. Olaf's illegitimate son Magnus

⁵ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, Laurentian Text, translated by Samuel Cross, The Medieval Academy of America, Cambridge, MA, no date.

Opposite: Left side of nave, St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.





*Daughters of Yaroslav the Wise and Ingegärd of Sweden, 11th-century fresco,
St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.*



(the future St. Magnus) was then raised by Ingegärd at the hospitable Kievan court who, when the boy was summoned back to rule Norway at eleven years old, refused to permit his departure until his succession was assured and the inheritance secure. Olaf was canonized a year after his death by the Norwegian Bishop Grimkell after a series of miracles and the discovery of his completely incorrupt relics.⁶

According to Icelandic historian and poet Snorri Sturluson, and the later *Legendary Saga*, during Olaf's sojourn in *Garthariki* (Kiev) he had performed two miracles, the second involving Ingegärd. When the son of a wealthy widow and friend of the court had a boil in his throat that no longer allowed him to swallow, the mother brought him to the Grand Princess, who told her to address Olaf. While the *Legendary Saga* is quite firm in saying that they did not call the exiled king a healer, Snorri gives a differing account in which Ingegärd is reported as saying, "Go to King Olaf. He is the best healer here." When the king insists that he is no physician, the mother continues to beg his help until Olaf places bread cross-wise on his palm and gives it to the boy to swallow. The child is healed and Snorri finishes the story with the words: "The common opinion was then at first that King Olaf had such good healing power in his hands as is ascribed to such persons who excel in the art of having healing hands; but later, when it became known that he performed miracles, this was taken to be a true miracle."⁷

Kievan-Rus' Marriages in the Courts of Byzantium and Europe

In 1043, Yarsoslav instigated a seaborne raid against Constantinople led by his son Vsevolod I. The reasons for the dispute are unknown, but the Byzantine historian Michael Psellus, an eyewitness of the battle, detailed how the invading Rus' were destroyed near the Anatolian coast by an imperial fleet equipped with Greek fire, while Slavic chroniclers record that the Kievan fleet was beaten back by a tempest. However the defeat occurred, the threat was serious enough to the Byzantines that peace terms included Vsevolod marrying Anastasia, the daughter of Emperor Constantine IX Monoma-

⁶ Not only were the relics of the dead king incorrupt after a year in the grave, but according to Bishop Grimkell and witnesses, Olaf's face was still rosy and his fingernails and beard had grown.

⁷ Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla II*, pp. 341-2; Trans. by Hollander, p.485; from *Saints and Their Lives on the Periphery: Veneration of Saints in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe 1000-1200*, Ed. Antonsson and Garipzanov, Brepols Pub., Belgium, 2010, p. 156.

Opposite: St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.

chos,⁸ as his grandfather St. Vladimir I had married the emperor's sister, Anna Porphyrogenita.

In all, Ingegärd and Yaroslav had at least six sons⁹—St. Vladimir II of Novgorod, Izyaslav, Svyatoslav, Vsevolod I, Igor, and Vyacheslav; and four daughters, Elisif, Anastasia, Anna, and (possibly) Agatha. Of the daughters, Elisif (Elizabeth) married one of the greatest of all Norwegian Viking rulers, Harald Hardrada, formerly a comrade-in-arms to Yaroslav and commander of the famed Varangian Guard that protected the Byzantine emperor. Later he became King Harald III of Norway.¹⁰ A second daughter, Anastasia, married the future King Andrew of Hungary. Anna, the third daughter, married King Henry I of France, of the Capetian dynasty, and not only ruled for six years as regent for her young son after Henry's death (the first French queen to ever do so), but was one of the first women in France to read and write—not one, but five languages including Greek and Latin—a tribute to Yaroslav and Ingegärd's patronage of education.¹¹ Around the same time Yaroslav gave the hand of his younger sister Maria to Casimir I of Poland, who would reunite the Polish kingdom.

