A green chalkboard with faint mathematical equations and a person's arm writing on it. The text is overlaid on the board.

**DISCRIMINATION AND  
VIOLATION OF SEPARATION  
OF CHURCH AND STATE  
IN THE FRENCH NATIONAL  
EDUCATION SYSTEM**



# INTRODUCTION : NEUTRAL SECULARISM BROKEN DOWN

For a few years now, a few MPs and higher officials have been instigating the disparaging of the principle of neutrality engraved in the very fundamentals of public schools by their founders. To do this, they have been using biased courses, textbooks and a propaganda clearly aimed at bringing discredit on non-established faiths or religious movements whose only wrongdoing is not yet being recognised and not being accepted by the majority. So one can find in schools such events as a lecturer openly sneering at Jehovah Witnesses (who count several hundred thousands members in France) a book mocking with impunity the Church of Scientology (which has tens of thousands of members) by spreading shameless lies about it .

A number of articles disparaging the new religious movements are now published in parents' and teachers' magazines. These contain no factual information [about these groups], charges [against them] are expressed in generalities and tainting by association is constant fare. Numerous individuals, children or teachers, have now become the target of discriminatory acts within the National Education system.

The documents we have gathered testify on various aspects of this reality. The aim is to allow everyone to realise that the basic principles of human rights and religious neutrality are being violated within the National Education System.

*We point out several facts :*

- The publication, in school textbooks, of texts, sometimes full chapters, slandering religious or spiritual minorities (*exhibit 1*)
- Special training given to teachers-in-training at the IUFM (*University units for teacher-training*) so that they can "recognise" religious or spiritual minorities' [members] (*exhibit 2*)
- Lectures given in schools by individuals known for their antagonism against groups that express new philosophical or religious opinions (*exhibit 3*)
- Stands and lectures [campaigning] against new religious movements at Education Fairs (*exhibit 4*)
- Discriminatory measures taken against students and teachers (*exhibit 5*)
- Documents published by the National Education system relaying libellous information against new religious movements through administration letters (*exhibit 7*)
- A booklet published by a governmental mission as a warning for teachers [against such groups] (*exhibit 8*)
- A booklet, "*Prevention of Proselytising by Cults*" published by the Ministry for Education (*exhibit 9*)
- Media campaigns (*exhibit 10*).

A great number of these discriminatory acts are based on a 1996 parliamentary report which contains a list of 172 movements which are labelled as "Cults" and where that word is given a derogatory meaning. But that list has been declared as having no legal value by several French courts and can't be used in any way as a basis for discriminatory measures.

A few militant associations, almost fully government-subsidised, and a governmental mission have been at the

source of the propaganda campaigns described in this brochure, or have relayed them.

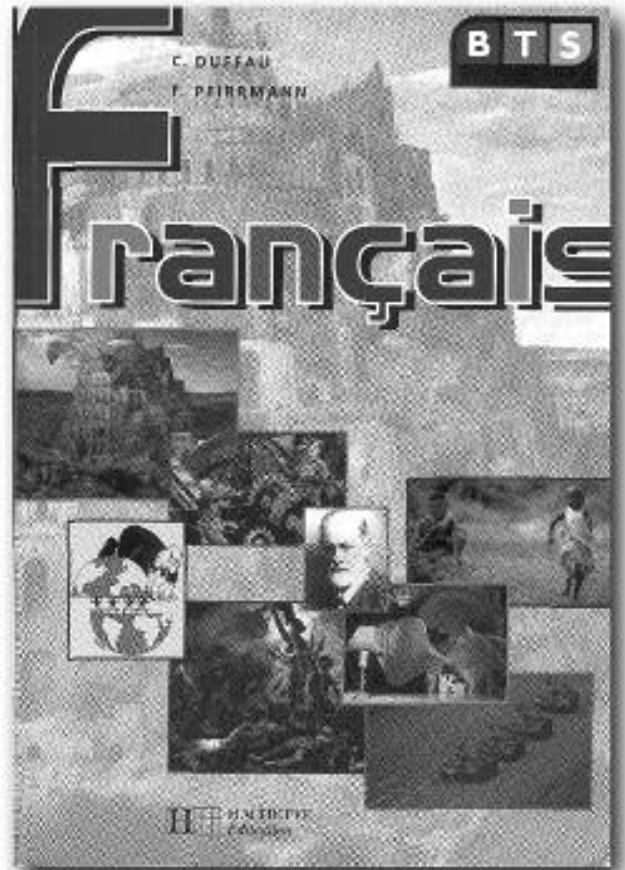
Each one of the facts we mention below represents, as such, a violation of the principle of religious neutrality guaranteed by the separation of Church and State law and by Article 2 of the French Constitution. It also violates the obligation of respect of beliefs and of religious freedom derived from international treaties ratified by France.

