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How Russia infiltrated for many years a European anti-cult organization founded in Paris

[Version en français](#)

HRWF (24.04.2025) - Thirteen months after Russia's invasion war of Ukraine, the "**Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme**" (**FECRIS**), which was founded and registered in Paris in 1994, had no other choice than to exclude its **Russian branch called RATsIRS and its president Alexander Dvorkin** to try to avoid a public scandal and save its face. Did it manage it?

It did not, according to *Bitter Winter* which published a documented research paper on 11 April 2025 titled "[When Dvorkin called FECRIS Cowards and Racists](#)" and examining the twists and turns of this "purge."

Here are a number of excerpts of this paper authored by Dr Massimo Introvigne.

Alexander Dvorkin, FECRIS' vice-president for 12 years, and Putin

"FECRIS was created in 1994 in Paris as an umbrella organization for anti-cult movements in different countries. Some of the largest organizations that eventually joined were Russian. Alexander Dvorkin, an employee of the Russian Orthodox Church who received political appointments from the Putin regime, became a prominent representative of FECRIS and, in 2009, its Vice President.

Dvorkin remained Vice President of FECRIS until 2021. During this period, Dvorkin became notorious for [insulting all sort of religious minorities](#).

He created considerable problems in the relationships between Russia and India by attacking the 'Bhagavad-Gita' as an 'extremist' book and stating that 'We won't be mistaken if we say that, from the Orthodox viewpoint, Krishna is one of the demons.'

He called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as the Mormon Church, 'a coarse neo-Pagan occult sect with fairly serious totalitarian tendencies,'

As for the Prophet of Islam, Dvorkin claimed that 'either Mohammed suffered from a disease and it was a delirium vision; or it was a demonic obsession; or, once again, the Byzantine fathers claim that he was a sort of fantasizer who made it all up and then, which he hadn't expected, his relatives believed in it. But of course, the combinations of all the three are possible as well'."

Dvorkin supporting Russia's aggressive policies against Ukraine

"Dvorkin also **justified the Russian aggressive policy against Ukraine**, proclaiming that 'cults' had infiltrated Ukrainian politics and promoted anti-Russian tendencies in the Orange Revolution of 2004–5 and the Maidan Revolution of 2014. He unequivocally and systematically supported the Russian aggression against Ukraine of the same year 2014.

From 2009 to 2021, FECRIS was aware of Dvorkin's insulting attitude to mainline non-Christian religions and his support to the human rights and international law violations of the Putin regime. Yet, it kept him as its Vice President and allowed him to continue as a main international spokesperson for FECRIS.

On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. Again unequivocally and systematically, as documented by 'Bitter Winter' in numerous articles, Dvorkin and the Russian anti-cult umbrella organization he is the president of, RATsIRS, supported Putin and his war by calling the Ukrainians 'Nazis,' 'Satanists,' and worse. Of course, Dvorkin was responsible not only for his statements but for those of RATsIRS and RATsIRS officers as well, which he never criticized and in fact often advertised through his website.

'Bitter Winter' and other media noted this support. Yet, Dvorkin remained part of FECRIS, even after ,on November 11, 2022, 82 Ukrainian scholars whose list reads like a who's who of Ukraine's academic excellency in the humanities, **wrote to French President Macron** urging him to cease the French taxpayers' support to the organization. They **wrote again to Macron** on February 17, 2023."

February 24, 2023: FECRIS still tolerating Dvorkin's intolerance and pro-Putin's policies

"February 24, 2023 marked the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine of 2022. One year is a long time, yet FECRIS did not take any action against Dvorkin and RATsIRS, except cosmetic adjustments to its website, hiding some mentions of the Russian affiliates and anti-cultists. Yet, Dvorkin and the Russians were still part of FECRIS.

This was perfectly coherent with FECRIS' past attitudes. Dvorkin had not started supporting the Russian policy against Ukraine in 2022. He started even before he became Vice President of FECRIS in 2009 and continued through the first Russian invasion of Ukrainian territories in 2014. Nothing substantially changed in 2022—except that Ukrainians (according to information we received from Ukraine, including President Zelenskyy himself) were protesting with France, putting the main source of funding of FECRIS at risk, and that 'Bitter Winter' and a few other media were returning to the issue."

FECRIS finally excludes Alexander Dvorkin

"As documented by the exchange of mails we publish, it was only on March 24, 2023, more than thirteen months after the (second) invasion of Ukraine, that FECRIS decided to exclude Dvorkin and the Russian associations. For whatever reason, FECRIS informed Dvorkin on the decision only on April 24, with a mail reading as follows:

'We are writing to inform you that at the General Assembly of 24 March 2023, the decision was taken to exclude you and all Russian associations from the membership list because your positions were not in line with the fundamental values of FECRIS.

The decision taken by the FECRIS Board of Directors, confirmed by the General Assembly is now binding and final. As a consequence. You are no longer a member of the Federation and therefore have no rights to the social fund.

There are no longer any Russian members or correspondents in FECRIS. and the associations concerned will no longer be able to mention their membership of FECRIS by virtue of article 3 of the internal regulations."

The answer of Dvorkin, which was fully published by Bitter Winter, was furious and insulting towards FECRIS' leaders, calling them "cowards and racists."

Conclusion

The author of the paper concluded by saying:

"The logical conclusion is that FECRIS was not disturbed by Dvorkin's and RATsIRS' support of Putin's anti-Ukrainian policies and his regime's disregard for human rights. FECRIS tolerated it in 2009, 2014, and again in February 2022, up to March 2023. When it took action, FECRIS was disturbed by the possibility that international, particularly Ukrainian, criticism might cause it to lost its lavish French funds."

The full paper of Dr Massimo Introvigne is available [HERE](#).

HRWF Footnote

(*) In 2009, FECRIS organized an anti-cult conference in St Petersburg with the **Center for Religious Studies „St. Irenaeos of Lyon“ (Moscow) which was sponsored by the University of St Petersburg and the French Government**

More reading about FECRIS

[Sympathy for the Devil: The Anti-Cult Federation FECRIS, China, and Russia. 5. FECRIS' Support of Religious Repression in Russia](#)

The New Annual Report of Miviludes and Jehovah's Witnesses

An analysis of MIVILUDES' Report of Activities 2022-2024 published on 8 April 2025

HRWF (12.04.2025) - On April 8, 2025, the Interministerial Mission for Vigilance and the Fight Against Cultic Abuses (Miviludes) released its new annual activity report, a few weeks after a new order issued by the Paris Administrative Court to delete certain passages from its 2021 Report [1].

While its president, Étienne APAIRE, declared to *Le Figaro* that he was "more interested in behaviors than in movements" in order "to spend as little time in court as possible," now using "a breakdown by type of movement" [2], several pages specifically attack Jehovah's Witnesses with a blatant lack of intellectual honesty.

Bias in the incomplete references to European Case Law

While Miviludes appears to want to refer more broadly to court decisions, its selection proves to be highly biased. For example, Box 3, entitled "The Ostracism of Excommunicated Jehovah's Witnesses, the Origin of Several Convictions in Europe," focuses on a few provisional convictions in order to "provide food for thought" (p. 50). But wouldn't "thought" be more relevant and legally rigorous if all European case law were taken into account without bias?

Norway

The first judgment about the announced liquidation of Jehovah's Witnesses due to their policy concerning the relations between their members and excluded members which was cited in the report was rendered on March 4, 2024 by the Oslo District Court (Norway). It is surprising that it pays more attention to this non-final first-instance judgment than to the decision of the Norwegian Supreme Court on May 3, 2022, dismissing the appeal of a former Jehovah's Witness [3]. All the more so since the first judgement has just been overturned on appeal [4]! Noteworthy as well is the fact that the Borgarting Court of Appeal prefers to use the expression "social distancing" rather than "ostracism" or any other term with an intrinsically negative connotation [5].