⁸ Anna Vsevolodna, daughter of Prince Vsevolod Yaroslavich and Princess Anastasia, and granddaughter of Ingegärd, was tonsured a monastic in 1082 at the Andreyev Yanchinov Monastery built for her at Kiev. She made at least one journey to Constantinople and back, dying in the year 1112, and was canonized as a second St. Anna (Vsevolodna). The monastery was destroyed in the 13th-century Mongol Tatar invasion.

⁹ An earlier son, Ilya, may have been by another mother.

¹⁰ Harald Hardrada: In 1030, at fifteen years old, Harald fought in the Battle of Stiklestad when his half-brother, St. Olaf II of Norway, sought to reclaim the Norwegian throne lost to the Danish King Canute two years earlier. During the battle Olaf and Harald were defeated by forces loyal to Canute. Olaf was killed and Harald went into exile in Kievan Rus' where he served in the army of Yaroslav the Wise, eventually obtaining rank as a captain. According to one tale, in order to win the hand of Yaroslav and Ingegärd's daughter, the Kievan princess Elesif, the young Viking needed to make his name and fortune. Around 1034 he travelled with compatriots to Constantinople where he rose to the position of commander of the Varangian Guard, the personal bodyguard of the Byzantine Emperor, and saw action on the Mediterranean Sea, in Asia Minor, Sicily, the Holy Land, Bulgaria, and in Constantinople itself, where he amassed considerable wealth and was involved in imperial dynastic disputes. He left the Varangian Guard in 1042 and returned to Kiev, where he wedded Elesif and began his successful campaign to reclaim the Norwegian throne, ruling as King Harald III of Norway from 1046-1066.

¹¹ At her marriage in Paris, Anna wrote to her father that "Francia" was "a barbarous country where the houses are gloomy, the churches ugly and the customs revolting," complaining that the French could neither read nor write, nor did they wash. Many French documents bear her signature in old Slavic script, "Anna the Queen." Impressed with her political acumen, Pope Nicholas II wrote the following: "Honorable lady, the fame of your virtues has reached our ears, and, with great joy, we hear that you are performing your royal duties in this very Christian state with commendable zeal and brilliant mind." Henry I so respected his wife's judgment that his decrees frequently bear the inscription, "With the consent of my wife Anna" and "In the presence of Queen Anna."

Opposite: Main transept, St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.



Kiev quickly became a formidable military town and a center of trade and learning, and it was here also that Yaroslav and Ingegård raised the young outcast sons of British King Edmund Ironside of England: Edward Ætheling (the Exile) and Edmund Ætheling, whose mother Ealdgyth, it has even been suggested, was another half-sister of Ingegård. After their father's death, England was under the rule of the Danish King Canute. The lives of the young exile princes were in jeopardy and they were first sent to Ingegård's brother, King Anund Jacob, at the Swedish court—perhaps further evidence, though circumstantial, that King Olof Skötkonung was indeed their grandfather. According to the English monk-chronicler John of Worcester, King Anund Jacob then secretly sent the children to his sister in Kiev.¹²

Another fascinating possibility with rather more substance is that, after being raised in Kiev, Edward Ætheling married Agatha, a fourth daughter of Yaroslav and Ingegård, which, if true would make Agatha the mother of St. Margaret of Scotland, and grandmother of St. David I of Scotland.^{13 14} Yaroslav and Ingegård's four daughters are portrayed in an 11th-century fresco that can still be seen in St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev; a nearby wall with frescoes of Yaroslav and Ingegård was destroyed in the 1600's.

Thus, in Ingegård's life we see the complex military, political, religious, and personal ties between Scandinavia, Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish England, Rus' and Byzantium. In fact, if we look closely, Ingegård and her

¹² This lineage is suggested by Gabriel Ronay, *The Lost King of England: The East European Adventures of Edward the Exile*, (Boydell Press, 1989).