# I - “COMMITTED” SCHOOL MANUALS

*French book, BTS level - Hachette Education - Author: C. Duffau and F. Pfirrmann*

In the part “Myths and religions”, we find an article by Alain Vivien published in the “*World of Education*” of April 1988 denouncing a so-called “penetration of structures and institutions” by the new religious movements so as to take over power and gain totalitarianism.

Under a rapidly-done synthesis, Alain Vivien dispenses appreciations which discredit the spiritual, philosophical and religious values of the named or implied movements. In the absence of proof, he starts proceedings so to speak, against them: “penetration of structures and institutions”, “offensive against the social structures”. He goes against university professors who publish information contrary to his own thesis: “what to think of those self proclaimed researchers for whom cults don’t exist?” he says with arrogance. The suspicion weighs equally on magistrates: “Even as far as certain members of the magistrate have awakened suspicion...”. He discredits artists who are members of movements: “a few members are celebrities from show-business, which suggests a veneer of prestige so as to seduce the public...”



“Alain Vivien, ex State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, honorary deputy of Seine-et-Marne, President of the Center Roger-Ikor - Center against mental manipulation.”

## A. Vivien

A. Vivien

### Au cœur de la société

Le sectarisme n'est à tout prendre qu'une variation, à caractériser le plus souvent religieuse, du racisme totalitaire. Tous les ingrédients de l'aliénation humaine s'y retrouvent. Existence dans des sociétés en proie à une certaine désinstitutionnalisation morale, développement accéléré en période de crise démographique, appel à la vague

**“Sectarianism is only to be taken as a variation, often with a religious connotation, of totalitarianism. All the ingredients of human alienation are here”**

### II. LE LIEU

Le lieu n'est pas ici de décrire la dépersonnalisation et la chute au profit auxquelles doivent se plier tous les adeptes, au bénéfice du mouvement sectaire et des happy few qui le dirigent. Mais plutôt de donner un coup de projecteur sur un aspect

II. LE LIEU **“penetration of structures and institutions”**

peut-être... se protéger du fait final... se défendre... déclarer... que ce soit chez Moore, dans le monde... scientifique, ou à la Nouvelle-orthodoxie, c'est la coexistence à terme du pouvoir.

**“a few members are celebrities from show-business, which suggests a veneer of prestige so as to seduce the public...”**

**“Even as far as certain members of the magistrate have awakened suspicion...”.**

**Book on Civic Education, 4th level (14 yr-old students): Freedoms, Rights, Justice - Hachette Education. Under the direction of Dany Feuillard.**

Alain Vivien is thanked for his contribution to this publication.