Switzerland

The second judgment dates back to 2019 (outside the report's active period: 2022-2024) and is part of a defamation trial, in which an anti-cult activist was acquitted from charges of defamation filed against her by the Swiss Jehovah's Witnesses. Two academics published a white paper on this case and the real impact of the District Court of Zurich's assessment on this issue [6].

Spain

As for the third legal reference, where the Court of Torrejón de Ardoz in Spain had to rule in 2023 on whether the seriousness of the statements made by members of an anti-cult association could justify its dissolution and not on the legality of the Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine on exclusion and social distancing. Moreover, it is dishonest to use this judgment rather than the other two in which the same court recognized the defamatory nature of the accusations made by this same anti-cult association [7].

Belgium

Last but not least, would it not have been objective to take up the other judicial decisions taken in Europe on the issue of exclusion and social distancing during the period examined by this report, i.e. between 2022 and 2024?

For example, the 2021 Activity Report of Miviludes mentioned the conviction of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses by the Criminal Court of East Flanders (Ghent division) in Belgium (p. 69). It would have been logical in the new report of Miviludes to point out that the Ghent Court of Appeal had overturned this judgment, had acquitted the association on June 7, 2022, and then that the Court of Cassation had rejected the appeal of the former Jehovah's Witnesses on December 19, 2023, confirming hereby the decision in favor of Jehovah's Witnesses [8]. Miviludes did not have this intellectual honesty.

Various facts in the report not attributable to the religion

Probably to give greater credibility to the criticism levelled at so-called cultic movements, the report lists the most significant judicial convictions from 2022 to 2024. Two cases have a link with Jehovah's Witnesses, but are rather general news than a condemnation of the movement.

One is the conviction by the Seine-et-Marne Assize Court of a man who tried to kill his wife, even though the couple were Jehovah's Witnesses (p. 55, 56). Far from being representative of the members of this religious community, such people commit crimes in violation of the morality agenda advocated by the group to which they belong. This happens in all religions, through no fault of their own, and for any other religion, the evildoer's membership of the Catholic Church, Judaism or Islam would not even be mentioned by the media.

What's more, it's ridiculous to claim that this man would have considered killing his wife rather than divorcing her, for fear of being excluded from the Jehovah's Witness community and being kept at distance from the community. On the one hand, divorce is not a reason for exclusion and social distancing, all the more so if his wife took the initiative of asking for it. On the other hand, since he had extramarital relations known to his wife, he was particularly at risk of being expelled from the community for this reason.

Paradoxically, the other legal case linked to Jehovah's Witnesses is the attack perpetrated on March 10, 2023, in Hamburg (p. 64). What does this case, currently under investigation, and moreover abroad, have to do with the Miviludes panorama of convictions in France, when Jehovah's Witnesses are the victims of this attack and the criminal was already no longer a Jehovah's Witness [9]?

Unlike the reactions of support and solidarity in Germany, France and elsewhere [10], is Miviludes taking advantage of the opportunity to argue and hold Jehovah's Witnesses responsible for the attacks of which they are unjustly victims [11]?

Everything shows that this fit of madness was not provoked by his time spent with Jehovah's Witnesses, nor by his voluntary withdrawal about a year and a half earlier [12]:

- According to a police representative, he was not only in conflict with his former community: this thirty-year-old "harbored a rage against members of religious congregations, in particular against Jehovah's Witnesses and his previous employer" [13].
- As his online publications, his book and his professional fees show, he clearly had serious psychological problems [14].
- He did not grow up in a Jehovah's Witness family, since it is indicated sometimes that he was born "into an ultra-Catholic family" [15], and sometimes that he "was raised in a 'strict' Evangelical family" [16].

Between testimonies and truncated quotations

Part of the report is devoted to the social distancing practised by Jehovah's Witnesses in the context of exclusion proceedings, using extracts from their publications, quotations from testimonies received by Miviludes and books published by former members (p. 48, 49).

As the Jehovah's Witnesses organization demonstrates real transparency by making all its publications available on its website, Miviludes was able to freely seek out their teachings on exclusion and social distancing recommended towards the excluded members. Alas, failing to find any truly problematic statements, Miviludes selected sentences it could manipulate by taking them out of context, for the purpose of stigmatization.

Such is the case with the leading article published in *La Tour de Garde* (Watch Tower) in August 2024, which revised the movement's view on how to behave towards those who are no longer Jehovah's Witnesses [17]. Miviludes' report repeated the recommendation not to greet or invite "apostates" to services, presenting it as if it applied to all excluded members (p. 49).

In fact, the article precisely explained that the Bible verse of 2 John 1:9-11 [18] was aimed only at those who oppose the teaching of Christ, that is, those who seek to discourage and turn away faithful Jehovah's Witnesses. However, apostates who fight against their former community represent a marginal group among all those who leave Jehovah's Witnesses or who are expelled from the community. The majority of disfellowshipped people can therefore be warmly invited and welcomed to meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses or even greeted on other occasions.

Miviludes' report also mentions selected extracts from the testimonies received, without any hindsight, despite the questioning by two academics of this methodology only based on referrals ("saisines" in French), simple requests and sending of information sent to Miviludes [19]. However, the report recalls that Miviludes has no investigative powers (p. 16). It cannot therefore verify the facts and circumstances, nor request the contradictory version of the accused persons.

How reliable and useful is a state body that bases its publications and actions exclusively on the denunciations of others, without the slightest credible investigation?

Source

[Rapport d'activité 2022-2024](#), Miviludes, 8 avril 2025.

Notes

- [1] Jan Leonid Bornstein, [« France : Miviludes Convicted for Having Stigmatized a Kibbutz »](#), *The European Times*, 5 March 2025.
- [2] Dérives sectaires : “Les faits commis par les gourous sont de plus en plus graves”, *Le Figaro*, p. 10, 11.
- [3] Massimo Introvigne, [“Jehovah’s Witnesses in Norway : The Supreme Court Corrects a Mistake”](#), *Bitter Winter*, May 13, 2022.
- [4] Willy Fautré, [« Deregistration attempt of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Norway declared invalid by the Court of Appeal »](#), *The European Times*, 16 March 2025.
- [5] Massimo Introvigne, [« Norway, Jehovah’s Witnesses “Fully Vindicated” By Appeal Court »](#), *Bitter Winter*, March 19, 2025.
- [6] Massimo Introvigne, Alessandro Amicarelli, [The New Gnomes of Zurich : The Spiess-Jehovah’s Witnesses Case and Its Manipulation by Anti-Cult and Russian Propaganda \(White Paper\)](#), 2020.
- [7] Massimo Introvigne, [“A Court Ruled Against Itself : A Strange Spanish Decision on the Jehovah’s Witnesses”](#), *Bitter Winter*, December 18, 2023.
- [8] [“BELGIUM : The Court of Cassation upholds the right of Jehovah’s Witnesses to exclude members”](#), *HRWF*, 30 December 2023 ; Massimo Introvigne, [“The Ghent Saga Ends : Belgium Cassation Court Confirms that Shunning Is Lawful”](#), *Bitter Winter*, January 4, 2024.
- [9] Moreover, the perpetrator of the massacre did not die from his act but chose to commit suicide.
- [10] [Allemagne : Huit morts dans une fusillade dans un centre des Témoins de Jéhovah à Hambourg](#), *Reuters*, 10 mars 2023 ; [Allemagne : ce que l’on sait sur la fusillade dans un centre des Témoins de Jéhova](#), *L’Express / AFP*, 10 mars 2023 ; [Allemagne - Fusillade de Hambourg - \(10 mars 2023\)](#), Ministère de l’Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 10 mars 2023 ; [Joint Statement : Shooting Spree In Hamburg Requires Diligence In Reporting And Solidarity With The Attacked Jehovah’s Witnesses](#), Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, March 11, 2023 ; [Déclaration sur la fusillade meurtrière au centre des Témoins de Jéhovah à Hambourg](#), AIDLR, 11 mars 2023.
- [11] See as well the attitude of the anti-cult activists : Massimo Introvigne, [“Blaming the Victims : The Hamburg Shooting and the Jehovah’s Witnesses”](#), *Bitter Winter*, March 18, 2023.
- [12] [German gunman kills 6 at Hamburg Jehovah’s Witness hall](#), *Associated Press*, March 10, 2023.
- [13] [Allemagne : la police avait été prévenue de la dangerosité de l’auteur de la tuerie de Hambourg](#), *RFI*, 11 mars 2023
- [14] Pascale Hugues, [Hambourg : l’auteur de l’attaque avait été signalé](#), *Le Point*, 11 mars 2023 ; [Fusillade à Hambourg : Que sait-on de l’auteur de la tuerie contre des Témoins de Jéhovah ?](#), *20 Minutes / AFP*, 11 mars 2023.
- [15] Pascale Hugues, [Hambourg : l’auteur de l’attaque avait été signalé](#), *Le Point*, 11 mars 2023.
- [16] [Fusillade à Hambourg : Que sait-on de l’auteur de la tuerie contre des Témoins de Jéhovah ?](#), *20 Minutes / AFP*, 11 mars 2023.
- [17] [Help for Those Who Are Removed From the Congregation](#), *The Watchtower—Study Edition*, August 2024, p. 26-31.

