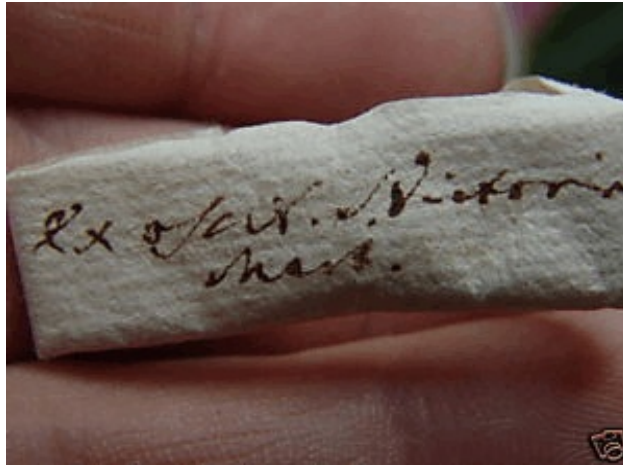




Saint Victoria, Martyr

"Ex oss. St. Victoria mart."

Late 17th to early 18th century folded paper altar reliquary



Relic, First Class, Saint Victoria. Self-contained authentics, no seal. 33 mm by 11 mm. Late 17th – early 18th century.

Saints Victoria, Anatolia, and Audax (Italian: Sante Vittoria, Anatolia, e Audace) are venerated as martyrs and saints by the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. Victoria and Anatolia are mentioned (without Audax) in the Roman Martyrology under the date of 10 July. Anatolia was first mentioned in the *De Laude Sanctorum* composed in 396 by Victrice (Victricius), Bishop of Rouen (330-409 AD). Anatolia and Victoria are mentioned together in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* under 10 July: VI idus iulii in Savinis Anatholiae Victoriae; Victoria is also mentioned alone under 19 December: In Savinis civitate Tribulana Victoriae. The two saints appear in the mosaics of the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, at Ravenna, between Saints Paulina and Christina. A *Passio SS. Anatoliae et Audacis et S. Victoriae* of the sixth or seventh century, which added the name of Audax, was mentioned by Aldhelm (died 709 AD) and Bede (died 735 AD), who list the saints in their martyrologies. Caesar Baronius lists Anatolia and Audax under 9 July and Victoria under 23 December.

Their legend recounts that, in the time of the Emperor Decius, Anatolia and Victoria were sisters whose marriage was arranged to two noble, non-Christian Roman men. They resisted matrimony and their prospective grooms denounced them as Christians. They received permission to imprison the women on their estates and convince them to renounce their faith. Anatolia's suitor, Titus Aurelius, gave up, and handed her back to the authorities. Victoria's suitor, Eugenius, was more persistent, but also ended up



returning her to the authorities. Both were ordered to be killed by the prefect.

Victoria's legend states that she was stabbed through the heart in 250 AD at Trebula Mutuesca (today Monteleone Sabino). An elaboration on her legend states that her murderer was immediately struck with leprosy, and died six days later.

Anatolia was killed, also in 250 AD, either at Trebula or at a place called "Thora," "Thyrum," or "Thurium" (the identity of which is not clear). Her legend states that she was at first locked up with a poisonous snake. The snake refused to bite her, and a soldier named Audax was sent into her cell to kill her. The snake attacked him instead, but Anatolia saved him from the snake. Impressed by her example, he converted to Christianity and was martyred by the sword with her.

Due to the translation of their relics, their cult spread across Italy. The body of Saint Victoria was transferred in 827 by Abbot Peter of Farfa to Mount Matenano from the Piceno because of the Moorish invasions. The town of Santa Vittoria in Matenano is named after her. Ratfredus, subsequent Abbot of Farfa, brought the body to Farfa on 20 June 931.

The bodies of Anatolia and Audax were transferred by Abbot Leo to Subiaco around 950. At an unknown date, an arm of Saint Anatolia was translated to the present-day Esanatoglia, named after her, in the province of Macerata. The current name Esanatoglia was formed in 1862 from a combination of Aesa and Anatolia. The first known document referring to it, under the name Santa Anatolia, is of 1015, and concerns the foundation of the monastery of Sant'Angelo by Count Atto and his wife Berta. The monastery soon became the most important religious establishment in the area.

The bodies of Anatolia and Audax still rest at Subiaco in the basilica of Santa Scholastica, under the altar of the sacrament.