



## Cultural Invasion and ways to Counter it in the Thought of The Supreme Leader with Emphasis on Media Invasion

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### Abstract

In this article, we seek to investigate what cultural invasion is and ways to deal with it in The Supreme leader's thought, emphasizing on media invasion. The research method is descriptive-analytical, and the collection of information is done by library-document method. The findings of this research show that The Supreme leader considers the cultural invasion of the West to the foundations of Islamic beliefs and to the corruption and destruction of Islamic societies. To deal with the cultural invasion, he suggests a correct knowledge of the enemy and a rational and logical defense of the right. At the level of media attack, his emphasis is to counter Western cultural and media propaganda through satellite networks and especially Hollywood, and considers the way to counter it to be paying attention to Islamic culture, promoting religious models, and encouraging young artists and believers in the field of art. As a result, the solution to deal with the cultural invasion should be followed by policies in the cultural and media arena, which can be mentioned as follows: creating national self-confidence through the display of the country's authority, unity and security by the responsible institutions, especially the radio and television, showing convergence and solidarity as a prominent cultural characteristic of Iranians, especially against the foreign enemy, highlighting the commonalities of ethnic identity with Iran's national identity, attention to the Iranian-Islamic style in life according to the emphasis of the Supreme Leader, providing awareness in the field of divisive satellite networks and paying special attention to Iranian art, especially music, which has a high power of attraction among young people.

**Keywords:** Supreme Leader, Cultural Invasion, Media Invasion, Enemy

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## 1. Introduction

It should be stated that culture is something that shapes the general mind and behavior of the society. The movement of the society is based on the culture of that society. Society's thoughts and decision-making is based on the culture that dominates their minds (Zoheiri et al., 2017). Since culture is a social category and is rooted in the beliefs and customs of the society, for this reason one of the methods of the domination system in the new colonial era is to attack the culture, values and beliefs of a nation (Khalaf Zadeh et al., 2021, p. 160). Today, due to the intellectual growth and general awareness of the nations of the world, influence, domination and the acquisition of colonies through military campaigns is not easily possible and if implemented, it imposes a lot of costs on the attackers. For this reason, for more than a century, the colonialists have changed the method of influencing the countries and through cultural policies (with the titles of religious propaganda, spread of technology, charitable associations, health promotion, etc.) they are trying to achieve sinister goals. because they have realized that the root of many problems and the origin of many

developments at the level of countries is the management of the culture that governs that country, and the best way to influence other countries is to influence their culture and its internal transformation (Asgari et al., 2018; Basiri et al., 2021, p. 156).

For many years, the Supreme Leader has been demanding cultural concern and neglecting the damages of the media environment. When political and economic issues are discussed, Supreme Leader says that I am not as worried as about cultural issues. I can't sleep at night because of cultural concerns. I get up and I am worried (Alvandi and Soleimani, 2015, p. 43). Therefore, the present article seeks to investigate what cultural invasion is, its components and ways to deal with it in the thought of The Supreme leader emphasizing on media invasion. The research method used in the research is descriptive-analytical, and the data and information of the research has been collected by the library-documentary method.

## 2. Background of the research

We can refer to some of the researches done about cultural invasion in Iran:

Rows	authors	title of research	findings
1	Seyyed Ali Mohammad Razavi,  Nusratullah Nematifar,  Seyyed Hossein Mousavi	Studying the relationship between media literacy and cultural invasion in social networks	A Research finding shows; There is an inverse relationship between media literacy and cultural aggression among users. There was also an inverse relationship between

			users' age and cultural aggression. The obtained results indicate a significant difference between the two variables of gender and education of users with cultural invasion.
2	Safiolah Safaii	Pathology of cultural invasion among the youth of Hamadan province	This quantitative research was carried out in 2017 and the experimental results of structural equation modeling indicated that cultural invasion had a significant effect on all three levels of micro, medium and macro culture. In addition, the most impact on the micro level on the tendency In fashion, at the middle level, it has been about the adherence of young people to family principles and at the macro level about the change of lifestyle.
3	Hossein Markazi Moghadam	Cultural invasion and ways to deal with it in the thought of Supreme Leader of the Revolution	In this research, using the words of the leader of the revolution on three levels, the objectives of the enemy in the cultural invasion, the methods and solutions to deal with

