Les Moutons Rebelles does not disclose its ownership. The website was registered in 2017 by a man named Loumi Mourad. The website’s 2017 registration document lists another man, Elloumi Khalil, as the site’s administrator, along with an address in Tunis, Tunisia. By 2019, the website’s registration records were private.

In response to a NewsGuard email asking about the site’s ownership, the site confirmed that LesMoutonsRebelles.com was founded by Khalil, and added that he no longer works for the site. The unsigned email to NewsGuard did not identify the site’s current ownership, describing the site’s staff as “three writers based in both France and Tunisia. We work and aggregate articles. We are simple rebels who try to link articles altogether and re-inform people.”

The website generates revenue through advertising.

Les Moutons Rebelles, which means Rebel Sheep, publishes articles and videos covering national, European, and U.S. news. Stories are divided into sections including Society (Société), Science & Technologies (Science & Tech), Health (Santé), and France. Stories frequently add commentary to news stories produced by other organizations, or embed social media posts.

The site frequently covers conspiracy theories, business and political scandals. Typical headlines include “We are installing 5G antennae under the feet of citizens...” (“On installe les antennes 5G sous les pieds des citoyens ...”), “United States: a woman pleads guilty of having been bare-breasted in front of her husband” (“Etats-Unis: une femme plaide coupable
Les Moutons Rebêlles does not appear to conduct original reporting. Articles are primarily based on stories published by other news organizations such as RMC, AJ+, Agence France-Presse, and France Info. The website has also cited information from sites NewsGuard has found to have repeatedly published false content, such as InfoWars and TruthTheory.com, as well as Russian government-owned media outlets RT and Sputnik. Some articles do not cite any sources.

The site has published unsubstantiated conspiracy theories about major world news, including the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. For example, a January 2020 article titled “Virus 2019-nCOV: the theory of a biological weapon more and more clear?” (“Virus 2019-nCoV: la piste de l’arme biologique se précise de plus en plus ?”), falsely claimed that “According to information gathered by Chinese sources, the replication of the new 2019-nCOV coronavirus is ... the result of the transfer of a highly sensitive biological material between two countries ... as part of an economical, commercial and financial asymmetric war strategy using campaigns in media as well as biological ‘disruptive’ carriers.” (“Selon des indications recueillies par des sources chinoises, la réplication du nouveau coronavirus 2019-nCoV (...) (est) le résultat d’un transfert d’un matériau biologique hautement sensible entre deux pays (...) dans le cadre d’une stratégie de guerre économique, commerciale et financière asymétrique utilisant aussi bien des campagnes de médiasguerre que des vecteurs de ‘disruption’ biologiques”).

There is no evidence that the virus was engineered by any country to hurt China. The WHO said that researchers have linked the COVID-19 virus to similar coronaviruses in bats. A February 2020 report said: “increasing evidence demonstrates the link between the 2019-nCoV and other similar known coronaviruses
(CoV) circulating in bats." A study published the same month in Nature found that the virus is “96% identical at the whole-genome level to a bat coronavirus.”

In September 2019, the website promoted false claims about the Sept. 11, 2001, collapse of the World Trade Center. An article titled “American Government reports on 9/11 are disproven” (“Les rapports du gouvernement américain sur le 11 septembre ont été réfutés”), advanced a Swiss historian’s false claim that Seven World Trade Center, an office tower next to the trade center’s twin towers, “was blasted” (“Le WTC7 a été dynamité”) before it collapsed.

A 2008 investigation by the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology concluded that flying debris from the twin towers sparked an intense fire that "caused a critical support column to fail, initiating a fire-induced progressive collapse that brought the building down." The study found no evidence that explosives were placed inside any of the three buildings that collapsed on Sept. 11, 2001.

An April 2019 article titled “Two videos show an individual sparking powerful lightning bolts on the roof of Notre Dame Cathedral before the fire,” (“2 vidéos montrent un individu déclenchant de vifs éclairs de lumière sur le toit de Notre-Dame peu avant l’incendie”) made the unsubstantiated claim that the fire at the iconic French cathedral could have been caused by arson. French newspaper Libération reported that the videos referred to by LesMoutonsRebelles.com appeared to portray reflections of sunlight, although it was “impossible to tell at that point”. Paris officials quickly ruled out arson as a cause of the blaze, and public prosecutor Rémy Heitz told reporters the day after the April 15, 2019, fire, “nothing suggests that it was a voluntary act.”

