

International Quds Day: Re-emergence of a Unifying Social Order for the Ummah



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Abstract

It has been a full thirty years since Imam Khumayni first consecrated the last Friday of the month of Ramadhan as “Quds Day” in a gesture of solidarity with the Palestinian people under the Zionist regime. Today, Quds Day has become an international phenomenon with marches and demonstrations held in many countries of the world. This paper begins by affirming the connection between the holy lands of Palestine and the advent of the Mahdi (‘atfs) as found within the hadith literature.

It then examines Imam Khumayni’s concept of intizar—one characterized by a dynamic activism—and its role in the declaration of International Quds Day. Through the examination of internet sources, the paper surveys the present status of Quds Day, which seems to have gained momentum both qualitatively and quantitatively, overcoming ethnic and sectarian boundaries. The author concludes with an analysis of the role of IT in the acceptance of Quds Day as a bona fide holiday in the Muslim world.

Keywords: al-Mahdi, Qud’s Day, Imam Khumayni, Palestine, cyberspace, intizar, social order.

Introduction

The victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 not only marks the triumph of the Islamic movement in Iran, but also heralds the dawn of a new phase in the Palestinian struggle against Israel. Barely a half year after the establishment of the Islamic government, the great leader of the Islamic Revolution, founder of the Islamic Republic, and magnificent idol-breaker of the twentieth century, Imam Khumayni (may his soul be sanctified), made the historic announcement consecrating the last Friday of the majestic month of fasting, Ramadhan, as ‘Quds¹ Day’ to signify the global Muslims’ gesture of solidarity and support for all the oppressed peoples of the world as epitomized by the Palestinian people under the Zionist regime.

In his first message on the occasion of the auspicious day, the Imam of the ummah reveals that Quds day is a global day; thus, a day not exclusively for Quds. For him, it is a day of confrontation for nations that have been under tyranny. Accordingly, it is a day when the oppressed should become equipped against the oppressors and “they should rub their noses in the dirt.”²

Al-Quds and the Mahdi’s (‘atfs) Advent

Al-Quds and the Mahdi’s (‘atfs)³ Advent

The holy city of Quds or Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque or Bayt al-Muqaddas/Madqis feature prominently in the events before and after the reappearance of the Imam of the Age (‘atfs). In the corpus of Islamic traditions (ahadith), Mecca is mentioned as the point of origin of his uprising and then Iraq—the city of Kufah in particular—as the military-political capital of his government. It is reported that the last Imam (‘atfs) will march towards Sham (Syria) and liberate Bayt al-Muqaddas.

The Commander of the Faithful ('a) said: "...Then, with a thousand ships, hadhrat al-Mahdi ('atfs) will leave the city of Qati' for the holy city of Quds, and from Acre, Tyre, Gaza, and 'Asqalan⁴ he will enter the land of Palestine. He will take out its wealth and booty. Thereafter, hadhrat al-Mahdi ('atfs) will enter Quds al-Sharif where he will dismount and stay until the coming out of al-Dajjal (the Anti-Christ)."⁵

In reply to a person who said, "I want to ask something from you, which has not been asked by anyone before me and will never be asked by anyone after me," Imam al-Sadiq ('a) said, "Perhaps, you want to ask about hashr and nashr." He said, "By the One Who appointed Muhammad as the giver of glad tidings and as the warner, yes." He ('a) said, "The hashr of all people is toward the Bayt al-Muqaddas (in Jerusalem) except that of a mausoleum in a mountainous land to be called 'Qom' and divine teachings will be part of their features." While half-standing, the man asked, "O son of the Messenger of Allah! Does it pertain to the people of Qom?" The Imam ('a) replied, "Yes, it pertains to them and anyone who shares their conviction and words."⁶

Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah said:

An army will set out from Khurasan that will wear black belts and white shirts. One of the army's vanguards will be the commander called Shu'ayb ibn Salih or Salih ibn Shu'ayb who is from the tribe of Bani Tamim. They will defeat the soldiers of Sufyani and drive them away; they will arrive in Bayt al-Muqaddas and pave the ground for the government of hadhrat al-Mahdi.⁷

Ka'b said, "A man from Bani Hashim will reside in Bayt al-Muqaddas. The number of his security forces is twelve thousand." In another hadith he said, "The number of his guards is thirty-six thousand, and twelve thousand will be stationed at the beginning of every highway leading toward Bayt al-Muqaddas."⁸

Regarding the conquest of Hind, Ka'b said:

The ruler in Bayt al-Muqaddas will dispatch an army to Hind and conquer it. Then that army will enter the territory of Hind and it will send the treasures there to the ruler of Bayt al-Muqaddas. He will also embellish it (Hind) and the kings of Hind will be brought to him as captives. The eastern and western lands will be opened for them and the forces will be present in Hind till the emergence of al-Dajjal.⁹