			it have been determined.
4	Mehdi Basiri, Mehrdad Shahsavari, Faramarz Nasri, Mohammad Seyyed Esmaili	Formulation of cultural defense J.A. .strategies of A against cultural invasion	In this quantitative research, using a questionnaire from experts in the field of culture, and data analysis, they have come to the conclusion that the police force should have multiple strategies regarding cultural invasion: using internal and external organizational capacities, improving the quality and quantity of cultural products based on the Iranian-Islamic model of progress, optimal use of cyber capacities etc.
5	Hasan Dolati, Farshideh Zamani	Explaining the relationship between national identity and responding to the enemy's cultural invasion	This research was conducted with the aim of explaining the relationship between different dimensions of national identity and the response to cultural invasion among the students of the Imam Khomeini University of Marine Sciences and it is of a quantitative type and a questionnaire design. The results of

			the research indicate the existence of a relationship between the geographical dimension of national identity and the response to the enemy's cultural invasion, but this relationship is weak and there is a significant and positive relationship between the cultural-historical dimension and the political dimension of national identity and cultural invasion.
6	Seyyed Ali Seyyed Nejad, Hamidreza Hatami, Mehrshad Shababi, Abbas Khalaji	The relationship between Western cultural invasion and the functioning of Iranian families	The findings of this research show that there is a significant relationship between cultural invasion factors and family functions. The type of relationship is correlational, non-correlated and negative.
7	Mohsen Mohajernia	Analyzing the meaning of cultural invasion in the political thought of The Supreme Leader	In this type of research, under the political literature of cultural invasion, it is divided into four types: observational literature, reflective and explanatory literature, ideal and desirable literature,

			prescriptive or thought literature, and focusing on the first part, more than three different concepts in the form of A conceptual network based on crisis theory has been studied, and all concepts have been processed based on the two central concepts of "enemy" and "Islamic world".
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### 3. Concepts and theoretical foundations of research

Culture: In a sociological perspective, culture is a material and non-material collection of reference knowledge, common ideas, accepted beliefs, accepted norms, special values and functions, opinions, beliefs, etc. Culture as a social glue is a pattern of basic assumptions that the social group has created or discovered to solve the two fundamental problems of matching with the external environment (the way of continuing to survive) and creating internal cohesion (the way of staying together) (Khalaf zadeh et al., 2021, pp. 163-164). It should be acknowledged that culture is the greatest need of human society and the main factor of dynamism, vitality and continuity of the life of societies. Today, the issues of culture as the most important factor in the economic, social, political, human and moral development of the country have been in the focus of attention of experts, thinkers and elites. The effective and fundamental role of culture in all human biological and intellectual fields has created a new perspective in mental and

objective fields. Culture is the platform for re-defining, restoring and evolving all human abilities, values, identities, beliefs, norms, traditions, myths and symbols (Rezapour & Eskandari Nasab, 2019, p. 180).

In his book titled *Ideology and Modern Culture*, John Thompson has presented a comprehensive classification of culture, which is as follows:

1. Traditional and classical definitions that consider culture as a sign of the spiritual growth and excellence of society.
2. Descriptive definitions that seek to describe culture and specify its constituent institutions and elements.
3. Symbolist definitions that consider culture as a whole that is recognized through symbols manifested in society.
4. Structuralist symbolic definitions, which establish an inseparable connection between the institution and the structure of society (Salehi Amiri, 2007, p. 18).

**Cultural invasion:** the term cultural invasion means exercising power in order to spread the cultural values of imperialism among the nations of the third world and to suppress the culture of these nations. In other words, cultural invasion means that a political or economic group invades the cultural foundations of that nation in order to implement its goals. Cultural invasion is carried out to disbelieve the new generation in religion and revolutionary principles (Khalaf zadeh et al., 2021, p. 174). It should be stated that cultural invasion can be defined in two ways. The first type is direct and the second type is indirect. Indirect cultural invasion is such that the western culture works for its own country and according to its own culture through the media, cellphones, internet and satellite networks and works for itself and their goals are limited to the countries of their own region and they do not care about outside of their country. But other countries, seeing this type of lifestyle and western culture, consciously or unconsciously try to become like them, and this cultural attack is of an indirect type. In the direct cultural invasion that has been a disaster, the West and Western culture try to work on a specific region, a specific country and spread and popularize Western culture and subject other countries to a cultural invasion that are also western oriented and believe in the west. The Supreme Leader had predicted this and said: "We raised the issue of cultural invasion a few years ago; Some denied the principle of invasion; They said: what aggression? Then slowly they saw that not only we say, but many non-western countries also raise the issue of cultural invasion and say that the westerners attacked us culturally; Then they saw that the Europeans themselves also say that America invaded us culturally! You must have seen and read what