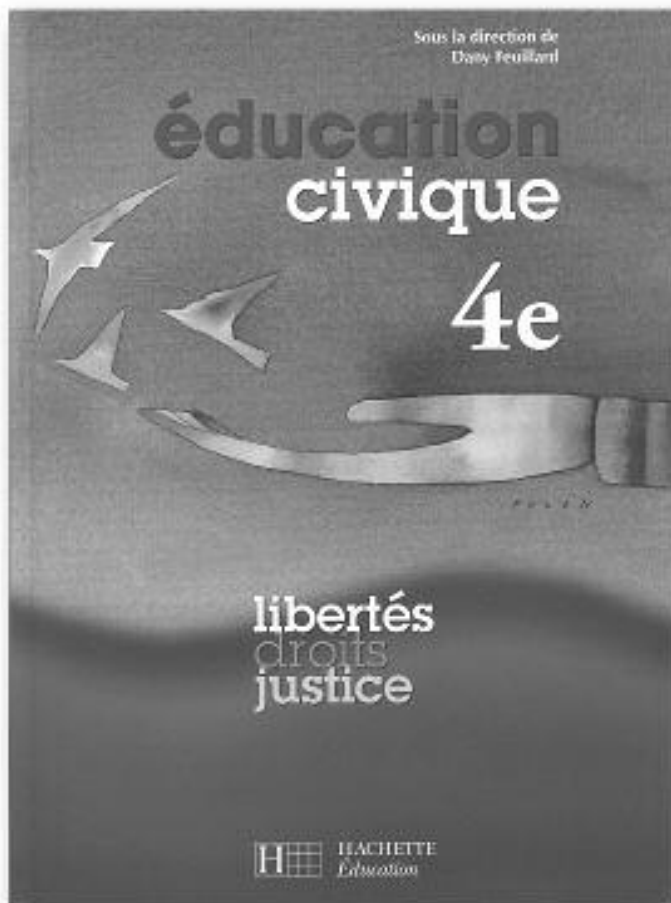
In Part I, "Freedoms and Rights", two pages are dedicated to the alleged "dangers of cults".

Generalities are used without any real and precise facts being mentioned: "suicides, massacres, kidnappings, families ruined and separated".

The facts put forth are extreme in their negative contents but the accusation is general and without proof: "to indoctrinate their new followers, the cult will "brainwash", "cut them from their families", they "lean on fantastic visions borrowed from science fiction or video games", "cults hide often behind a mask".

Different movements are presented in a tendentious manner, such as The Sahaja Yoga, The Church of Scientology, The Jehovah Witnesses, The New Acropople or Tabitha's Place.

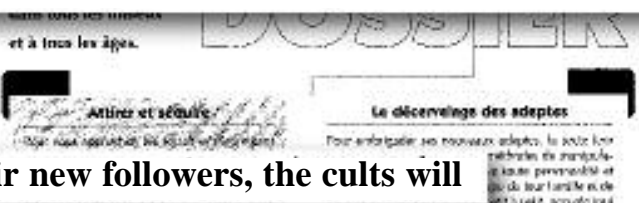
The testimonies of ex-followers are taken word for word, without any objective viewpoint. (The testimony of an ex-follower of The Sahaja Yoga, The New Acropople, Tabitha's Place). No contradictory and comparative elements are communicated so as to allow one to make an opinion for oneself: number of unhappy followers, number of active, number of people who, having gone through the movement without staying, have kept a positive image of it, etc.



**Les dangers des sectes**

Les pratiques de certaines sectes font souvent la Une de l'actualité : suicides,

**"suicides, massacres, kidnappings, families ruined and separated"**



**"to indoctrinate their new followers, the cults will 'brainwash'"**



**"cut them from their families"**



**"lean on fantastic visions borrowed from science fiction or video games"**

*Civic Educational Course, 4th Level (14 yr-old students),  
delivered by the CNED (National Educational Course by correspondence)*

A section entitled “cults against freedoms”.

This illustrates the practice of using “cults” as a generality in an abusive way and the amalgam thereof. What appears allegedly in one movement is then valid for all others. False statements are relayed against Tabitha’s Place and other movements, especially concerning children: “their education is aimed at making them good followers”, “they are taken from their parents at birth”, “their mental health and some times physical health is so affected that they cannot live outside the cult”. We feel a real scorn and the will to discredit the members of movements, who, on the other hand have not been asked to express themselves: “The new follower who becomes a member in a cult is manipulated. We take all personality away from him”.