Hudhayfah reported that the Prophet (S) said: "Tahir ibn Asma' fought with the Children of Israel and took them in captivity, setting Bayt al-Muqaddas on fire while taking the amount of one thousand seven (or nine) hundred ships of gold and jewellery from there to the city of Rome. Hadhrat al-Mahdi ('atfs) will definitely take them out from that city and return them to Bayt al-Muqaddas."¹⁰

Ka'b said, "The days will not end until a man from the Quraysh will descend in Bayt al-Muqaddas ... and war will also cease to exist."¹¹

The Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Conception of 'Waiting' (Intizar)

The Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran's conception of 'waiting' (intizar) is characterized by activism and dynamism. In one of his speeches—barely a year prior to his demise—Imam Khomeini (r) ¹² mentioned the different conceptions of 'waiting' and indicated which of them is the correct one, refuting an objection against it:

Some understand waiting for the advent in this way: that they would sit and supplicate in the mosque, at the husayniyyah, and at home, and pray to God for the advent of the Imam of the Time (may God's peace be upon him). They are righteous people as they have such a belief. In fact, among them whom I used to know before was a very righteous man; he had bought a horse, he had a sword, and he was waiting for hadhrat Sahib (may God's peace be upon him). They used to perform their religious duties too—enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong; however, it was only that. Apart from this, they did not do any other things; they neither thought of doing such an important work.

Another group was saying that waiting for the advent means that we should not be concerned with what is happening in the world, what is happening to the nations, and what is happening to our nation—we should not be concerned with these things. We are doing our duty. For preventing these affairs, His Holiness himself, God willing, will come and set them right; we have no other duty. This is our duty: to pray for him to come and not to mind whatever is happening in the world or in our own country. They constitute another group; they [too] were people who were righteous.

One group was saying, "Well, the world must be full of sin in order for His Holiness to come—hence, we should not forbid what is evil, nor should we enjoin what is good so that the people would do whatever they want; once sins become many, the advent would become near."

Another group was more extreme than this; they were saying, "Sins must be committed—people should be urged to commit sins so that the world would be filled with tyranny and oppression, and His Holiness (may God's peace be upon him) would come." This was another group, which was [most] misguided among the groups of course. They were narrow-minded individuals; they were misguided who committed those acts to attain the [perceived] objectives.

Yet another group was saying, "Any government that is established at the period of occultation is false [illegitimate] and is contrary to Islam." They were arrogant. Those who were not actors were arrogant on account of some fabricated traditions that state, "Any banner that is hoisted prior to the appearance of His Holiness is a false [illegitimate] one." They were imagining that any government [that is established] according to the manner of those [mentioned] traditions—that anyone hoisting the banner with the banner of al-Mahdi, in the name of "Mahdism" [—is false and illegitimate].

Now, let us assume that there is really such a tradition. Does it mean that we have no more duties [to

perform]? That is, is it not against the expediency of Islam and against the Qur'an that we have to indulge in sin in order for the Prophet to come and for hadhrat Sahib to come? What would hadhrat Sahib come for? It is to spread justice, to consolidate the government, and to eliminate corruption. It is contrary to the noble verses of the Qur'an that we should refrain from forbidding what is evil; that we should refrain from enjoining what is good; that we should spread sins so that His Holiness would come. His Holiness would come for what?

As His Holiness comes, he will do the same things. Now, what else is our duty? Does it mean that a person has no duty, or that his duty is to call on the people to indulge in corruption? According to the opinion of this assembly—some of whom are actors while others are ignorant—we have to sit [idly] and pray for Saddam. Whoever is cursing Saddam has done it contrary to the affair [of waiting for the advent] since His Holiness' coming will be delayed! And everybody should pray for Saddam so as to increase this corruption. We should pray for America, we should pray for the Soviet Union, we should pray for their puppets such as Saddam and the like—so that they would fill the world with tyranny and oppression and His Holiness would come?! After the coming of His Holiness, what would he do? His Holiness will come to eliminate tyranny and oppression—the same thing that we are doing—and we pray that there should be tyranny and oppression?! His Holiness will eliminate the same things. In case we could—in case we have power—we must act and eliminate all the tyrannies and oppressions in the world. It is our religious duty, but we are incapable of doing so. What is [certain] is that His Holiness will fill the world with justice; it is not that you have to discard your duty; it is not that you have no more duty to perform.

We do have a duty. One who says that government is not necessary is implying that there should be chaos. If there is no government in a certain country for a year—if there is no system in a country—a great amount of corruption will fill that country in an unprecedented manner. One who says that there should be no government is implying that there should be chaos. Everybody should kill one another and everybody should oppress one another so that His Holiness would come. His Holiness would come for what? It is in order to eliminate it [corruption].