they said. What kind of cultural invasion have American movies and American books made on us and are affecting our culture. Then finally, thanks to the acceptance of others, our words were accepted by many who did not accept! Cultural invasion is a reality... There are hundreds of audio, visual, internet, written media in the world working with the goal of Iran! Aiming at Iran! Not that they are doing their own thing. There is a time when you assume that the radio of a certain country or the television of a certain country is doing something for itself; This is not the goal here at all; [they make a program] in Farsi language; They adapt it to the time of using Persian language or Iranian element; They monitor our issues and prepare topics and content for their media according to those issues; It is quite clear what the goal is here. They say it themselves; they don't deny it either (Zoheiri, 2016; Zoheiri et al., 2017).

Cultural aggression includes any psychological action and media propaganda that targets the aimed society and forces the rival to pass or defeat without military conflict and opening fire (Wang, 2013, p. 169). The 21st century is the age of media and communication. As McLuhan says, the world is like a village, where people interact with each other and learn about the process of transformation and human evolution. The result of such a situation is cultural exchange and cultural invasion. Cultural exchange is not only reprehensible but also very effective, but unfortunately today we are facing the phenomenon of cultural invasion. Cultural invasion has a long history and is so dangerous and even effective that it is feared that they will achieve their goals if successful. History also testifies to the success of such methods. The Andalusian conspiracy is a concrete example of a cultural attack

against Muslims, in which the Westerners were able to disintegrate Andalusia from within and finally overcome them by expanding the sexual corruption of the Islamic society of that day. Some defined the cultural invasion as follows: a cultural war between two or more cultures takes place by using cultural tools such as advertising, communication, and arts. The elements of cultural invasion are the cultural system of invasion, which is the order of cultural dominance over another cultural system. Second, the cultural system under attack, whose main elements are degraded due to the invasion. The third is the act of cultural invasion. Therefore, the goal of cultural invasion is actually the destruction of the invading culture instead of that which will eventually lead to cultural, political, and economic domination (Jamshidi, 1994, pp. 102-103).

In defining the phenomenon of cultural invasion, the viewpoint of the supreme leader of the revolution is significant. According to him: "In the cultural invasion of a political or economic group, it attacks the cultural foundations of that nation in order to achieve its own goals and capture a nation. In this invasion, new beliefs are brought into the country by force and with the intention of replacing the national culture and beliefs of that nation; And the enemy tries to mislead the youth by spreading false culture. What the enemy is doing from a cultural point of view is not only a cultural invasion, but it should be said that it is a cultural bloodbath and a cultural massacre and looting" (statements of the Supreme Leader in a meeting with the commanders of the Ashura Battalion, July 13<sup>th</sup> 1992). He continues to say that in the cultural attack, the enemy seeks to eradicate the national culture and destroy it. The cultural invasion is quiet like the cultural autocrat and it tries to destroy the

youth from the fanatical adherence to faith which is an important factor in maintaining the Islamic civilization and it appears in the weak phase of a nation.

#### **4. Research findings: cultural invasion in the thought of the supreme leader of the revolution with emphasis on media invasion**

First of all, it should be stated that numerous contents in the field of definitions, elements and indicators as well as cultural characteristics have been stated by the Supreme Leader. Regarding complete and native definitions of culture, he has presented some cases as follows: "Culture is the basis of our work. In fact, culture with all its branches, that is, science, literature, etc., is the soul of the body of any society. " (Hadith Velayat, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2001).

##### **4-1. Cultural invasion and "cultural vandalism"**

Therefore, the issue of culture in a society is a vital issue. Culture is not a luxury for the society; Culture is the basis. If the culture in a society, in the true sense of the word, is a correct culture, with any perception that a person has of a correct culture; Naturally, in our opinion, the right culture is the culture that is consistent with Islamic principles, logic, reason, and wisdom, that society will move towards economic growth, prosperity, freedom, and these things. That is, this good culture will be the basis for the society to become rich, to become a scholar, to gain political power, and to achieve its dreams and goals in terms of freedom and independence" (statements of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution in the meeting with the members of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution January 5<sup>th</sup> 1999). If the culture of a country was a