There is no contradictory debate and no real data from th inquiry is noted.



**Scénario**

- en quoi l'usage abusif de fichiers informatiques peut-il consister ?
- quelle loi protège les personnes contre la consultation et l'usage abusif de fichiers informatisés ?
- que doit-on faire si l'on constate un usage abusif d'un fichier ?
- quels progrès apporte la loi de 1994 en matière de libertés face à l'informatique ?

**“Brainwashing”**

Les technologies offrent de nouvelles possibilités en matière de fichiers informatisés. Là encore, la loi intervient pour j

**“Forget your way of thinking, your ideas, your opinions.**

**Do not think. If you have belongings, money, give them to us. Consider work as a leisure.”**

et la lutte menée contre elles, les sectes recrutent toujours des adeptes. Les révolutions ouvrent souvent des possibilités énormes d'exploitation des sectes.

**“The new follower who becomes a member in a cult is manipulated. We take all personality away from him.”**

... et si vous avez des biens, donnez-les à la secte. ...

**“Parents almost never see their children.**

**The mother who has just given birth is sent on a mission the same day in a foreign country for 15 days which become 3 months. Same for the father.”**

... qui s'engage dans une secte est manipulé. On lui enlève toute personnalité et tout esprit critique. Les adeptes doivent aussi souvent donner leurs biens et leur argent. Ils sont coupés du reste du monde et n'ont plus les moyens de sortir de la secte.

**“Their education is aimed at making them good followers”.**

... La mère qui accouche est envoyée le jour même en mission à l'étranger pour quinze jours, qui deviennent 100 jours. Même chose pour le père.”

**“their mental health and some**

**times physical health is so affected that they cannot live outside the cult”**

... vue à ce titre de tous adeptes qui ne cherchent pas à quitter la secte. Souvent, ils sont enlevés à leurs parents dès leur naissance ou subissent de mauvais traitements. Leur santé mentale et parfois physique est tellement atteinte qu'ils ne peuvent vivre en dehors de la secte. Les enfants des sectes leur volent leur vie d'enfants.

A section mentions a few figures borrowed from the Parliamentary report.

Discrimination is encouraged against associations that deliver after-school teaching or that give music or drawing classes, based on an unfounded accusation: "Cults recruit via associations."

Will we have to present a certificate of the MILS to be authorized to practice an activity such as after-school teaching or artistic education?

There is an explosion of information coming from the parliamentary report of 1996 without specifying that this information has not been subject to prior inquiry, or that this report has no normative value.



## A FEW FIGURES

**In January 1996, a parliamentary report states that there are 160 000 cult followers and 100 000 supporters.**

**We have taken census of 176 cults and 800 sub-groups.**

**Cults recruit via associations that offer services such as after-school teaching and remedial classes, music classes and drawing classes. BEWARE!**

