

# Research Journal of Pharmaceutical, Biological and Chemical Sciences

## A Review on Healthy Cultural Efforts.

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### ABSTRACT

The term 'cultural hegemony' is a compound noun which was posed by Ayatollah Khamenei to oppose to the extensive advertisements made by the mass media of the world's superpowers. That's due to the fact that today, global advertisement moves towards subordinating politics, arts and economics to culture. It aims to put pressure on national cultures and to impede any efforts against colonialization. To stand against these pressures every attempt should be made in accordance with the goals of the Islamic Republic as well as those values which are created and continue to be based on the same Islamic rules and values. Indirect methods should be adopted to make different cultural efforts. Such efforts are not limited to those targeted at an Islamic or religious preachment which would explicitly publicize certain concepts. Instead, they are applicable to many levels and can cover a myriad of planning and programs. To this aim, we collected the key issues in some of the preachments made by ayatollah Khamenei concerning cultural efforts and cultural hegemony.

**Keywords:** Health, Culture, Medical Sciences

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## INTRODUCTION

Today one general and common goal sought for by the world's superpowers including the U.S., Europe and China [to a less degree] is fighting against Islamization. The news, the press and mass media manipulated by these superpowers attest to this fact. The term 'cultural hegemony' is a compound noun posed by ayatollah Khamenei to elaborate on this conflict. There are certain goals and values in the Islamic Republic which form the basis of this national/political system and its prospects. In fact the aim of these cultural efforts is to impede any deviation from these values and goals which are quite vivid. They include: religious orientation of people, strong bonds between people and the system and its basics, maintaining the revolutionary and high spirits of people, not losing hope or getting frustrated, maintaining the bonds and trust between people and their government and so on. However, this issue does not imply that all media working inside the country as well as all their efforts with this regard are restricted to the content of such religious and Islamic preachments. Nor are they expected to merely publicize those basics and concepts. Instead, it aims to make use of common advertising methods at the service of Islam and Islamic revolution. These methods are in fact indirect such as an optimal use of art and artistic styles [1]. The building blocks of a cultural effort are hard to find. In other words, it is dissimilar to construction work which has a particular and predetermined budget and facilities to start with and expect certain results. Finding a reliable architect in cultural efforts is demanding indeed. In other words, you need to work harder to proceed with a cultural aim and effort. You would firstly need to prioritize different tasks which need to be done to achieve your cultural goal. In this prioritization you ought to consider global circumstances since today all advertisements are moving towards subordinating politics, arts and economics to culture. They aim to put pressure on national and local cultures so as to stop standing against colonialization. Every individual is characterized by a certain culture which, if modified, can let that person be entirely manipulated by others. Those in charge of cultural affairs should seek for production. In fact, they are supposed to produce cultural products. It is hard to find a proper cultural content which has to be done after the act of prioritization. Formalities are to be avoided in proceeding cultural affairs. Showing off cultural issues are not only useless but are also detrimental. In terms of culture, one should seek for original and realistic content as is the primary need of the country today. In the holy prayer of Makarem-ol-Akhlagh it is stated: "Lord, let me work at the service of affairs about which I will be questioned on the Doom's Day" (Sajjadiye sahf, 20<sup>th</sup> prayer) [2]. Cultural efforts have either positive or negative loads. That is exactly why this field is very significant. That is, every effort can either be at the service of the goals or quite contrary to them. With this concern, Ayatollah Khamenei has stated: "Cultural efforts are like Damocles' sword. If they have a proper content, they would begin to reform and correct a society. Otherwise, they would deviate and disrupt it [3]. Considering culture should be always a key issue at all levels. All planning should be done corresponding with cultural directions [4].