decadent culture, if it gets economic growth, it will end up being detrimental to it; If it finds prosperity, prosperity will lead it to corruption; If it has freedom, democracy, the right to vote and all these, it will cause chaos and corruption and ruin for it; It means culture; the mentality and rationality of the society, and other things; The rest are human parts. It is clear that the intellect and mind of man is the guide and the direction that divides and determines. If a society becomes rich, but does not have the right mindset, he will waste this wealth, or spend it in a bad place. Culture is a society instead of rationality; Therefore, whatever is invested in culture, it is not much. Well, now I want to make a conclusion from this statement which is accepted and acknowledged by everyone; And that in this sense, cultural management in the society is necessary and clearly it is possible (statements of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution in the meeting with the members of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1998).

In our opinion, the main part of culture is the beliefs and morals of an individual or a society. The behavior of the society, which is part of the general culture and the culture of a nation, originates from the same beliefs. In fact, beliefs or morals shape and create human behavior. Therefore, due to the close relationship between culture and identity, they consider cultural domination to be the most dangerous and complete type of domination; Because it leads to the destruction of the identity of nations. Based on this, the type and method of Western invasion of other countries has gradually turned from economic domination to cultural domination due to the long-term and wide dimensions of culture's impact on cyber space. "Cultural dominance is more dangerous

than economic dominance and political dominance. Why? Because when a nation gains cultural dominance over another nation, the identity of the nation that is under domination is lost. The problem is that a cultural complex in the world, relying on oil, veto power, chemical and biological weapons, atomic bomb, political powers and virtual solutions, wants to impose all its favorite beliefs and frameworks on other nations and countries. This is the reason why a country sometimes suffers from impressionable thinking and taste and is influenced by the cultural products of others.

Of course, not the first-hand products; The second-hand products, copied, scrapped and removed from the market that they consider necessary for a country and a nation, and they inject it into that nation through advertising, and it is shared with that nation as a new idea. This is bigger and more difficult for a nation than any calamity" (Hadith Velayat, 11/14/2000). For this reason, after the end of the imposed war and the beginning of the country's development and reconstruction programs, the issue of cultural invasion and dealing with this phenomenon was brought to the attention of the Supreme Leader, hence the imposition of the culture, customs and heritage of the western colonial governments on Islamic nations through false propaganda and various media tools such as virtual networks, humiliating the culture of Eastern nations and Muslims and instilling European culture with insults and insults to other nations; are among the concerns of His Highness in the topic of cultural invasion. In these statements, the cultural invasion is referred to as a bloody and violent invasion, which shows its destructive dimensions and highlights the need for the awareness of cultural officials and managers, especially cultural planners. Neglecting the

enemy's cultural invasion, neglecting the enemy's ambush, neglecting the enemy's influence in the media and virtual space of the country, carelessness in protecting the treasury; These are our sins, these are our weaknesses" (Hadith Velayat, 08/07/2011).

The Supreme leader knows the danger of cultural invasion to the extent that a revolution takes people away from their main goals and makes them meaningless and destroys self-belief and self-reliance among different strata, especially the youth, and makes them follow western culture and takes them away their own culture. On this basis, they believe that cultural invasion should not be seen in trivial social issues or western lifestyle, but "a bigger cultural invasion is that these have been carried out over many years and through the media, books, virtual space and advertisements they have injected this belief in the Iranian brain that you cannot do things on your own. You have to follow the west and Europe, they don't let us believe in ourselves" (Hadith Velayat, 07/07/2004).

Also, most importantly, Ayatollah Khamenei has recently used the word "cultural vulgarity" in his speeches and meetings. The word "Vulgarity" which is defined in Persian dictionaries as: carelessness, unrestrainedness, etc. Using such words is not very common for a person like Ayatollah Khamenei because he is very much interested in literature and poetry and has always tried to use Persian literature in his terminology. Accordingly, the use of such words shows that he has not found a more appropriate word to describe the cultural situation in the society. Because he believes that cultural contents, including movies, books, computer games, etc., should be monitored and coordinated with Islamic culture.

Therefore, on one hand, he believes that the content of such media should be monitored, and on the other hand, appropriate content for the Islamic community should be produced inside the country. But in today's situation, from his point of view, we see a kind of indifference on the part of government officials, and they have acted passively for fear of being accused of preventing free access to information (statements of the leadership in the meeting of the president and representatives of the Islamic Council, 06/05/2016).

