

## THEY WEAVE MYTHS WITH DECEITFUL LIES



Devotees of the Patriarchate of Constantinople continue to harass the Albanian Orthodox Church for its support of the persecuted canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The Church was first attacked by Archimandrite Romanos (Anastasiadis), and then by Archon Elias Damianakis, both of whom are known for emotional attacks against anyone they deem to be an enemy of the center of their faith—the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The Albanian Church responded to both men, but impervious correction, they only continued their statements against the Church and its primate, His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios.

Yesterday, the Albanian Church responded to Damianakis again:

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A month ago, in a post titled “Let us stand well, let us stand with the fear of God,” the iconographer Elias Damianakis, Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, did not hesitate to circulate a shameful lie stating that during the resurrection of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania, over 250 churches were erected or

restored with the efforts of international oligarchs. This is clearly unprecedented and dangerous misinformation. The press office of the Church of Albania responsibly followed with a refutation on August 30, 2023, citing official data that has long been published. Nevertheless, this gentleman did not admit that he spread fake news to support the malicious myth that the Church of Albania is under Russian influence and by no means apologized. Instead, in a new post, he tries to argue that the reaction of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania was supposedly due to a mistranslation of the term “international oligarchs.” However, the context of this term was referring to the Russian Church, in order to further weave the myth that “the Church of Albania is under the influence of the Russian Church.” And the number of the 250 churches is not written differently in his English than in Albanian and Greek. Then, he gives lessons in Patrology, emphasizing the importance of the truth, which he himself, however, violated. With paradoxical audacity in a subsequent publication, he continues to argue with the Holy Synod and gives additional instructions.

These superficial texts were immediately published in Greek on the website Light of the Phanar by another Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. A third newly-appointed Archon, serving on an inter-Christian council in Germany, hastens to comment, insult, and even offend.

This phenomenon is alarming. Some, according to the well-known expression, “mounted the reed”—they were wrapped in the Archon’s robe and have evolved into inspectors, prosecutors, and judges of the Local Orthodox Churches. They control, mock, insult institutions, personalities, Synods of Churches, without a trace of respect for ecclesiastical ranks, academic prestige, or contribution to the Church and society.

The way they target those who have a different position on the serious ecclesiastical issue of Ukraine is not in line with Orthodox ethos or the basic ethics of any dialogue. This new ecclesiastical tactic is an immediate need to stop.

The Orthodox Church of Albania is not under the influence of the Russian or any other Church and does not accept any kind of external guardianship. Nor does it tolerate suggestions and lessons from unqualified auditors, members of other Local Autocephalous Churches. It is content to be inspired by the Gospel and to act according to Orthodox Tradition.

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