

Theologians, scholars discuss revival of veneration of Anna, wife of St. Vladimir, at Athos-Ukraine conference



About 50 scholars from 11 countries took part in the international theological conference, “The Athonite Heritage and the Tradition of Hesychasm in the History and Culture of Ukraine,” in Odessa on July 20. The forum was timed to the 170th anniversary of the birth and 25th anniversary of the glorification of St. Gabriel the Wonderworker of Mt. Athos and Odessa.

Among the many topics discussed was the role of Princess Anna, the wife of St. Vladimir the Great, in the conversion of the people of Rus’ to holy Orthodoxy, and an initiative to renew the ancient veneration of Princess Anna was brought forward by Sergei Shumilo, the Director of the [International Institute of the Athonite Legacy](#), reports the Institute.

“Remember the Baptism of Rus’, nearly everyone has forgotten that, besides

Prince Vladimir, Kievan Rus' was baptized by him together with his wife—the Byzantine Princess Anna Porphyrogenita (963-1011)," Shumilo noted.

"It was she who baptized Prince Vladimir, placing it as a condition of her marriage to Vladimir, and she devoted the entire rest of her life to the Christianization and enlightenment of Rus', the Institute Director said.

The daughter of Byzantine Emperor Romanos II and sister of Emperors Basil II the Bulgar Slayer and Constantine VIII, she gave up her comfortable life in her homeland and moved to an unknown land to dedicate her life to missionary service to Christ. "While Vladimir was busy with military campaigns and state affairs, Anna dealt with questions of spreading Christianity in Rus' and the development of the Church," Shumilo said.

Princess Anna was also the co-author of St. Vladimir's Church statutes, she engaged in the construction of numerous churches, she brought monks, priests, architects, iconographers, and translations of Church services into Church Slavonic from Byzantium, and she contributed to the establishment of the first Russian monastery on Mt. Athos, Ksilourgou, where St. Anthony of the Kiev Caves later accepted monasticism. It is also believed that Anna was the mother of Sts. Boris and Gleb, Shumilo noted.

Her tomb stood next to St. Vladimir's in the Kiev Church of the Tithes for centuries, and in ancient times, they were venerated together as enlighteners of Rus'. Later, following the destruction of the Tithes Church by the Horde and the destruction of Kievan Rus', the veneration of Princess Anna was forgotten. The people remembered only the veneration of St. Vladimir, "although the Baptism of Rus' is their common achievement," Shumilo emphasized.

The restoration of the Church veneration of Princess Anna would be the restoration of historical justice, the Director added.

"We discussed this at our academic-theological conference ... because, among other things, the name of Princess Anna is closely connected with the development of the first ancient Russian monastery on Athos. I hope Anna's name will be returned from oblivion and that we will soon see icons of St. Vladimir together with his wife, as in the frescoes of St. Sophia's in Keiv," Shumilo commented.

"We will work on this," he concluded.

Scholars and theologians from Ukraine, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Italy, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, the USA, and France took part in the Athos-

Ukraine conference in person and in absentia.



/ Source: orthochristian.com