In a general view, the methods of cultural invasion of the West can also be considered from two dimensions, external and internal. In the external dimension, the attackers, with the various facilities and positions they have in the international forums, are trying through their extensive networks of advertising and news companies with titles such as human rights violations, support for terrorism, the existence of suffocation and censorship. The lack of freedom for women, the press, and writers, belligerence, adventure, etc., with well-known and repetitive tactics, draw a distorted and unpleasant image of the opposite culture in the minds of the people of the world, and it is natural that in this way, they choose the evilest and dirtiest tactics. In the internal dimension, the cultural invasion of the West in Islamic countries occurs in the following two ways:

1. Promoting non-Islamic and even anti-Islamic thoughts and ideas, propagating eclectic thoughts, desecrating and insulting sacred things, weakening the religious foundations of the youth regarding some Islamic principles and ideals.
2. Modernism, scientism and extreme rationalism, trying to purify the West and

Westernism, discrediting Islamic science and education on the pretext of not being compatible with modern human knowledge, planning to separate religion from politics, promoting veiling, popularizing Western fashions. promiscuity, production and distribution of highly immoral films, content less music and distribution of vulgar photos on a large scale, production and distribution of alcoholic beverages and narcotics at the community level, publication of immoral, criminal and romantic magazines, Vulgar novel books etc., is only an example of the enemy's conspiracy. All these things are in conflict with Islamic culture. The tools of cultural invasion are not only limited to the above, but all written, oral, public and visual cultures are also other tools of this invasion. Western culture has considered the destruction of Islamic culture by using the above tools. Cases such as doubting the authenticity of Islam, publishing anti-religious books such as the Satanic Verses, negating Islamic holy things, as well as limiting religion and trying to remove religion from the social arena are among these cases (Basiri et al., 2021, pp. 158-159).

In general, cultural invasion as a form of soft war is in a constructive and meaningful interaction with cultural war (Hemat & Farhadi, 2018).

#### **4-2. When did the cultural invasion start in Iran?**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, the cultural invasion clearly started during Reza Shah's reign. That is, a century ago and even more, the preparations for the implementation of the cultural invasion had been prepared, and the enemy provided the ground for the creation and activity of the related intellectual

movement from the Qajar era in Iran, and with intellectuals such as Mirza Malkam Khan, Taghizadeh, Fathali Akhundzadeh, etc., created this field. But their activities did not have a special effect during the Qajar era, and with the Coronation of Reza Shah, the biggest step in this direction was taken. By changing many Iranian traditions including the clothes, he took the first step in implementing this plan, and after him, during the second Pahlavi period, this invasion took different and more dangerous forms (Khamenei, 08/12/1992).

#### **4-3. Enemy's goals in cultural invasion**

##### **4-3-1. Offensive approach towards Islamic values**

According to Ayatollah Khamenei, there is a vast attack against Islam in the world today, which is not directly related to the Islamic Revolution. This attack is wider than the revolution and it is against Islam. Islam meaning the belief of the common people is under attack, let alone revolutionary Islam in Iran. Westerners have felt extremely threatened by Islam. The colonialists had the same feeling towards Islam from the old days, and this was also derived from the things they had seen from Islam (Khamenei, 11/28/1989). They consider the propaganda of the enemy to be calculated, for which they spend a lot of money, so that they consider the propaganda of the enemy to be calculated, for which they spend a lot of money, so that they can make the word they are falsifying appear effective. Their goal with these actions is to separate us from Islam (Khamenei, 11/18/1992). The enemy is hoping to destroy people's beliefs and faith, which is a force to continue the difficult path of life (Khamenei, 07/27/2002).

#### **4-3-2. The goal of establishing an Islamic system**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, the Islamic system is the manifestation of government based on Islamic rules and is one of the main targets of the enemies in their cultural attacks. In this regard, he believes that the enemies have placed their hopes on several things that should be of interest to the nation and political elements; Their first goal is to discourage and disappoint the nation towards the Islamic system (Khamenei, 07/27/2002). From his point of view, the theory of the Islamic government is one of the points that have been targeted by the enemy's attacks; In this regard, there is an intellectual and theoretical attack on the fundamentals of Islam, or on the constitution, or on some prominent parts of the Islamic system, which are the hallmarks of the system (Khamenei, 09/06/2001).