### Key issues in cultural efforts

1. Learning: a great many prayers which have appeared on different occasions and have been recommended to be read should not be merely read. The reason why they have been emphasized is first of all to get closer to God. Such precious assets are in the form of prayers and contain original and strong Islamic knowledge which is hard to find in quotations. One is supposed to learn from them. In fact, in order to disseminate Islamic knowledge it is not enough for these prayers to be read out in praying ceremonies. They need to be restated in other terms which are clear, precise and calculated so that everyone can understand and learn them [1]. Besides, there hides a key issue in every word of Quran. Therefore, cultural efforts should be based on the holy Quran, Nahjolbalaqa, Sajadiye Sahife, and other similar religious sources. Moreover, mosques are suitable sites for cultural efforts. If prayers in mosques are accompanied with artistic and cultural efforts they would strongly affect the audience [5].
2. Cultural efforts are intermingled with art. This could help to elucidate what one has in mind. In other words, using artistic concepts in cultural efforts can help to better articulate the above-mentioned goals. What we mean by art is not to subordinate or abuse it. It needs to be of an artistic and effective value. Unfortunately, the artistic works which are used today as a company for cultural efforts are not professional or of a high quality. They have nothing to do with content. Neither do they satisfy the artistic nature of the audience. Since a cultural effort is specialized, you need to appeal to experts in this field so as to achieve the best artistic intervention [1].
3. The happy environment created by art should be void of moral deviation. That is to say that, creating a delightful atmosphere and attraction should not mean to downgrade basic beliefs and values [1].

4. Orientations should be kept untouched while making cultural efforts [1].
5. Experts employed should not only be efficient in their job but need to be also reliable. That is because at the present time, we are not able to make a good use of all existing ideologies in our country. In case, a wrong person finds its way to enter a system, especially in an imperceptible way, one could easily trespass certain borders [1]. In order to avoid this, only efficient and talented individuals should be singled out and employed [1, 3]. Among their characteristics are a searching spirit and critical view along with feeling of responsibility [4].
6. Consultations need to be done with individuals who know Islam, people, their needs and art well, and are also stable in their orientations [4, 5].
7. Emphasis should be on using useful and propitious cultural content.
8. Criteria are needed to set the basis of evaluations, criticisms and decision-making. This criterion is virtue which is not equal to becoming a slave of one's ego. This criterion should be permanently considered in favoritism, opposition and conflicts, criticism or appreciation. In case this criterion is abode by, criticism, favoritism and appreciation can be done appropriately [4]. Islam is to some extent intermingled with personal tastes which is perceived as wrong [1].
9. Among key issues which should be considered in planning a cultural effort is the target population. As an instance, playing music on TV when people show interest in it is not forbidden if it does not go to extremes. However, at dawn when people get up to pray and have sahari (meal eaten to prepare for a day's fasting) nobody needs nor likes to hear music [1]. Therefore, a key factor in cultural efforts is considering people's essential needs [5].
10. Iran's neighboring countries at the east, west and especially north take certain steps to attract people who live in those regions and have a similar language or culture. These efforts should be carefully monitored in order to hinder probable conflicts [1].
11. In cultural efforts, attention should be paid to appropriateness of context and the task at hand. If there is a mismatch of temporal/spatial conditions and a cultural effort, not only it will fail to be effective but it can even backfire [5].
12. Efforts should be long-lasting. Planning should take into account all sources, the significance of a plan and its costs [5].
13. Misleading religious icons which prevail in society need to be corrected. The time and energy spent on such efforts should be at the service of an actual dissemination of religion, instead of iconic and showy practices which are theme-less [5].
14. Cultural efforts require a prioritization fitted to the existing status. The goal should be a conveyance of messages and values. For instance, if a school lacks a prayer's room, priority would go to build one [5].

#### CONCLUSION

The holy Quran in the 136<sup>th</sup> verse of Nesa surah states: "You who have faith in God, be faithful to God". This verse is addressed to those who are moving in the right pathway, They are advised to move forward. In other words, they are asked to accompany others along this pathway [5]. According to what is mentioned in this verse, accompanying others which is the core of any cultural effort is essential in Islam. Therefore, one needs to acquire knowledge of how to do so and what rules lie at its basis. Then in accordance with different temporal and spatial needs and following virtue one is supposed to take a step all throughout the way with the help of experts in the field.

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