[18] 2 John 1:9-11 : "Everyone who pushes ahead and does not remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God. The one who does remain in this teaching is the one who has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your homes or say a greeting to him. For the one who says a greeting to him is a sharer in his wicked works." (*New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*)

[19] Massimo Introvigne, [A Swiss Criticism of the French MIVILUDES : "Opaque Methods, Imprecise Data"](#), *Bitter Winter*, August 26, 2024.

Massimo Introvigne, [Feet of Clay: The French Miviludes Acknowledges the Faulty Basis of Its Reports](#), *Bitter Winter*, September 14, 2022: *The "saisines" are alerts by those who write to the MIVILUDES, or use a web form, to denounce a "cultic deviance."* [We objected](#) that there is no verification that those sending a "saisines" to the MIVILUDES exist, let alone tell the truth, and mentioned the case of an American scholar who had successfully registered with the French governmental mission a "saisine" signed by Napoleon Bonaparte.

Manéli Farahmand, Fabrice Berna, "Health-related cultic deviances : A comparison between France and Switzerland", *Hegel*, 2024/2, Vol. 14 : "[Part 1. Defining and managing risks within cults](#)", p. 155-174 ; "[Part 2. Assessment and overview of health-related cultic deviances](#)", p. 175-194.

Le nouveau rapport annuel de la Miviludes et les Témoins de Jéhovah

Une analyse du [Rapport d'activités 2022-2024 de la Miviludes](#) publié le 8 avril 2025

HRWF (12.04.2025) - Le 8 avril 2025, la Mission interministérielle de vigilance et de lutte contre les dérives sectaires (Miviludes) a rendu public son nouveau rapport annuel d'activité, quelques semaines après une nouvelle condamnation prononcée par le Tribunal administratif de Paris à supprimer certains passages de son Rapport 2021 [1].

Alors que son président Étienne APAIRE déclarait au *Figaro* « s'intéresser plus aux comportements qu'aux mouvements » afin « de fréquenter les tribunaux le moins possible », usant désormais d'« une répartition par type de mouvements » [2], **plusieurs pages s'attaquent spécifiquement aux Témoins de Jéhovah avec un manque flagrant d'honnêteté intellectuelle.**

Références lacunaires et biaisées à la jurisprudence européenne

Si la Miviludes semble vouloir se référer plus largement à des décisions de justice, **sa sélection s'avère très partielle.** Par exemple, l'encadré n° 3 intitulé « L'ostracisme des Témoins de Jéhovah excommuniés, à l'origine de plusieurs condamnations en Europe » se concentre sur quelques condamnations provisoires afin d'« alimenter la réflexion » (p. 50).

Mais « la réflexion » ne serait-elle pas plus pertinente et rigoureuse juridiquement si l'on tenait compte de toute la jurisprudence européenne sans parti-pris ?

Norvège

Le premier jugement concernant la liquidation annoncée des Témoins de Jéhovah en raison de leur politique relationnelle entre leurs membres et leurs ex-membres, qui a été cité dans le rapport, a été rendu le 4 mars 2024 par le Tribunal de district d'Oslo (Norvège). Il est étonnant d'accorder plus d'attention à ce jugement de première instance non définitif, plutôt qu'à l'arrêt de la Cour suprême de Norvège rejetant le 3 mai 2022 le recours d'une ex-Témoins de Jéhovah [3]. D'autant plus que le premier jugement vient d'être annulé en appel [4] ! A souligner que la Cour d'appel de Borgarting a d'ailleurs préféré utiliser l'expression « distanciation sociale » plutôt qu'« ostracisme » ou tout autre terme à connotation intrinsèquement négative [5].

Suisse

Le deuxième jugement remonte à 2019 (en dehors de la période d'activité du rapport : 2022-2024) et entre dans le cadre d'un procès pour diffamation, où une activiste antisectes a été acquittée des charges de diffamation déposées par l'association suisse des Témoins de Jéhovah. Deux universitaires ont publié un livre blanc sur cette affaire et l'impact réel de l'appréciation portée par le Tribunal de district de Zurich (Suisse) dans ce dossier [6].

Espagne

Quant à la troisième référence juridique, où le Tribunal de Torrejón de Ardoz en Espagne devait juger en 2023 si la gravité des propos des membres d'une association antisectes pouvait justifier sa dissolution et non la légalité de la doctrine des Témoins de Jéhovah sur l'exclusion et la distanciation sociale. D'ailleurs, il est malhonnête d'utiliser ce jugement plutôt que les deux autres par lesquels le même tribunal a ensuite reconnu le caractère diffamatoire des accusations portées par cette même association antisectes [7].

Belgique

Enfin, n'aurait-il pas été objectif de reprendre les autres décisions judiciaires prises en Europe sur la question de l'exclusion et de la distanciation sociale au cours de la période examinée par ce rapport, i. e. entre 2022 et 2024 ?

Par exemple, le Rapport d'activité 2021 de la Miviludes avait mentionné la condamnation de la Congrégation chrétienne des Témoins de Jéhovah par le Tribunal correctionnel de Flandre orientale (division de Gand) en Belgique (p. 69). Il aurait été logique de signaler dans le nouveau rapport de la Miviludes que la Cour d'appel de Gand avait annulé ce jugement et acquitté l'association le 7 juin 2022, puis que la Cour de cassation avait définitivement rejeté le recours des ex-Témoins de Jéhovah le 19 décembre 2023, confirmant par là même la décision en faveur des Témoins de Jéhovah [8]. La Miviludes n'a pas eu cette honnêteté intellectuelle.

Faits divers dans le rapport non imputables à la religion

Probablement pour donner plus de crédibilité aux critiques portées contre les mouvements dits sectaires, le rapport liste les condamnations judiciaires les plus marquantes de 2022 à 2024. Deux affaires ont un lien avec les Témoins de Jéhovah, mais relèvent plus des faits divers que d'une condamnation du mouvement.

Ainsi est-il repris la condamnation par la Cour d'assises de Seine-et-Marne d'un homme qui a tenté de tuer sa femme, tandis que le couple faisait partie des Témoins de Jéhovah (p. 55, 56). Loin d'être représentatifs des fidèles de cette communauté religieuse, de telles personnes commettent des crimes en violation de la moralité prônée par le groupe auquel ils appartiennent. Cela arrive dans toutes les religions, sans qu'elles soient à blâmer pour ces choses et pour toute autre religion, l'appartenance d'un malfaiteur à l'Eglise catholique, au judaïsme ou à l'islam ne serait même pas mentionnée par les médias.

De plus, il est ridicule de prétendre que cet homme aurait envisagé de tuer sa femme plutôt que de divorcer, par peur d'être exclu de la communauté des Témoins de Jéhovah et d'être mis à l'écart de la communauté. D'une part, le divorce n'est pas un motif d'exclusion et de distanciation sociale, d'autant plus si sa femme prenait l'initiative de le demander. D'autre part, dans la mesure où il entretenait des relations extraconjugales connues de sa femme, il risquait surtout d'être renvoyé de la communauté pour ce motif.