#### **4-3-3. Poisoning the minds of young people**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, the youth of a country are considered as the driving force and the leading forces of that country, who need vitality, health, strength and attachment to work and progress to move forward. In order to destroy this spirit in the younger generations of Iran, the enemy tries to divert them from this path by using various ways. The enemy does not want a young person who is in the workshop, laboratory, university, scientific environment, working, industrial and agricultural environment. Rather, the enemy wants a young person who is engaged in sexual matters and addicted to drugs; A young person who doesn't have the time to think and the ability to work (Khamenei, 06/03/2008).

#### **4-4. Methods of cultural invasion**

From his point of view, one of the most important points, which is more important than knowing the enemy, is knowing the enemy's methods (Khamenei, 11/22/2002). He considers the enemy's methods to be destructive and psychological; not reasoning methods (Khamenei, 02/15/2001) and in the various methods they use (Khamenei, 11/12/2006); Sometimes they use the language of threats, sometimes with ideological expressions, sometimes with military threats, etc. (Khamenei, 02/17/1990). We can point out 4 important and basic methods that the enemy uses in the cultural attack, emphasizing the thoughts of Ayatollah Khamenei:

##### **4-4-1. Belief in faith and religion**

Ayatollah Khamenei considers one of the enemy's methods of cultural invasion to attack and challenge the religious foundations, in which he challenges the issues of the authenticity of Islam, the Qur'an and divine decrees, and the fusion of religion and politics by thinkers and people who have an opinion in the fields of Religion and politics. (Khamenei, 11/22/2002). From his point of view, the enemy is targeting Islamic faith and traits in its all-out attack, and in the shadow of exporting their scientific goods, they are exporting anti-moral and anti-religious culture to our societies (Khamenei, 12/09/1997).

##### **4-4-2. Westernization of the Society**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, western theorists and propaganda are trying to bring back to our society the non-Islamic thinking that ruled Iran before the Islamic Revolution. They raise this goal with pseudo-intellectual theories and as a new opinion.

They say that the students of this generation can no longer be anti-colonial, the era of seeking justice has passed, the era of fighting capitalism is over; Meaning, the Iranian nation should become the provider of America's interests, just like in the past, before the Islamic revolution. They hide these goals under pleasant names such as globalization, transformation and progress (Khamenei, 02/27/2001).

#### **4-4-3. Promotion of unethical behaviors and relationships**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, one of the methods of cultural invasion is that the enemy tries to attract the real soldiers of Islam towards sexual and immoral issues by penetrating the young generation (Khamenei, 07/04/1989) and they to dissuade them from adhering to faith - which is the factor of maintaining a civilization - and implement the same thing they did in "Anadolu's" in Iran. The enemy seeks to drive men and women, young and old, towards immoral sexual relations and behavior and bring the same calamity that has happened to Western countries to Islamic countries and the Islamic Republic (Khamenei, 06/04/1997).

#### **4-4-4. Media attack**

Another important point regarding the phenomenon of cultural invasion is the discussion of the media. The media plays the main role in directing public opinion. In this sense, Ayatollah Khamenei has listed the media as one of the other factors that spread cultural invasion and believes: "These new media tools are both an opportunity and a danger; The danger is that the issues raised by these media may have an effect on the minds of young people and the minds of older people (a meeting of Imam Sadeq Institute managers and professors with

the Supreme leader, 05/22/2017). He emphasizes the issue of resistance against the phenomenon of cultural invasion. In Ayatollah Khamenei's view, a strong, aggressive and logic-based confrontation is the main way to neutralize the plans and conspiracies of the Arrogant Front, and he believes that there should be an aggressive attitude against the West in all fields, including human rights, terrorism and war crimes (Meeting between the chairman and members of the Council of Leadership Experts with the Supreme leader on 03/09/2017). In an open letter to the Iranians outside of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei stressed the importance of the phenomenon of cultural invasion and called the emergence of ISIS as the result of cultural invasion. "Unfortunately, over many years, these roots have gradually penetrated deep into the cultural policies of the West and organized a soft and silent invasion. But in the contemporary era, the western world insists on simulating and assimilating the world's culture by using advanced tools. I consider the imposition of Western culture on other nations and belittling of independent cultures a silent and very harmful violence. Insulting rich cultures and insulting their most respectable parts takes place while the alternative culture has no replacement capacity whatsoever. For example, the two elements of aggression and moral disobedience, which have unfortunately become the main components of Western culture, have lowered its acceptance and status even at its origin. It is with great regret that I have to say that inferior groups like ISIS are the result of such failed connections with imported cultures. If the problem was really an ideological one, similar phenomena should have been observed in the Islamic world before the colonial era, while history testifies to the contrary.