In a June 2019 article, the site claimed that a Yellow Vest protester was shot to death “following the launch of a rubber weapon” by the police in Montpellier that month. The article cites a Facebook post. However, local police denied that a demonstrator was killed, a
finding confirmed by accounts in multiple news organizations, including Midi Libre, Le Monde, France 3, and France Soir.

In November 2018, LesMoutonsRebelles.com published a video that showed an activist falling on the floor, and claimed that the video showed that a protester was killed during a Yellow Vest demonstration in Paris. Police never reported such a death, although Paris police officials told AFP that 19 protesters and five officers were injured in the November 24, 2018, demonstration. In a fact-checking article, the French newspaper Libération reported that “several witnesses contacted by our newsroom report that a man was injured,” but said that there was no evidence of a death.

A November 2017 article about Adolf Hitler stated that the German Nazi leader “co-founded Israel in 1933 with Zionist Jews.” A September 2016 article claimed that Hitler, who historians said killed himself in 1945 in his bunker in Berlin, instead escaped to Argentina at the end of World War II and died in Paraguay in 1971.

The site has also been accused of running fabricated stories that it attributes to other news organizations. In November 2017, it quoted a Saudi princess named Amira Al-Tawil as describing, in an interview with the French newspaper Le Monde, “Lurid details of “orgies with minor girls and the excessive use of drugs and alcohol.” Le Monde published an article that same month saying “it has never asked questions to Amira Al-Tawil or published an interview of the princess.”

Because Les Moutons Rebelles articles and headlines have included false and unsubstantiated claims, NewsGuard has determined that the site repeatedly publishes false content and deceptive headlines and fails to gather and present information responsibly.

In response to NewsGuard’s questions about Les Moutons Rebelles’ content, the site’s unsigned email claimed that LesMoutonsRebelles.com does not regularly publish false information.
“We have already faced situations where we published hoaxes,” the email said. “We corrected and updated all our articles. The email also said, “We never publish articles with deceptive headlines. We will never do this. Clickbaiting is not our thing.”

The unsigned email did not provide examples of the corrections that were published by Les Moutons Rebelles.

NewsGuard found several stories published in 2019 and one in 2020 that replaced earlier false stories with reliable news organizations’ fact-checks that debunked the earlier claims. The stories did not always make clear that LesMoutonsRebelles.com had initially published false information, which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for publishing transparent corrections. In addition, the website has not corrected numerous other false stories on the website, such as many of those cited above.

The website does not disclose a clear political ideology and does not label stories as opinion, but writers regularly include political opinions in news articles. For example, a March 2020 article, “Tougher than the Coronavirus: Manuel Valls is considering a come back on the French political scene” (“Plus coriace que le Coronavirus : Manuel Valls envisage de revenir dans la politique française”), which appeared in the France section, said, “even the French President, who is fond of dishonest and incompetent politicians, like Christophe Castaner, did not want Valls.” (“même le président Français pourtant friand des politiciens véreux et incompétents, tel Christophe Castaner, n’a pas voulu de Valls”). The article was labelled France.

A December 2019 news article, “Joe Biden the pedophile spins out of control during a speech among kids.” (“Joe Biden le pédophile part totalement en vrille lors d’un discours parmi des enfants”), said, “This man was Vice-President of the United States, no, you are not dreaming.” (“Cet homme a été vice-président des États-Unis, non vous ne rêvez pas”). And a June 2019 article titled “Globalists have just signed our death sentence,” criticized members of the U.S. Congress who signed a letter challenging the White House’s
Middle East policy. “Among the 512 members of the American Congress, 400 signed a letter proving that they are the most despicable idiots, liars, hypocrites and the most pitiful of the bloodthirsty belligerents,” the article said.

The anonymous person responding to NewsGuard’s questions on the site’s editorial practices did not address questions on mixing news and opinion. “We try to reproduce articles which are the most interesting from our point of view,” the email said.

Transparency

The website does not disclose its ownership or its editorial leadership. The Contact Us page provides a contact form.

Articles are generally attributed to “the rebel” (lerebelle). No contact or biographical information for content creators is provided.

“We want to keep our identities anonymous for diverse reasons,” the site said in its unsigned email to NewsGuard.

Advertisements are distinguishable from editorial content.

History

The website’s domain name was registered in March 2016. In 2017, Le Monde ranked LesMoutonsRebelles.com as among the 10 most widely shared Facebook pages that publish misinformation in France.

*Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on March 13, 2020.*

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Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

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