Paradoxalement, l'autre affaire judiciaire liée aux Témoins de Jéhovah est l'attentat perpétré le 10 mars 2023 à Hambourg (p. 64). Que vient faire cette histoire, en cours d'instruction, de surcroît à l'étranger, dans le panorama de la Miviludes des condamnations en France, alors que les Témoins de Jéhovah sont les victimes de cet attentat et que le criminel n'était déjà plus témoin de Jéhovah [9]?

Contrairement aux réactions de soutien et de solidarité en Allemagne, en France et ailleurs [10], la Miviludes profiterait-elle de l'occasion pour polémiquer et rendre les Témoins de Jéhovah responsables des agressions dont ils sont injustement victimes [11] ?

Tout montre que ce coup de folie n'était pas provoqué par son passage chez les Témoins de Jéhovah, ni par son retrait volontaire environ un an et demi plus tôt [12] :

- Selon un représentant de la police, il n'était pas en conflit uniquement avec son ancienne communauté : ce trentenaire « nourrissait une rage contre les membres de congrégations religieuses, en particulier contre les Témoins de Jéhovah et son précédent employeur » [13].
- Comme le montrent ses publications sur Internet, son livre et ses honoraires professionnels, il avait manifestement de gros problèmes psychologiques [14].
- Il n'a pas grandi au sein d'une famille de Témoins de Jéhovah, puisqu'il est indiqué tantôt qu'il est né « dans une famille ultra-catholique » [15], tantôt qu'il « a été élevé au sein d'une famille évangélique "stricte" » [16].

Entre témoignages et citations tronquées

Une partie du rapport est consacrée à la distanciation sociale pratiquée dans le cadre d'une procédure d'exclusion par les Témoins de Jéhovah, en reprenant des extraits de leurs publications, des citations de signalements reçus par la Miviludes et de livres publiés par d'anciens membres (p. 48, 49).

L'organisation des Témoins de Jéhovah faisant preuve d'une réelle transparence en mettant à disposition l'ensemble de ses publications sur son site web, la Miviludes a pu chercher librement quels sont précisément leurs enseignements sur l'exclusion et la distanciation sociale recommandée à l'égard des exclus. Hélas, à défaut de trouver des affirmations vraiment problématiques, la Miviludes a sélectionné des phrases qu'elle pouvait manipuler, en les sortant de leur contexte, à des fins de stigmatisation.

Ainsi en est-il de l'article de référence à ce sujet paru dans *La Tour de Garde* (édition d'étude) d'août 2024, qui révisait le point de vue du mouvement sur le comportement à adopter à l'égard de ceux qui ne sont plus Témoins de Jéhovah [17]. Le rapport de la

Miviludes reprenait la recommandation de ne pas saluer, ni inviter aux offices les « apostats », en la présentant comme si elle s'appliquait à l'ensemble des excommuniés (p. 49).

En fait, l'article expliquait justement que le verset biblique de 2 Jean 1:9-11 [18] visait seulement ceux qui s'opposent à l'enseignement du Christ, c'est-à-dire ceux qui cherchent à décourager et détourner les fidèles Témoins de Jéhovah. Or, les apostats qui luttent contre leur ancienne communauté représentent un groupe marginal parmi tous ceux qui quittent les Témoins de Jéhovah ou qui sont renvoyés de la communauté. La majorité des excommuniés peuvent donc être chaleureusement invités et accueillis aux réunions des Témoins de Jéhovah, ou même être salués en d'autres occasions.

Le rapport de la Miviludes cite également des extraits choisis des signalements reçus, sans aucun recul, malgré la mise en cause par deux universitaires de cette méthodologie basée sur des « saisines », de simples demandes et envois d'information à la Miviludes [19]. Pourtant, le rapport rappelle que la Miviludes n'a pas de pouvoir d'enquête (p. 16). Elle ne peut donc pas vérifier les faits et circonstances, ni solliciter la version contradictoire des personnes accusées.

Quelle est la fiabilité et l'utilité d'un organisme étatique fondant ses publications et ses actions exclusivement sur les dénonciations des uns et des autres, sans la moindre enquête crédible ?

Source

[Rapport d'activité 2022-2024](#), Miviludes, 8 avril 2025.

Notes

[1] Jan Leonid Bornstein, « [France : la Miviludes condamnée pour avoir stigmatisé un kibboutz](#) », *The European Times*, 5 mars 2025.

[2] Dérives sectaires : « Les faits commis par les gourous sont de plus en plus graves », *Le Figaro*, p. 10, 11.

[3] Massimo Introvigne, « [Jehovah's Witnesses in Norway : The Supreme Court Corrects a Mistake](#) », *Bitter Winter*, May 13, 2022.

[4] Willy Fautré, « [La tentative de radiation des Témoins de Jéhovah en Norvège déclarée invalide par la Cour d'appel](#) », *The European Times*, 16 mars 2025.

[5] Massimo Introvigne, « [Norway, Jehovah's Witnesses "Fully Vindicated" By Appeal Court](#) », *Bitter Winter*, March 19, 2025.

[6] Massimo Introvigne, Alessandro Amicarelli, [Les nouveaux gnomes de Zurich. Les Témoins de Jéhovah, l'affaire Spiess et son exploitation dans la propagande russe et antisectes](#) (Livre blanc), 2020.

[7] Massimo Introvigne, « [A Court Ruled Against Itself : A Strange Spanish Decision on the Jehovah's Witnesses](#) », *Bitter Winter*, December 18, 2023.

[8] « [BELGIUM : The Court of Cassation upholds the right of Jehovah's Witnesses to exclude members](#) », *HRWF*, 30 December 2023 ; Massimo Introvigne, « [The Ghent Saga Ends : Belgium Cassation Court Confirms that Shunning Is Lawful](#) », *Bitter Winter*, January 4, 2024.

[9] D'ailleurs l'auteur de la tuerie n'a pas « lui-même trouvé la mort lors de son acte », mais il s'est volontairement suicidé.

[10] [Allemagne : Huit morts dans une fusillade dans un centre des Témoins de Jéhovah à Hambourg](#), Reuters, 10 mars 2023 ; [Allemagne : ce que l'on sait sur la fusillade dans un centre des Témoins de Jéhova](#), L'Express / AFP, 10 mars 2023 ; [Allemagne - Fusillade de Hambourg - \(10 mars 2023\)](#), Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 10 mars 2023 ; [Joint Statement : Shooting Spree In Hamburg Requires Diligence In Reporting And Solidarity With The Attacked Jehovah's Witnesses](#), Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, March 11, 2023 ; [Déclaration sur la fusillade meurtrière au centre des Témoins de Jéhovah à Hambourg](#), AIDLR, 11 mars 2023.

[11] Voir aussi l'attitude des militants antisectes : Massimo Introvigne, ["Blaming the Victims : The Hamburg Shooting and the Jehovah's Witnesses"](#), Bitter Winter, March 18, 2023.

[12] [German gunman kills 6 at Hamburg Jehovah's Witness hall](#), Associated Press, March 10, 2023.

[13] [Allemagne : la police avait été prévenue de la dangerosité de l'auteur de la tuerie de Hambourg](#), RFI, 11 mars 2023

[14] Pascale Hugues, [Hambourg : l'auteur de l'attaque avait été signalé](#), Le Point, 11 mars 2023 ; [Fusillade à Hambourg : Que sait-on de l'auteur de la tuerie contre des Témoins de Jéhovah ?](#), 20 Minutes / AFP, 11 mars 2023.

[15] Pascale Hugues, [Hambourg : l'auteur de l'attaque avait été signalé](#), Le Point, 11 mars 2023.

[16] [Fusillade à Hambourg : Que sait-on de l'auteur de la tuerie contre des Témoins de Jéhovah ?](#), 20 Minutes / AFP, 11 mars 2023.