Muslim historical documents clearly show how the intersection of colonialism with an extreme and outcast thinking, that too in the heart of a primitive tribe, planted the seeds of extremism in this region" (Letter of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to the Youth in Western Countries, 11/29/2015). "The goal of this cultural invasion with such dimensions is Islam, the revolution and us" (Supreme Leader's statements 11/28/1989). But after a while, he called the new cultural invasion a huge war against Islam, which has no direct connection with the revolution, and noted: "This invasion is wider than the revolution and against Islam. It is a strange thing that with all its cultural, social and political dimensions, a campaign has been launched against Islam - and even Islam that has influence in the masses of the Algerian people. There is only one exception, and that is Islam dependent on colonial institutions; However, even Islam in the sense of popular belief of the people is under attack; What about pure and revolutionary Islam - and in their interpretation, Iran's Islam - whose situation is now clear" (excerpt of the statements of the Supreme leader on the difference between pure Islam and American Islam, 06/16/2010). Regarding the support of religious people and experts in cultural institutions to counter the cultural invasion of the enemy, he says: "In cultural environments, rely on the religious forces. These are a barrier against cultural invasion" (Supreme leader's statement, 08/11/1996). Therefore, in terms of cultural pathology, Ayatollah Khamenei considers the most important obstacle against the cultural invasion of the enemy to be the cultivation of faithful and God-seeking people and to rely on the authentic Iranian Islamic values and beliefs, and pointing to the distinctive feature of the universality of Islam in his view, he

considers the cultural invasion to be dangerous not only for Iran, but for the entire Islamic world, which will lead to the destruction of the Islamic world in the future (Dashti & Bagheri, 2020).

#### **4-5. Ways to deal with cultural invasion**

After explaining the point that we were subjected to a cultural attack by the enemy, and the enemy has done things and used methods to achieve the desired result, according to Ayatollah Khamenei, the Islamic world and especially Iran should be ready to face the cultural invaders, and by drawing a battle plan and coping strategies, he should go to war with the attacking enemy. The enemy tries to plot, conspire and attack, so we must counter-plot, plot and counter-attack (Khamenei, 11/03/2001). This action is a negative and defensive action (Khamenei, 08/14/1991). The two basic ways to deal with the enemy are as follows:

##### **4-5-1. Knowing the enemy correctly**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, before taking any action to confront the enemy, the first step is to get a correct understanding of them (03/21/2007). We must know that the enemy has planned policies against us and has plans to defeat the Islamic system (Khamenei, 03/21/2007). So we have to predict which way the enemy wants to enter. If this prediction is made, when social events occur, it will be possible to deal with them, and people will no longer unknowingly and unwittingly contribute to the causes of that phenomenon (Khamenei, 01/03/2008). In this regard, we should consider what the enemy is sensitive to, we should also show sensitivity towards those issues and know that the enemy wants to penetrate us in this way (Khamenei, 08/29/1990).



#### **4-5-2. Rational and logical defense of Islam**

From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, Islam is real and the Holy Qur'an is a real and fundamental barrier against the enemy. Belief in Islam is what makes the arrow of the enemy's attack not hit the target (Khamenei, 12/14/1996). Since the culture war is a theoretical battle, scientific and intellectual work must be done in this battle. That is, the custodians of the field of thought and opinion must take measures to produce, compile and explain thoughts (Khamenei, 09/06/2001). Therefore, we should feel a duty towards the thoughts and ideals of the Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (Khamenei, 02/03/1998). They consider the intellectual justification of the people as a correct cultural work (Khamenei, 08/14/1991).