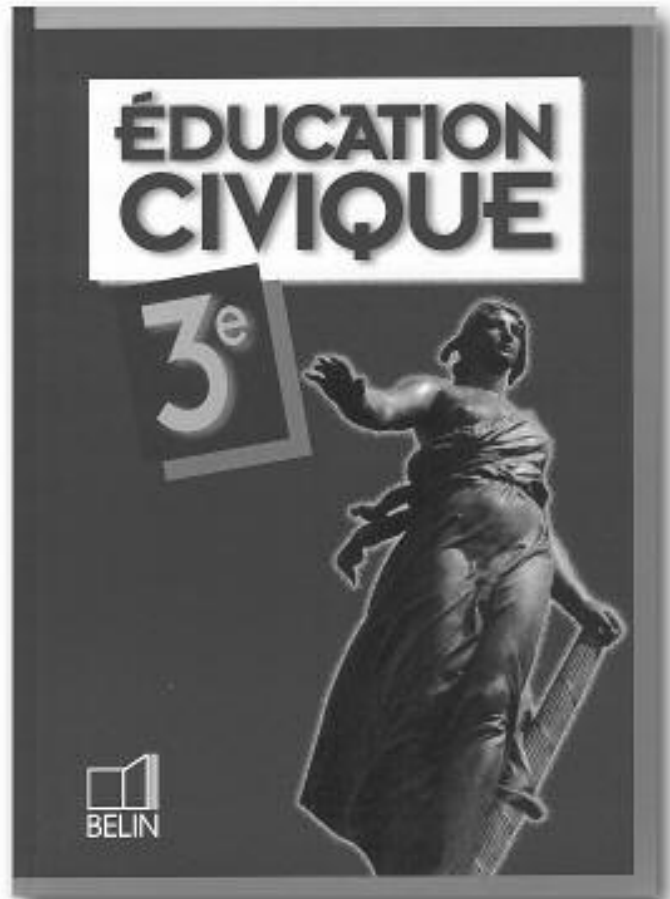
1996	1997	1998	1999
160 000	100 000	176	800
1996	1997	1998	1999
160 000	100 000	176	800

Under the section “Cults: between rights and duties of citizens”, a document relates Article 9 of the European convention of 1950, opposite another document which talks about a “cult” ‘s appearance in court, based on an article of the newspaper “Le Monde” of 21 January 1999.

It is the hypocrisy of a page which seems to call for the respect of the law, in this case legislation on freedom of thought, conscience, and religion and which violates in this case the principle of presumption of innocence and the democratic rights of the defense, by presenting a case not yet judged.

The information is voluntarily partial and completely tendentious: “Ms X is believed to have...”. It is again the practice of amalgam: What allegedly appears in a movement is valid for all others. The title is general “Cults: between rights and duties of citizens”, but the body of the text deals with only one movement: “the members of a cult under judgment”.

The final educational quiz gives the lies and biased ideas a real status of knowledge: “Does Ms X have the right to orient the bed of the community members ‘to better receive positive waves’?”.



Les sectes: entre droits et devoirs des citoyens

“Cults: between rights and duties of citizens”

« Article 9 - Liberté de pensée, de conscience et de religion  
 • 1. Toute personne a droit à la liberté de pensée, de conscience et de religion. Ce droit implique le libre exercice de sa religion, en solitude ou en commun avec les autres, solennellement ou dans l'intimité »

« D'après le tribunal correctionnel où elle comparait Mme X. était poursuivie pour l'exercice illégal de la médecine et non-assistance à personne en danger. Elle était accusée de deux homicides qualifiés qu'elle avait commis en 1995.

“Ms X is believed to have forced 2 women to stop the medical treatments which were prescribed by doctors, to conform to her own healing methods: laying on of hands, absorption of a few elixirs of her own making or orientation of the bed to “better receive positive waves”.”

Les deux femmes d'arrêter les soins qui leur avaient été prescrits pour passer à ses propres méthodes (i.e. absorption de quelques élixirs, absorption de quelques élixirs, orientation du lit pour "recevoir" les ondes positives).  
 Par conséquent, les enquêteurs ont été conduits à cette conclusion : Dans un journal de bord de l'enquête, il est écrit : « Après leur mort les deux femmes ont été déclinées en plusieurs villages respectifs, où les décès ont été faussement déclarés et que les corps ont été incinérés, empêchant ainsi toute autopsie qui aurait pu permettre de vérifier si les traitements avaient été réellement administrés. »  
 D'après Le Monde 21 janvier 1999.

Quiz on document 2

■ “Does Ms X have the right to orient the bed of the community members ‘to better receive positive waves’?”

réviser par

► Synthèse

• Montrer que dans une société démocratique, « la liberté consiste à pouvoir faire tout ce qui ne nuit pas à autrui » (Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme, art. 4).