[17] [Comment les anciens aident ceux qui sont renvoyés de l'assemblée](#), La Tour de Garde (édition d'étude), Août 2024, p. 26-31.

[18] 2 Jean 1:9-11 : « Toute personne qui ne reste pas dans l'enseignement du Christ et va au-delà n'est pas en union avec Dieu. Celui qui reste dans cet enseignement, c'est lui qui est en union et avec le Père et avec le Fils. Si quelqu'un vient chez vous et n'apporte pas cet enseignement, ne le recevez pas dans votre maison et ne lui adressez pas non plus de salutation. Car celui qui lui adresse une salutation participe à ses œuvres mauvaises. » (*La Bible. Traduction du monde nouveau*)

[19] Massimo Introvigne, [Une critique suisse de la MIVILUDES française : « Méthodes opaques et données imprécises »](#), Bitter Winter, 28 août 2024.

Massimo Introvigne, [Pieds d'argile : la MIVILUDES française reconnaît que ses rapports sont établis sur des bases erronées](#), Bitter Winter, 19 septembre 2022 : Les « saisines » sont les alertes de ceux qui écrivent à la MIVILUDES, ou utilisent un formulaire web, pour dénoncer une « dérive sectaire ». [Nous avons objecté](#) que rien ne permet de vérifier que les personnes qui envoient des « saisines » à la MIVILUDES existent, et encore moins qu'elles disent la vérité, et avons mentionné le cas d'une universitaire américaine qui avait réussi à faire enregistrer par la mission gouvernementale française une « saisine » signée par Napoléon Bonaparte.

Manéli Farahmand, Fabrice Berna, « Les dérives sectaires en santé : comparaison entre la France et la Suisse », *Hegel*, 2024/2, Vol. 14 : [Partie 1. Définition et gestion du risque sectaire](#), p. 155-174 ; [Partie 2. Évaluation et état des lieux des dérives sectaires en santé](#), p. 175-194.

Miviludes convicted again for defamation in its annual reports

HRWF (02.04.2025) - The Interministerial Mission for Vigilance and the Fight Against Sectarian Abuses (Miviludes) has once again been convicted by the Paris Administrative Court following a defamation proceeding against a small religious group conducting a collective living experiment in Haute-Loire region.

The Malrevers Kibbutz and Interstyl Case

The "Malrevers Kibbutz" and the "Interstyl Society," whose management and operations are ensured by kibbutz members, challenged Miviludes' refusal to remove the disputed passages from its 2021 activity report, equating them with "cultic abuse."

The Paris Administrative Court issued its judgment on February 21, 2025, ordering Miviludes to correct its publications due to "inaccurate or unverified information."

The Minister of the Interior is therefore ordered to remove the words "Cultic Abuses Observed" from the title on page 82 of Miviludes' 2021 Activity Report within fifteen days. In addition, the State must pay the applicants €1,800 pursuant to Article L. 761-1 of the Code of Administrative Justice.

Miviludes bogged down in other appeals

The amendments to the latest Miviludes annual report (those for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 have not yet been published) are far from being completed, since **Jehovah's Witnesses** have also contested it [1] and a similar request from the **Atypikoo Society** has just been submitted to the Paris Administrative Court [2].

[1] « Les Témoins de Jéhovah contestent le dernier rapport de la MIVILUDES », Les Témoins de Jéhovah de France, 8 mars 2023.

[2] TA Limoges, 3 février 2025, n° 2500044.

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[TA Paris, 6^e sect., 2^e ch., 21 février 2025, n° 2307350](#)

[« Dérives sectaires : une communauté obtient que la Miviludes change son dernier rapport », Le Figaro / AFP, 5 mars 2025](#)

Steve Eisenberg, [« La Miviludes condamnée pour avoir qualifié un kibboutz de "dérive sectaire" », RELIGACTU, 5 mars 2025](#)

Jan Leonid Bornstein, [« France : Miviludes Convicted for Having Stigmatized a Kibbutz », The European Times, 5 March 2025](#)

Davy Forget, ["La Miviludes encore condamnée à corriger une publication"](#), Droit des cultes et Témoins de Jéhovah, 27 mars 2025

La Miviludes encore condamnée pour diffamation dans ses rapports annuels

HRWF (02.04.2025) - La Mission interministérielle de vigilance et de lutte contre les dérives sectaires (Miviludes) a de nouveau été condamnée par le Tribunal administratif de Paris suite à une procédure pour diffamation d'un groupuscule religieux menant une expérience de vie collective en Haute-Loire.

L'affaire du Kibboutz de Malrevers et Interstyl

Le "Kibboutz de Malrevers" et la "Société Interstyl" dont la gestion et le fonctionnement sont assurés par les membres du kibboutz ont contesté le refus de la Miviludes de supprimer les passages litigieux du rapport d'activité pour l'année 2021 les assimilant à une "dérive sectaire."

Le Tribunal administratif de Paris a rendu son jugement le 21 février 2025, intimant la Miviludes d'apporter des correctifs à ses publications, en raison d'informations inexactes ou non vérifiées.

Il est donc enjoint au ministre de l'Intérieur de procéder à la suppression des termes « Les dérives sectaires constatées » du titre de la page 82 du rapport d'activité 2021 de la Miviludes, dans un délai de quinze jours. De plus, l'État doit verser 1 800 € aux requérants sur le fondement de l'article L. 761-1 du code de justice administrative.

La Miviludes embourbée dans d'autres recours

Les modifications du dernier rapport annuel de la Miviludes (ceux pour les années 2022, 2023 et 2024 n'étant pas encore publiés) sont loin d'être terminées, puisque les **Témoins de Jéhovah** l'ont également contesté [1] et une requête similaire de la **Société Atypikoo** vient d'être transmise au Tribunal administratif de Paris [2].

[1] « Les Témoins de Jéhovah contestent le dernier rapport de la MIVILUDES », Les Témoins de Jéhovah de France, 8 mars 2023.

[2] TA Limoges, 3 février 2025, n° 2500044.

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Who is Mihai Stoian, the Romanian yoga teacher arrested in Georgia and wanted by French justice?

[Version en français](#)

By Willy Fautré, director of Human Rights Without Frontiers

[The European Times](#) (20.01.2025) - On 20 and 26 December 2024, the City Court of Tbilisi held hearings to decide whether Georgia should extradite Mihai Stoian and his wife Adina arrested in August 2024 on the Turkish-Georgian border on the basis of an Interpol arrest warrant issued on France's request.

A few days after mid-December, I happened to be in Tbilisi for *The European Times* to cover the unstable political situation and the demonstrations in the country following the contested results of the parliamentary elections and the subsequent election of a new contested pro-Kremlin president by the new parliament. On this occasion, I published two articles titled "[GEORGIA: Election of an ex-footballer as the new president booed by demonstrators](#)" and "[GEORGIA: Police violence in Tbilisi while President Zurabishvili calls for quick EU actions](#)". I also used the opportunity of being in Tbilisi to meet state and non-state actors as well as lawyers involved in the case of the Stoians and to collect some unpublished information about the couple. A member of their family was also in Tbilisi.

At the end of the second hearing taking place after my departure from Georgia, the court found that a third hearing was necessary to try to solve a crucial issue: the interpretation of the debates and the translation of printed or written court documents in Romanian, as strongly required by Mihai, his wife and their lawyers instead of the English language imposed until then by the judicial authorities.

The court considered that Mihai and his wife were sufficiently fluent in English due to their international activities but their counter-argument was that the legal and judicial language used during the proceedings and interpreted in English was foreign to him and was putting them at risk of failing to understand the implications of what they might have to accept and to sign.

The double translation of complex issues, first by the interpreter Georgian-English and second by themselves in their own language (Romanian) was *de facto* opening the door to inaccuracies and misunderstandings at both levels of understanding and could lead to a miscarriage of justice they would be the victims of, they argued.

The context of the arrest of Mihai Stoian and his wife

On 28 November 2023, a SWAT team of around 175 policemen wearing black masks, helmets, and bullet proof vests, simultaneously descended at 6am on eight separate houses and apartments in and around Paris but also in Nice where Romanian yoga practitioners had decided to go into spiritual retreat. The police forces were then brandishing semi-automatic rifles, shouting, making very loud noises, crashing doors and putting everything upside down.

Most of those Romanian yoga practitioners who were there had chosen to combine the pleasant with the useful in France: yoga and meditation in villas or apartments kindly and freely put at their disposal by their owners or tenants who were also mainly yoga practitioners of Romanian origin and at the same time to enjoy picturesque natural or other environments.

They were IT experts, engineers, designers, artists, medical doctors, psychologists, teachers, university and high school students, and so on.

Around 50 yoga practitioners of all ages were taken to police stations for interrogation, most of them being kept in custody for two days and sometimes more. In November 2024, I published in The European Times an article titled "[Police raids on Romanian yoga centers in France, one year later](#)".

The November 2023 raids were not an operation against a terrorist or armed group or a drug cartel. They were raids targeting eight private places mainly used by peaceful Romanian yoga practitioners but the police suspected these places to be used under cover for illegal activities: trafficking in human beings, sexual exploitation and forcible confinement. This was the official charge against Gregorian Bivolaru and some others who were put in pretrial detention in France in the aftermath of the raids.

The arrest warrant against the Stoians channeled from Paris to Tbilisi through Interpol included the same charges although they were not in France at the time of the police raids or before and had never had any yoga activity in France. In the French media, they were repeatedly painted as a criminal, without any evidence, but who is Mihai Stoian?

Family and social background

Mihai Stoian was born on 27 January 1969 in Bucharest in an atheistic society. It was then under the rule of Ceaucescu, the Communist President of Romania to be toppled 20 years later.

His mother, G. Stoian, was an accountant. His father, Zaharia Stoian, was born in 1938 in a peasants' family of 11 children in the village of Comosteni, Dolj county. His father attended the Faculty of Mathematics in Bucharest in 1962 and was admitted for his doctoral thesis in 1966. Later on, he taught as a professor of mathematics at the same university as well as at the Bucharest Polytechnic University between 1962 and 2009. Due to his experience, he was proposed to teach at the Faculty of Electronics in Kinshasa (Zaire), where he stayed for two years (1974-1976).

In the 90s, after the collapse of Ceaucescu's regime, he started practicing yoga together with his two sons, Mihai and Jan, and participated in the courses of the MISA Yoga School. At some time, he was a Hatha Yoga instructor in Ploiesti. After 14 years of practice he got retired as he had done from his teaching career in his capacity of Professor of Mathematics in various universities.

Studies and professional activity of Mihai Stoian

In his early life Mihai Stoian studied at the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, founded in 1818 and affiliated with the European Association for International Education (EAIE). He graduated in 1993 with a degree in nuclear physics and nuclear technology.

For several years he worked as a scientific researcher at the [Research Institute for Artificial Intelligence](#) "Mihai Draganescu", created in 1994 in the [Romanian Academy of Sciences](#) (*) founded in 1866 under the name of the Romanian Literary Society.

Mihai Stoian received the Romanian Academy Award for his scientific activity in 2001, which included the publication of eight papers in the field of formal languages and optimization methods for interactive algorithms.

While working as a researcher he also taught "Microprocessor Fundamentals" at the Faculty of Electronics and Telecommunications of the Polytechnic University of Bucharest (1999-2002).

Mihai Stoian's involvement in yoga

In 1989 he heard about the MISA yoga movement (Movement for Spiritual Integration into the Absolute) and met later on Gregorian Bivolaru, the spiritual leader of MISA who officially founded it in 1990. Before the COVID, about 30,000 practitioners were following his teachings throughout the world.

After his university graduation in 1993, he co-founded and ran Soteria Didact, a non-profit organization specialized in the production of yoga teaching material (1994-1996). After that, he co-founded and ran the Ganesha Publishing House, for the printing of alternative works on personal development (1996-2001).

In 2001 he got married in an Orthodox church with Adina, another yoga practitioner in MISA. Together, they created a counseling program and service for couples and individuals in matters related to love and intimacy.

In 2002, Mihai Stoian and his wife moved to Denmark and from 2003 he became the senior teacher of the Natha Yoga Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to personal development.

In 2006, the teaching methods of Mihai Stoian attracted the attention of ATMAN, the International Federation for Yoga and Meditation, he collaborated with from time to time. ATMAN Federation was officially registered in 2004 in the UK by teachers of yoga and personal development.

From 2009 until his arrest in Georgia in August 2024 Mihai Stoian participated in the Yoga and Personal Development Program of ATMAN Federation, providing consultation and teaching materials.

Besides yoga courses, he provided series of lectures on topics such as Science of Success, Stress Mastery, Quantum Science, Keys for Couple Relationship and Nature of Consciousness.

Mihai Stoian and his wife are opposed to their extradition to France, saying they were not involved in any yoga activity there and in any illegal activity as mentioned in the Interpol arrest warrant, had nothing to do with the massive police raids on yoga centers on 28 November 2023 which led to several arrests and pretrial detention cases, and no yoga practitioner had filed a complaint against him or his wife.

Who is Adina Stoian, the female yoga teacher arrested in Georgia and wanted by French justice?

By Willy Fautré, director of Human Rights Without Frontiers

[The European Times](#) (18.01.2025) - On 20 and 26 December 2024, Tbilisi City Court held hearings to decide whether Georgia should extradite Adina Stoian and her husband Mihai arrested in August 2024 on the Turkish-Georgian border on the basis of an Interpol arrest warrant issued on France's request.

A few days after mid-December, I happened to be in Tbilisi for *The European Times* to cover the unstable political situation and the demonstrations in the country following the contested results of the parliamentary elections and the subsequent election of a new contested pro-Kremlin president by the new parliament. On this occasion, I published two articles titled "[GEORGIA: Election of an ex-footballer as the new president booed by demonstrators](#)" and "[GEORGIA: Police violence in Tbilisi while President Zurabishvili calls for quick EU actions](#)". I also used the opportunity of being in Tbilisi to meet state and non-state actors as well as lawyers involved in the case of the Stoians and to collect some unpublished information about the couple. A member of their family was also in Tbilisi.

At the end of the second hearing taking place after my departure from Georgia, the court found that a third hearing was necessary to try to solve a crucial issue: the interpretation of the debates and the translation of printed or written court documents in Romanian, as strongly required by Adina and Mihai Stoian and their lawyers instead of the English language imposed until then by the judicial authorities.

The court considered that Mihai and Adina Stoian were sufficiently fluent in English due to their international activities but their counter-argument was that the legal and judicial language used during the proceedings and interpreted in English was foreign to them and was putting them at risk of failing to understand the implications of what they might have to accept and to sign.

The double translation of complex issues first by the interpreter Georgian-English and second by themselves in their own language (Romanian) was *de facto* opening the door to inaccuracies and misunderstandings at both levels and could lead to a miscarriage of justice they would be the victims of, they argued.

The context of the arrest of Adina and Mihai Stoian

On 28 November 2023, a SWAT team of around 175 policemen wearing black masks, helmets, and bullet proof vests, simultaneously descended at 6am on eight separate houses and apartments in and around Paris but also in Nice where Romanian yoga practitioners had decided to go into spiritual retreat. The police forces were then brandishing semi-automatic rifles, shouting, making very loud noises, crashing doors and putting everything upside down.

Most of those Romanian yoga practitioners who were there had chosen to combine the pleasant with the useful in France: yoga and meditation in villas or apartments kindly and freely put at their disposal by their owners or tenants who were also mainly yoga practitioners of Romanian origin and at the same time to enjoy picturesque natural or other environments.

They were IT experts, engineers, designers, artists, medical doctors, psychologists, teachers, university and high school students, and so on.

Around 50 yoga practitioners of all ages were taken to police stations for interrogation, most of them being kept in custody for two days and sometimes more. In November 2024,

I published in *The European Times* an article about the case titled "[Police raids on Romanian yoga centers in France, one year later](#)".