#### **4-6. Ways to deal with cultural invasion and vandalism in the media**

Ayatollah Khamenei believes in dealing with the cultural invasion in the media, "If you want the art of this country to grow and rise, rely on the young and faithful artist." He can defend Islam, the revolution and this country. But the director or producer who makes the film, thinks in advance that I will include this point in this film, in order to target one of the religious foundations of this system, which does not defend Islam and the revolution. From the beginning, when he makes this film or writes this story, his goal is to question the efficiency of the Islamic system and say: This Islamic system is not efficient. Of course, we have not decided to introduce those who we think are not serving or are betraying to the law one by one; No. There are still many things to be done in this country in the field of culture. I mean to rely on the forces of faith in cultural environments. These are a barrier

against cultural invasion" (statements in a group meeting of cultural agents, 08/12/1992). "Today, expenses are being spent so that the thinking of the Western government, in its European sense, becomes global and widespread in the world. They lie; With films, advertisements and various methods, they reflect things that are not true, to magnify and beautify and make appearances, as truth in the world to absorb thoughts. This is the most effective thing that economic and political power centers can do. These are also reflected in our minds; But we must pay attention not to be influenced" (statements at the meeting of the academic staff of the Imam Khomeini Congress: 01/24/2001). "We should not be influenced by the false models of the West and we should realize and stick to our own religious and noble models. Everyone should feel that the responsibility of creating a new Islamic civilization is on their shoulders; And one of the limits and weaknesses of this work is the confrontation with Western civilization, so that it is not imitated" (statements in the meeting of the youth of North Khorasan Province: 10/14/2012). "The power of security, espionage and propaganda of various security and propaganda services in the world should not be underestimated. Everyone feels this - now maybe those who were less proficient in various categories will see less - do not underestimate Hollywood. Do not underestimate the power of western art and the very precise layout of advertising letters in the western world. All these great forces, in addition to endless wealth, in addition to huge political and propaganda machines, are working against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Today, you will not find any other country in the world that is the target of such attacks. And the Islamic Republic is resisting" (statements at a group meeting

of the country's scientific elite: 10/28/2009). "It should be mentioned that this state of chastity, decency and modesty, which is natural for Iranians, is also recommended by Islam. We must rule this in the sports environment and in other environments. This will be a spiritual, cultural and sports space; The same thing will happen as you say, in order to face the cultural invasion, we must stick to our own culture, and it is completely true" (statements in a group meeting with youth, 04/27/1998).

Finally, in general, the ways to deal with cultural influence and invasion in the field of culture and art (cinema and media) can be stated as follows:

1. Creating national self-confidence through the display of the authority, unity and security of the country by the responsible government institutions, especially the radio and television.
2. Showing convergence and solidarity as a prominent cultural characteristic of Iranians, especially against foreign enemies.
3. Highlighting the commonalities of ethnic identity with Iran's national identity.
4. Attention to the Iranian-Islamic style in life according to the emphasis of the Supreme Leader.
5. Providing awareness in the field of divisive satellite networks.
6. Pay special attention to Iranian art, especially music, which has a high power of attraction among young people.

## 5. Conclusion

Cultural issues and topics have a high place in the vision of Ayatollah Khamenei. With the leadership of Ayatollah Khamenei, according to national, regional and international changes, this matter entered new stages. After failing to achieve their goals in Iran through military, political and economic means, the enemies and rivals of the Islamic Republic put cultural issues and debates in the direction of internal transformation in the form of soft war and cultural influence at the top of their work program and applied and announced policies. At the very beginning of his leadership, Ayatollah Khamenei has considered this issue with special insight and intelligence, so that during the last three decades, he announced most of the slogans and policies of the country based on the importance of the issue of culture to the trustees and relevant institutions. The cultural situation in the internal and external policies of the Islamic system can undoubtedly be defined and described on the basis of communication. In other words; If "cultural priority" is considered as a special situation in the legal system and strategic planning, this issue is undoubtedly possible on the basis of communication. What is communication in an age that basically has a technical and media identity, it is so complicated and hidden in the veil of norms that it is not easy to get past its veil. In his wise recommendations, Ayatollah Khamenei has continuously emphasized the priority of culture over economy and politics, and he has made special orders regarding the special attention of officials and managers to the culture sector. In his statements, the undeniable truth is that it is necessary to pay attention to indicators and factors that strengthen cultural security, including capacity building and efficient management in dealing with cultural invasion; It has provided many



opportunities to introduce and present cultural abilities and capabilities, create and promote social capital through social awareness and education, and finally reproduce cultural soft power at the disposal of nations and governments. Therefore, by emphasizing the words of Ayatollah Khamenei, the necessity of

continuous planning and coordination due to protection from religious, identity and cultural damage requires that a centralized focal point for policy-making, decision-making and organized coordination in dealing with cultural invasion, especially in the media space of the country should be made.

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