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News

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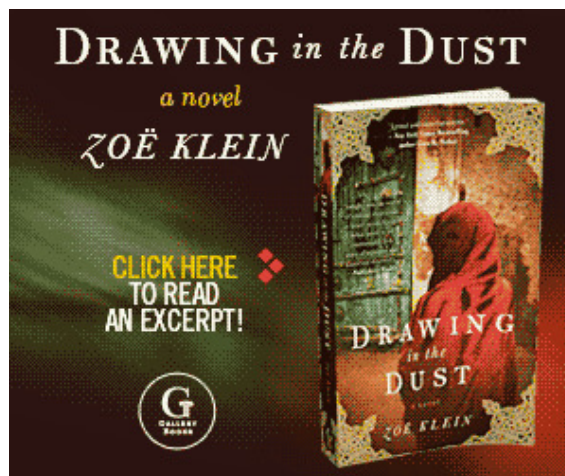
Yad L'Achim Advises Chinese on Cult-Fighting

by Hillel Fendel

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At the express invitation of the Chinese Government, Rabbi Binyamin Kluger of the [Yad L'Achim](#) anti-missionary organization and Raphael Aron, Director of Cult Counseling Australia, spoke at a four-day conference in southern China on cult-fighting strategies.

The two bearded Orthodox Jews stood out blatantly at the late-January conference, the International Forum on Cultic Studies, which featured some 30 anti-cult experts from China, Russia, Ukraine, England, France, and the United States. The conference's overall objective was to discuss ways to combat the influence of the Falun Gong cult in China, with the Chinese eager to learn from the experience of experts from around the world.

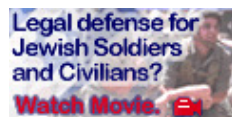


Rabbi Kluger of Jerusalem spoke primarily about how cults and missionary groups take full advantage of the media in their struggle to win over souls. "Even in Israel," he told IsraelNationalNews.com, "articles appear in the media condemning the Chinese Government for its treatment of the Falun Gong – when in fact proof of the alleged 'harvesting of organs' from live Falun Gong members has been hard to come by. Investigators from the US Consulate and the British Embassy who arrived at the place that had been pointed out as the central extermination camp found that it was nothing more than a normal hospital."

"I'm not saying there is no Chinese persecution at all of Falun Gong," Rabbi Kluger said, "but it is far from the extent that is often reported – and in the meantime, this harmful cult receives public sympathy and recognition via the media."

Using the Media Both Ways

"Cults use the media for their own purposes, so we have to do the same," he told



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IsraelNationalNews, preferring not to elaborate on Yad La'Achim's specific measures so as not to "tip off" the groups it is fighting.

"It is also important to have effective media advisors," Rabbi Kluger said. "When the media starts paying attention to a certain issue, we have to be alerted and get our own opinion in there as well."

Rabbi Kluger said he told the Chinese "that they can't only quote government-backed studies against Falun Gong. They have to be willing to also quote people who may be critical of the government but who, at the same time, show that the cults, and particularly Falun Gong, are harmful."

In Israel

Rabbi Kluger said that Falun Gong is active in Israel, though not to the extent that the cult boasts. "It's a destructive cult in all senses: encouraging the detaching of relations with friends, colleagues and sometimes also family members; saying that doctors cannot cure illnesses because they are 'spiritual' in nature; teaching that the leader is all-knowing and can never be challenged, etc. ... They say they have 1,000 members in Israel, when in fact there are maybe 500 people who have practiced some of its exercises, but who don't really know anything about what the cult teaches and promotes. The hard-core in Israel is not more than 60 people... But that's how all cults work: they brag about their vast numbers, which are simply not true."

Asked to name the most dangerous cults in Israel, Rabbi Kluger said, "Messianic Jews, Scientology, and Je-hova's Witnesses. They target religious and non-religious Jews all over the country, and we must be vigilant."

Praise for Yad L'Achim

Prominent U.S. anti-cult expert Rick Ross, who also attended the conference, had lavish words of praise for Kluger and Yad L'Achim: "The strategies and tactics of Yad L'Achim in Israel deserve a scientific study in and of themselves."

Similarly, the Head of the Social Sciences Department in Beijing University, who MC'd the conference, told Rabbi Kluger at the closing session, "Honored rabbi, you have enriched us greatly and we are full of appreciation for the words of wisdom and courageous activities that you, the people at Yad L'Achim, oversee." (IsraelNationalNews.com)

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