The 28 November 2023 raids were not an operation against a terrorist or armed group or a drug cartel. They were raids targeting eight private places mainly used by peaceful Romanian yoga practitioners but the police suspected these places to be used under cover for illegal activities: trafficking in human beings, sexual exploitation and forcible confinement. This was the official charge against Gregorian Bivolaru and some others who were put in pretrial detention in France in the aftermath of the raids.

The arrest warrant against the Stoians channeled from Paris to Tbilisi through Interpol included the same charges although they were not in France at the time of the police raids or before, had never had any yoga activity in France and no yoga practitioner had filed a complaint against them. In the French media, they were repeatedly painted as criminals, without any evidence, but who is Adina Stoian?

Family and social background of Adina Stoian

Adina Stoian was born on 12 June 1968 in Sibiu (Romania).

She grew up in Bucharest under the Communist rule of Ceausescu but was baptized in the Orthodox Church.

Her mother was an accountant at the Ministry of Transport. Her father studied at the Bucharest Polytechnic University and made a military career.

In her studies, Adina followed in her father's footsteps. In 1991 she graduated from the Polytechnic University with a degree in Transport Engineering. Afterwards, she worked for about two years in the Computer Centre of the Ministry of Transport in Romania before dedicating herself exclusively to spirituality, teaching yoga and tantra classes. She has a sister, Corina, who graduated in mathematics from the Bucharest University. Corina taught mathematics for some time and later on she started working in other fields while teaching yoga in her free time for the last ten years.

In 1990 Adina started attending classes and other events on spirituality and yoga, including lectures given by Gregorian Bivolaru, the founder and spiritual master of MISA (Movement for Spiritual Integration into the Absolute). She was impressed by his teachings.

For over 30 years, she was a yoga practitioner and also a teacher. She shared her knowledge about yoga and personal development through articles and books, courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and camps, both in Romania and elsewhere in Europe, as well as in Asia and South America.

Adina and Mihai Stoian got married in a Romanian Orthodox Church in 2001 and moved to Denmark a year later. As yoga teachers, they worked for the Danish Yoga Natha Centre.

They both co-authored yoga and personal development programs based on the teachings of the traditional tantra yoga. The course is currently taught in many countries in the schools affiliated with Atman, the International Federation for Yoga and Meditation, officially registered in 2004 in the UK. Noteworthy is that Adina Stoian has never been part of the board of the Atman Federation. They also wrote together several books about the Mahavidya, a group of ten Hindu goddesses.

Adina Stoian also gave lectures on topics such as hormones, pre-menstrual syndrome, esoteric astrology, specifically for women.

She is opposed to her extradition to France, saying she was not involved in any yoga activity there and in any illegal activity as mentioned in the Interpol arrest warrant, had nothing to do with the massive police raids on yoga centers on 28 November 2023 which led to several arrests and pretrial detention cases, and no yoga practitioner had filed a complaint against her or her husband.

Anti-cult association UNADFI will not escape justice

The Court of Appel of Aix-en-Provence dismissed the anti-cult association UNADFI which refused to implement the decision of the judicial court of Marseille

Press release of CAP/LC [in French](#)

On December 2, 2024, UNADFI [was condemned by the Marseille Magistrates' Court](#), and forced to publish CAPLC's right of reply on its website within 48 hours, subject to a penalty of 50 euros per day of delay. Convinced it could escape the law, UNADFI appealed in summary proceedings to obtain suspension of the decision. This action was curtly dismissed by the Aix-en-Provence Court of Appeal.

Catherine Katz, President of UNADFI, had argued at the Court of Appeal that the very idea of publishing a right of reply was unbearable for her, and that the Court should allow her not to apply this legal obligation. It claimed that publishing this right of reply would jeopardize its rights with "extremely serious consequences". The Court replied: "*If the publication of the right of reply on its site is unbearable for the UNADFI association in view of the fundamental opposition which opposes it to the CAP LC association on the question and conception of individual freedom and certain values, it does not have the effect of 'jeopardizing' the rights of UNADFI.*"

For Thierry Valle, President of CAPLC, "*UNADFI's panic at the idea of having to publish a perfectly legal and, all things considered, moderate right of reply, is symptomatic of the fact that they think they won't be able to pursue their mission if they are obliged to respect the law and the fundamental rights of citizens. What are they afraid of? Of the truth being exposed? Yes. And they are terrified that in the future, they may be forced to respect the law, and that their impunity will end.*"

UNADFI under a preliminary investigation by the National Financial Prosecutor's Office

In addition, UNADFI is currently the subject of a preliminary investigation by the *Parquet National Financier* (National Financial Prosecutor's Office) into suspicions of financial

misappropriation linked to the distribution of subsidies by *Miviludes* in recent years. These pharaonic subsidies awarded to a number of anti-cult associations have already been referred to the Contentious Chamber by the Public Prosecutor at the National Audit Office (Cour des Comptes). According to the President of the National Audit Office (Cour des Comptes), Pierre Moscovici, the Contentious Chamber will now investigate “ *and possibly judge and condemn whoever is entitled to do so*”, in what he considers to be “ *a serious matter* ”.

Text of the right to reply UNADFI refused to publish

To clear up any ambiguity about the content of the right of reply in question, here it is in its entirety:

“In the article “Did the Senate give in to pressure” of February 12, 2024, the association CAPLC, *Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience*, is implicated.

Contrary to what is stated, CAPLC is not and has never been “a European non-governmental organization close to Scientology which aims to legitimize cults as mere belief groups”. CAPLC is independent and secular. It has consultative status with the UN and defends freedom of conscience in Europe and internationally. It is recognized worldwide for its expertise in its field. It has been in existence for nearly 30 years.

Information on the movements defended by CAPLC when their fundamental rights are threatened is readily available online: In the last two years alone, CAPLC has led numerous actions to defend the rights of Uighurs persecuted by the Chinese government, those of Ethiopian Orthodox communities, women's rights in Saudi Arabia, freedom of conscience in the Russian Federation, the rights of minorities in Baluchistan, Pakistan, the rights of persecuted Ahmadiyya Muslims in Pakistan, the rights of numerous prisoners of conscience in many countries, including Ukrainians threatened with deportation to Russia for their opinions, actions against the death penalty for apostasy which still exists in 13 countries, and dozens of others.

Uyghurs, women in Saudi Arabia and other minorities defended by CAPLC cannot be considered as “cults” that we would seek to legitimize. Incidentally, the term “cult” was officially abandoned by the public authorities more than twenty years ago, when the *Interministerial Mission for Combating Sects (MILS)* was replaced in November 2002 by the *Interministerial Mission for Vigilance and Combating Cultic Deviances (Miviludes)*.

As part of its statutory mission, CAPLC informed French senators and deputies of its opinion on the draft law on cultic deviances currently debated in the parliament, in view of the risks this text raises for freedom of conscience and freedom of expression - a risk also identified by the State Council itself, in its documented opinion on the draft law, with regard to this freedom. CAPLC has also provided parliamentarians with objective data in its possession concerning the financing of the policy to combat cultic deviances. CAPLC has acted transparently and assertively, without exerting any “insidious pressure”.

CAPLC has nearly 30 years' experience in the field of freedom of conscience and the threats to it. As such, CAPLC intends to share its expertise with lawmakers and take part in the democratic debate in which pluralism of opinions must be able to express itself freely without being accused or suspected of “insidious pressure”.

When state-funded anti-cult groups think they are above the law

State grants funded with taxpayers' money said to be misused by anti-cult groups stigmatizing and inciting hostility against some religious or belief groups and their members

HRWF (03.01.2025) - In the framework of its 2023 Call for Projects, MIVILUDES (Interministerial Mission of Vigilance and Combat against Cultic Deviances) generously allocated a state subsidy of 150,000 EUR to CAFFES (Family Support Center Facing Cultic Control). This represents a considerable, if not completely disproportionate, grant for a small association with 90% of its annual budget funded with public money.