¹³ The Norwegian St. Olaf II Haraldsson had earlier taken service under Æthelred, the boys' father, before his dethronement.

¹⁴ Edward Ætheling (the Exile), Agatha's presumed spouse, was a close friend and ally of Andrew I of Hungary, another royal exile in Yaroslav's Kievan court, and Edward followed him from Kiev to Hungary in 1046, living at the Hungarian court for many years. The wife of Andrew I, Queen Anastasia, was Agatha's elder sister, and thus, according to the Kievan lineage theory, Edward could have easily married another of Yaroslav's daughters while in Kiev. This accords with the unexpected statements of 12th-century chroniclers Geoffrey Gaimar and Roger of Howden that while in Kiev, Edward took a native-born wife "of noble parentage" and that his father-in-law was a "Rus' king." Additionally, William of Malmesbury in *De Gestis Regis Anglorum* and several later chronicles state clearly that Agatha's sister was a queen of Hungary. Although later continental sources claim that Agatha was related to Henry III or IV of Germany, it is unlikely that such a sister or daughter would have been unknown and unmentioned by contemporary German chroniclers.

Among medieval royalty, Agatha's rare Greek name is first recorded in the Macedonian dynasty of Byzantium, and was one of the most frequent feminine names in the Kievan Rurikid Dynasty. When Anna Porphyrogenita married St. Vladimir, Enlightener of Russia, Yaroslav's father Vladimir took the Christian name of the reigning Emperor Basil II at baptism, while some members of his family were named after other members of the imperial dynasty.

Opposite: Nave, looking toward the altar. St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.



sister Astrid were the lynch-pins in this vast network of emerging and rediscovered Christianity.

In later years she and her husband built a church dedicated to the Great-Martyr Irene. Some *Lives* report it as part of a women's monastery where Ingegård was tonsured a nun and over which she ruled, but the consensus of tradition is that she was tonsured at the end of her life or on her death-bed with the name Anna. St. Anna reposed in 1050, followed in death by her son Vladimir II of Novgorod in 1052 and her husband Yaroslav in 1054.

Upon the completion of the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, St. Anna was buried in the Korsun porch, although some versions claim that she traveled to Novgorod to see her son, where she initiated the building of Novgorod's Cathedral of St. Sophia, was tonsured, died, and buried in the Novgorod church. However, when the Novgorod sarcophagus was opened by Soviet scientists sometime before 1950, the remains were that of a woman in her thirties, now thought to be the second Anna of Novgorod, the wife of Ingegård-Anna's son, Vladimir II. Confusion about where St. Ingegård-Anna was buried and whether both Annas are saints has frequently muddled the accounts of her life.

In some church *Lives*, Ingegård is mistaken as the mother of St. Vladimir, Enlightener of Russia, actually her father-in-law. Instead, it was her son, Vladimir II Yaroslavich of Novgorod who is celebrated as a saint. The veneration of Ingegård-Anna of Novgorod and her son Vladimir II as saints was established in 1439 after a vision by St. Euthymius, Archbishop of Novgorod. Her husband Yaroslav the Wise, previously commemorated as a local saint, was included in the official calendar of the Russian Orthodox Church by Patriarch Alexis II in 2005.

Saint Ingegård-Anna's feast day is celebrated on February 10 and, with her son Vladimir II, on October 4. Saint Yaroslav is celebrated on February 20. In late medieval Novgorod, an annual festival was held on the October feast of Sts. Anna and Vladimir II, with both civil and church dignitaries obliged to appear, and in 1556 Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) decreed that the festival would continue to be held in their memory "for as long as the world exists."

From 1968, the Swedish Orthodox Church in Eskiltuna, Sweden has been dedicated to St. Anna, and her relic resides there now for veneration. For the Orthodox she is one of Sweden's first and most revered saints, and a welcome bridge between East and West. ✦

Opposite: Dome and apse, St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev.