



Summary :

A widowed nun disguised as a man under the monastic name Eufemianos, who lived in the 8th and the early 9th century. She lived in men's monasteries at Olympus, Bithynia, and then in Constantinople and the Bosphorus. Anna (Eufemianos) was proclaimed saint after her death; she is celebrated on October 29.

Date and Place of Birth

circa 750, Constantinople

Date and Place of Death

October 8, circa 825, Sigma Bosphorus coast

Main Role

Nun – saint

1. Biography

Anna was born in Constantinople, in the area of the Blachernes, possibly around 750. She was the daughter of a deacon called Ioannes, who served at the [Church of the Blachernes](#). She was left orphan at an early age and was raised by her grandmother. Her two uncles, her father's brothers, contributed to her upbringing. The one was a monk at [Olympos of Bithynia](#) and, as a defender of icon veneration in the first period of the [Iconoclastic Controversy](#), in the years of Emperor [Leo III the Isaurian](#) (717-741), had suffered a tongue excision.

Anna got married and had two children. However, she soon became a widow and some years later, after she had lost her children, gave her possessions to the poor and left for Olympus of Bithynia, where an unknown monk she accidentally met in the area tonsured her a nun. She then appeared dressed as a man under the name Euphemianos at the Monastery of Leukades and asked to join the monastic community. The abbot of the monastery, thinking she is a eunuch, accepted her. Euphemianos was particularly devoted and was respected by the rest of the monks of the monastic community. She was soon known for the power of her prayer and her alleged miraculous powers. Large groups of believers flocked to the monastery and asked for help. The abbot sent a letter to the [Patriarch of Constantinople, Tarasios](#) (784-806), informing him about the monk and saying that the monastery could not accommodate such large numbers of visitors.

The patriarch responded by ceding to the monastery a vast abandoned area near [Prousa](#). The new Monastery of the Abramites was founded and Euphemianos settled there.¹ However, Euphemianos was soon made to leave the monastery because of the problems caused by a monk, who claimed that Euphemianos was a woman and not a eunuch. Euphemianos along with the monks Eustathios and Neophytos left the Monastery of the Abramites and settled for some time in a wild area of Olympus. Euphemianos later escaped to Constantinople invited by some monks. She possibly settled at first in the area of Stenon and then at Sigma, on the Bosphorus coast, until her death. She died on October 29, possibly around 825. The fact that she was a woman became known after her death. The Orthodox Church proclaimed Anna-Euphemianos saint and celebrates her memory on October 29.

2. Vita

The *Vita* of saint Anna-Euphemianos has been preserved in a manuscript at the National Library of Paris.² The text was possibly added in the 14th c. to the [Synaxarion of Constantinople](#). Her *Vita* does not contain any dates referring to her life. The biographer calls her simply Anna for brevity's sake. There is no reference to the issue of the Iconoclasm nor her attitude to that issue is reported. On the contrary, there is information about the foundation of the new Monastery of the Abramites. The *Vita* underlines the power of Anna's prayer as well as her miraculous powers.



1. See Menthon, B., *Une terre de légendes. L' Olympe de Bithynie: Ses Saints, Ses Couvents, Ses Sites* (Paris 1935), pp. 84-87. There are two opinions about the date and place of foundation of the Monastery of the Abramites. Grumel believes that the monastery was built between 784 and 787 on the site of the pre-existing Monastery of the Abramites in Constantinople and not at Olympus of Bithynia (Grumel, V., *Les registes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople 1: Les actes des patriarches, Facs. 2-3: Les registes de 715 à 1206* (Paris 1936, revised by J. Darrouzes 1989), no. 350, p. 22. Janin disagrees and believes that the new monastery was founded at Olympus (Janin, R., 'Les Eglises et les Monasteres des Grands Centres Byzantins', in *La Geographie Ecclesiastique de l' Empire Byzantin* (Paris 1975), p. 132, note 2.
2. Paris. gr. 1582.

Bibliography :

	Janin R. , <i>Les églises et les monastères des Grands Centres Byzantins. Bithynie, Hellespont, Latros, Galésios, Trébizonde, Athènes, Thessalonique</i> , Paris 1975
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	Ευστρατιάδης Σ. , <i>Αγιολόγιον της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας</i> , Αθήνα 1960
	Μουγάτσος Ν. , "Άννα", <i>Θρησκευτική και Ηθική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια</i> , Αθήνα 1963, 837-8
	Kazhdan A., Talbot A.M. , "Women and Iconoclasm", <i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i> , 84/85B, 1991/1992, 391-408
	"Anna-Ephemianos", F. Winkelmann, R.J. Lilie et al. (ed.), <i>Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Erste Abteilung (641-867), Bd. 1</i> , Berlin 1999, 117-118
	Λαγγή Μ. , <i>Ο Μέγας Συναξαριστής της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας, 10. Οκτώβριος</i> , Αθήνα 1997
	<i>Les registes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople</i> , Grumel, V. – Laurent, V. – Darrouzès, J. (eds), <i>1: Les actes des patriarches, Facs. 2-3: Les registes de 715 à 1206</i> , Paris 1932-1979

Webliography :

	Anna-Ephemianos
http://www.doaks.org/saints2/dohp.asp?cmd=SShow&Key=44	

Glossary :

	Synaxarion of Constantinople
A compilation of brief accounts on every saint that was celebrated during a liturgical year, arranged by months. It was one of the first and most thorough compilation of synaxaria and it is considered a valuable source for the Byzantine studies. Its compilation must be dated to the 10th century and was probably linked to the tradition of the Church of Constantinople. It was the model for many synaxaria compiled later (such as the Menologion of Basil II), and it was completed or slightly altered in some parts through the years. It was published in 1902 by the Belgian scholar Hippolyte Delehaye (<i>Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e codice Sirmondiano</i> [Bruxelles 1902]).	

Sources

Νικοδήμου Αγιορείτου, *Συναξαριστής των δώδεκα του ενιαυτού*, 1 (Αθήνα 1868), p. 169.

Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae, ed. H. Delehaye (Brussel 1902), σελ. 170, no. 7, col. 18-19; 174-8.



Λαγγή, Μ., *Ο Μέγας Συναξαριστής της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας*, 10, Οκτώβριος (Αθήνα 1997), pp. 663-667.

*Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*³ 3, ed. Fr. Halkin, στο *SubsHag* 8 (Bruxelles 1957), N^o 2027, p. 8.

Quotations

Troparion

Στολή κρυβείσαν ανδρική σεμνή Άνναν,
Χριστός κατ' αυτών αρρενοί των δαιμόνων.