This is a clever man. If he is not a foolish person, is not spiteful, and has not done it for political motives to deceive us and not to mind them anymore and for them to come and do whatever they like, then he must be an extremely stupid person! 13

The Imam (r) also condemned the superpowers for promoting, or at least, tolerating a wrong conception of 'waiting' in this manner:

But the issue is that it has been politically motivated—in the same way as they had inculcated the following on the nations, on the Muslims, and on the other strata of the societies in the world: "Politics is none of your business; mind your own business, and entrust whatever is related to politics to the emperors." Well, they would like to ask God for the people to remain unaware and entrust politics to the government, to the oppressor, to America, to the Soviet Union, and the like, as well as their

puppets—those who would take away everything we possess, those who would take away the possessions of Muslims, and those who would take away the possessions of the downtrodden—and then we have to sit down [idly] and say that there should be no government; this is a silly statement, but it has been politically motivated. These unwary individuals were deceiving in saying: “Do not mind politics. Government belongs to us. Go to your mosques; stand and perform prayer! What are you going to do with these (political) things?”

Those who were saying that any banner cannot be hoisted and government cannot be established imagined that any government can be established; (while the fact is that) it is repugnant to (the concept of) waiting for the advent. They do not understand what they are saying. They have been inculcated to make these statements. They do not know what they are uttering. To have no government means that all the people take the life of one another, kill one another, strike one another, eliminate one another, and act contrary to the text of the divine verses. Even if we assume that they have two hundred narrations [ahadith] on this subject, we will throw all of them against the wall because they are contradictory to the verses of the Qur'an.¹⁴

If there is a narration stating that we have to say that forbidding evil should not be done, it must be thrown against the wall. This kind of narration is impractical [as it is fabricated]. And these ignoramuses do not know what they are saying when they claim, “Any government is a [false and illegitimate] government”! In fact, I heard some of these people saying, “Well, with the existing condition that is in Iran now, we should no more engage in moral purification.” These statements are wrong! It is no longer needed now. The teacher of ethics should definitely be in an environment where all the people are corrupt; where all the liquor houses are open, and I should say, where all centers of prostitution are open! If there is a decent place, moral purification is no more needed there. It cannot be; it is wrong! These [statements] are things which, if not only politically motivated, are silly ones. However, they know what they are saying. They want to sidetrack us.

Of course, filling the world with justice is something that we cannot do. If we can, we will do, but since we cannot do it then he (Imam al-Mahdi) has to come. Now, the world is full of oppression. If we could stop oppression, then we will do so; it is our duty. It is required by Islam and the Qur'an. It has been our duty to act and do everything we can. But we could not do so. Since we could not do so, he has to come to do it. But we have to facilitate the work. Facilitating the work makes it become nearer. We will perform the work such that the world will be fitted for the coming of His Holiness (may God's peace be upon him). At any rate, these afflictions that have been experienced by Muslims and been exacerbated by foreign policies [of the arrogant powers] are all meant to plunder the Muslims and demolish their dignity; and they believed it so much [though it is false].

Now, perhaps, some also believe that there should be no government—that government should be [established] at the time of hadhrat Sahib, and any government not at the time of hadhrat Sahib is false—that is, there should be chaos and the people of the world should be at logger heads with one

another so as for His Holiness to come and set it right! We will set it right so as for His Holiness to come.¹⁵

As a manifestation of this positive ‘waiting’ espoused by the Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution in a macro-state level, he initiated many bold steps in paving the ground of the reappearance of the Imam of the Age (‘atfs).

These bold steps include: (1) the introduction of the theory of ‘guardianship of the jurist’ (wilayat al-faqih), (2) the founding and heading the Islamic Republic as the Supreme Leader and ‘jurist-guardian’ (wali al-faqih), (3) the declaration of Rabi’ al-Awwal 12–17 as ‘International Islamic Unity Week’ and the opening of ‘the Forum for the Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought’ (Dar al-Taqrib bayn al-Madhahib al-Islami), (4) the revival of the Abrahamic Hajj and the rite of ‘disavowal of the polytheists’ (bara’ah al-mushrikin), and (5) the consecration of the last Friday of the fasting month of Ramadhan as ‘International Quds Day’.

International Quds Day

To fully grasp the importance of the declaration of the last Friday of Ramadhan as Quds Day, it is necessary to quote at full length the first message of the champion of the oppressed, which lays down the cornerstone of the Imam’s conception of, and philosophy behind, the declaration; the subsequent messages are based on these declarations. Thereafter, we will analyze the implication of the key points of the statements towards the Palestinian Question.

The Declaration of International Quds Day

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

For many years I have been warning Muslims of the menace posed by the usurper Israel which has recently intensified her savage raids on our Palestinian brothers and sisters. Bent on the destruction of Palestinian freedom fighters, Israel has been ceaselessly bombing their houses and homes in Southern Lebanon.

