

CDL comment: So many facets that people choose not to wake up to



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THE MULLAHS MOUNT A CRUSADE AGAINST THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Posted by: Reza Parchizadeh May 7, 2016

The regime of the mullahs has mounted a crusade against the English language which it considers to be the instrument of “imperialism” and a weapon for the “Cultural Invasion” of Iran by the West. In a typical move, the Supreme Leader initiated the attack, and an array of Islamic Republic officials followed suit with a salvo.



In a meeting with a group of schoolteachers in Tehran on May 2, 2016 the Teacher’s Day according to the Islamic Republic official calendar, Ali Khamenei accused the English language of being a tool of Western infiltration. By saying that other countries block infiltration attempts of foreign languages, he demanded for a stop of the English language’s “unwholesome dissemination” by the Iranian educational system.

Khamenei emphasized that “we are not working alone in an empty arena when educating our future generation. We are haunted by an opponent called ‘the international domination system’” which is composed of “the United States, Zionism, and some other arrogant powers.” According to Khamenei, “that system wants to shape the thought, culture, worldview and taste of the future generations of other nations according to its wishes so that eventually their elites, politicians and influential individuals act to the liking of that system.”

Khamenei claimed that “we have had no plan to counter that system so far, and thus have left the arena at the disposal of the invading culture.” He blamed the Iranian educational system for that vulnerability. By saying that the present educational system has been adopted from Europe and since then has not been modified, Khamenei took to task the Iranian educational system as being “old and shabby.” He then urged the Ministry of Education and Cultivation to create a proper cultural base for the realization of his ideal of “Resistance Economy.”

Following Khamenei’s remarks, a number of high officials of the Iranian regime in a concerted effort attacked

the English language. Ahmad Alam-Alhoda, the Supreme Leader's Envoy in Khorasan Razavi Province, said that "not only English is not the language of science but it is the language of ignorance and mischief... It was England's vile mischief that introduced English as the language of science... No one regards translations from English as scientific sources. Who says English is the language of science?!"

Mohammad Reza Naghdi, commander-in-chief of the basij militia, said that "now that the British bayonet has become dull, the Old Fox [England] wants to push its nasty language on other nations through its minions and intelligence services... It tries to do so by falsely claiming that English is the language of science." Mohammad Nabavian, MP, said that "that we should regard English as the means of development is not only unscientific but also ridiculous." He then called upon the Islamic Holy Scripture as witness against English by saying that "the Quran has forbidden us from popularizing the language and words of the infidels."

Last but not least, Kazem Saddighi, one of the number of Tehran's "Temporary Friday Prayer Imams" close to Khamenei, criticized the Iranian educational system and called for an "injection of the blood of the martyrs to schoolbooks." Saddighi complained that "the structure of the Iranian educational system is the product of the West and as such does not suit the revolutionary mood of Iran." He then asserted that "we need to bring about a fundamental change to our educational system if we want to be able to put up a proper resistance to the enemy."

In an unremitting xenophobic mood since the 1979 Revolution, the regime of the mullahs has constantly been in fear of the so-called Western "Cultural Invasion" of Iran. Following the barefaced Cultural Revolution of the early years of the Islamic Revolution, the regime has been conducting a creeping second Cultural Revolution in the name of "Islamizing the Universities" since the mid-2000s. The process specifically targets humanities and whoever has any affiliation with them, whether in academia or in the public sphere. That includes university professors, students, writers, journalists and cultural activists who have been facing various "penalties" for their activities.

The process has accelerated since the 2009 demonstrations and protests as the regime considers Western cultural influence conducive to unrest and possibly revolution in Iran. Most recently, the fear of an "American infiltration" of Iran after the Nuclear Deal has driven the regime's xenophobia to absurd extremes. Previously, the regime had concentrated its "revolutionary" efforts mostly on academia. Now it is making every effort to put not only schools but also kindergartens on its agenda of Cultural Revolution. The attack on the English language comes as the latest in a chain of attacks against any sign of Western cultural presence in Iran. It certainly won't be the last.

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