If the size of the allocated amount does not constitute an irregularity in itself, the appropriateness of such state generosity raises serious questions and suspicions as every year state funding keeps artificially alive an association that would close its doors without it.

It was recently discovered that CAFFES had failed to publish its financial reports in the Official Gazette for the years [2021](#) and [2022](#) and suddenly, but only partly, abode by the law in a hurry on... 18 April 2024 while it should have been done every year within three months after the legal approval of the financial report. Although it is mentioned at the bottom of the document that the report was certified by a statutory auditor, the report itself of the said statutory auditor should also be published to fully comply by the law ([Decree Nr 2010-31 of 11 January 2010](#)) but it was not.

Without the grant of the Ministry of the Interior, which represented almost 50% of CAFFES annual budget in 2021 and 2023, the association could hardly survive.

State-sponsored stigmatization and incitement to hostility

The public money allocated to CAFFES and other similar non-state actors is in fact meant by a number of public and state institutions, including ministries, to be used for the fight against some religious or belief communities duly registered and legally monitored. Indeed, they hereby condone and finance stigmatization and incitement to hostility against specific segments of civil society but is it their role to fracture society and create internal tensions?

Is it the role of state institutions to fight against religious communities whose beliefs and practices were not sanctioned by a court, to subcontract that fight to associations hostile to such faith communities and to hereby instrumentalize them so that borderline actions beyond their already questionable mandate can be attempted by others? This is however the reality on the ground.

[A decision of the Cassation Court in 2002](#) against the former head of the anti-cult group ADFI who named Jehovah's Witnesses "a criminal association" is enlightening. That activist hostile to Jehovah's Witnesses was also known by the judiciary as [another decision of the Court of Cassation in 1999](#) shows and is now the driving force of CAFFES.

On 27 June 2024, CAFFES launched [a call for testimonies targeting the community of Jehovah's Witnesses in France](#). The purpose is obviously to stigmatize that religious community. Defamation and hate speech are however never far from violations of the rule of law.

In 2003, [CAFFES was sentenced by the Appeal Court of Paris for defaming Jehovah's Witnesses](#) and many [other anti-cult associations in France and other European countries](#) have lost court cases on the same ground in the last 20 years.

Despite the profile of such non-state actors openly expressing their hostility in public, state institutions finance their activities, breaking themselves the laws of the French Republic.

Moreover, in June 2024, [the Paris Administrative Court found the state institution MIVILUDES guilty of defamation](#) and sentenced it to delete "incorrect statements" claiming that Jehovah's Witnesses do not report cases of child sexual abuse to secular authorities and that discourage children from pursuing school education, other fake news reproduced by the media and not only in France.

And in 2023, MIVILUDES had to republish its yearly report, including a four-page right to reply by the Church of Scientology, to avoid a lawsuit.

Anti-cult organizations scrutinized by the Court of Auditors and the UNADFI case

Noteworthy is that, thanks to the vigilance of associations defending religious freedom for all, the anti-cult organizations funded by the state are now increasingly scrutinized by the Court of Auditors (Cour des Comptes), whose mandate is to check whether public funds have been properly used.

In its [report of March 2024](#), the Court strongly denounced the omissions and lies of associations requesting funding from MIVILUDES, in particular following the 2021 call for projects.

A few years ago, the allocation of public subsidies linked to the MIVILUDES 2021 call for projects was scrutinized by *CAP/ Liberté de Conscience (CAP/ Freedom of Conscience)*, a secular European NGO with UN Consultative Status (ECOSOC). It then detected a number of irregularities concerning the anti-cult organization [UNADFI \(Union Nationale des Associations de Défense des Familles et de l'Individu victimes de sectes\)](#) and reported them to the Court of Auditors on 23 September 2021.

The CAFFES case was also investigated by *CAP/ Liberté de Conscience* and the information material that follows comes from their [report](#) on their website.

Diversion of the objective of a MIVILUDES call for projects in the CAFFES case

In the CAFFES case, *CAP/ Liberté de Conscience* asked and received from the Prefect of the Département du Nord, the documents related to the allocation of a subsidy of 150,000 EUR by MIVILUDES in 2024 (MIVILUDES Call for Projects 2023) to the Lille-based anti-cult association CAFFES.

CAP Liberté de Conscience scrutinized them and identified irregularities which it considered to be particularly serious before reporting on 6 August 2024 to the Prefect, as well as to the Court of Auditors and the National Financial Prosecutor's Office.

On this issue, the President of the Court, Pierre Moscovici declared "this is a serious matter." He also indicated that the Prosecutor General of the Court of Auditors had referred the matter to the Litigation Chamber, which would investigate the case "and possibly judge and sentence who it may concern."

It is important to understand that the MIVILUDES Call for Projects 2023, as its name indicates, obviously concerns future projects... It is therefore intended to finance projects to be implemented during an upcoming given period, and in no way existing or past activities of an association. However, according to CAP/ Liberté de Conscience, this is what CAFFES has done with the grant of 150,000 EUR.

Projects already completed... or already funded!

A first announced project by CAFFES was the production of a comic book called "Operation Thomas" but this project was already completed in 2022, thanks to a previous grant from the same source, MIVILUDES! It was already distributed online on the CAFFES website in March 2023, months before the grant request.

A second CAFFES project is named BOOMERING which CAFFES is in no way piloting but in which it is only a partner, unlike what it said in its application. Moreover, CAFFES website itself mentioned that the project was already complete in the first half of 2023 with some funding of the European Union. Under these conditions, the funding request for the "BOOMERING" project was misleading, according to CAP/ Liberté de Conscience, as the grant of 150,000 euros could therefore not be used for this purpose.

Finally, CAFFES referred to a "prevention film" and a "short film", which in fact consists of short video segments featuring a member of CAFFES. These videos were shot on a cell phone in a fixed shot and then uploaded to YouTube. These amateur videos did not require any professional skills or equipment. To date, these videos have had between 14 and 46 views – including those of CAP/ Liberté de conscience - with the exception of one successful video which has a mere 108 views.

The official [CAFFES YouTube account](#) had only four subscribers and 300 views from 1 March 31 December 2024. This means that even CAFFES members don't even watch these highly confidential videos. Once again, a part of the 150,000 EUR subsidy could not be allocated to the production of these videos.

To recap: From the three projects that were supposed to justify the 150,000 EUR grant, two had already been fully financed from other sources at the time of the application, and one consisted of a few amateur videos shot free of charge on a smartphone in an office and posted on YouTube.

Opinion of CAP/ Liberté de Conscience about the responsibility of MIVILUDES in the CAFFES case

In brief, a micro-association in Lille which wanted to obtain a whopping 150,000 EUR in funding from MIVILUDES, applied for projects which no longer exist or which have already been funded by other calls for projects and ultimately received hundreds of thousands of EUR from MIVILUDES and other state institutions all together. That is thanks to such maneuvers that CAFFES could pay its staff handsomely and continue to exist on the backs of the taxpayers, according to CAP/ Liberté de conscience.

And what does MIVILUDES do, despite having been alerted some years ago about irregularities in the way it allocates subsidies?

It gives, it distributes, it squanders, it finances these associations under perfusion to fight against the vertigo of emptiness. Indeed, if MIVILUDES were to stop supporting such associations, which are on their last legs, they would quickly disappear, as they clearly lack the credibility of the French authorities.

Indeed, if MIVILUDES were to stop supporting these associations, they would rapidly disappear, as they clearly lack any credibility to mobilize the public and attract donations. In other words, on the day MIVILUDES becomes more rigorous and vigilant in abiding by the rule of law, the small and closed club of associations under financial perfusion that benefit from MIVILUDES' largesse will collapse and die a natural death.

But the circle of beneficiary associations - guardians of the safe - are making sure that such an eventuality does not materialize, even if it means ignoring the clear messages of the Court of Auditors."

How difficult was it to see the questionable use of state funds by the CAFFES? Just a few hours of research to establish and document what was going on, according to *CAP/ Liberté de conscience*, adding that this is the work that should have been carried out by MIVILUDES from the outset but there was obviously no will to do it.