I call on the Muslims of the world, as well as on all Islamic governments, to join forces to cut down this usurper and its supporters. I invite Muslims all over the globe to consecrate the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadhan—which is a ‘day of fate’ and which could also become the day on which the fate of the Palestinian people might be determined—as ‘Quds Day’ and to proclaim the international solidarity of Muslims in support of the legitimate rights of the Muslim people of Palestine.

I pray to the Almighty for the victory of the Muslims over the infidels.

May peace and mercy of God be upon you.

Ruhullah al-Musawi al-Khumayni
Ramadhan 1399 AH (August 7, 1979)

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Quds day is a global day. It is not a day exclusively for Quds. It is a day when the oppressed confront the oppressors. It is a day of confrontations for nations that have been under the tyranny of the American government and other oppressors. It is a day when the oppressed should become equipped against the oppressors and they should rub their noses in the dirt. It is a day when committed individuals are preferred over hypocrites. Dedicated people consider today as Quds day and act as they are obliged. The hypocrites—as well as those who are secretly acquainted with the superpowers and are friendly with Israel—are indifferent today or do not allow the nations to demonstrate on this day.

Quds day is a day when the fate of the oppressed nations must be determined. Oppressed nations should make their presence known to the oppressors, just like Iran rose up and defeated [their oppressors] and will [continue to] defeat. All nations should rise up and throw these germs of corruption in the garbage. Quds day is a day when these followers of Iran's past regime and these corrupt plot-making regimes and superpowers in other places, especially in Lebanon, should know their assignment. It is a day when we and they should exert our efforts to liberate Quds and save our Lebanese brothers.

It is a day when we have to rescue the oppressed from the claws of the oppressors. It is a day when the Islamic society should make its presence known to all superpowers and their pulp, whether in Iran or other places. It is a day when these intellectuals who have formed a relation with America or American agents should be warned—warned that if they don't quit this interfering, they will be suppressed...

Quds day is the day when superpowers should be warned that they must leave the oppressed alone and sit back and take their own place. Israel has become the enemy of humanity; on a daily basis, it starts a new uproar setting our brothers in Southern Lebanon on fire. Israel should try to understand that its masters don't have any power any longer. They should choose isolation. They should cut their covetousness of Iran and take their hands off all Islamic countries.

Quds day is the day of announcing such an issue. It is the declaration that the satanic superpowers want to isolate the Islamic nations and impose themselves on the scene of action. Quds day is a day when their wishes should be chopped and they should be warned that those times are gone.

The day of Quds is the day of Islam. All Muslims must be warned and must understand how strong their spiritual and economic powers are. Muslims are one billion people, supported by God, Islam, and the power of faith. Why should they be afraid? ...

All the governments of the world must know that Islam is invincible. Islam and the Qur'an will conquer the world. A true religion should be a divine religion. Islam is a divine religion and thus must be promoted throughout the whole world.

The Day of Quds is such a day and announces such a goal, announcing the progress of the Muslims all over the world. The Day of Quds is not only the Day of Palestine, but it is a day of Islam as well. It is the day of Islamic government. It is the day that the banner of Islam is to be flown in all countries and the Muslims must show the superpowers that they cannot influence Islamic countries any longer. They must realize that the day of Quds is Islam's and the Prophet's Day—the day that we must muster all our powers when all of the Muslims must come out of isolation and stand against the foreigners with all of their strength...

The Day of Quds is the day that we will realize which regime and persons are cooperating with international conspirators and thus are opposing Islam. Those who do not participate in these demonstrations are opposing Islam and thus are in agreement with Israel. Those who participate in the demonstrations on this day are responsible people and are in stride with Islam and thus oppose Israel.

The Day of Quds is a day to distinguish between truth and falsehood. I ask God Almighty to give victory to Islam over all of the other faiths and support the deprived in order to defeat the arrogant—"those who cause deprivation." I implore God to free our Muslim brothers in Palestine and South Lebanon and everywhere in the world from the oppressors, deprivers, and plunderers.

Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of God and the Imams of the Muslims.¹⁶

A close scrutiny of the foregoing message would bring to light the following points with paramount import to the Palestinian issue:

First of all, by stressing that "For many years I have been warning Muslims of the menace posed by the usurper Israel which has recently intensified her savage raids on our Palestinian brothers and sisters," Imam Khomeini's concern to the issue is not a new one born out of the establishment of the Islamic Republic. It is not meant to be an empty rhetoric aimed at winning the heart of the Arabs or at least the Palestinians towards the Islamic political establishment in Tehran. Instead, it has been a priority agenda for him as a concerned Muslim worthy of the name long before the Islamic Revolution.¹⁷ Secondly, though "all Islamic governments" are mentioned, undoubtedly Imam Khomeini's invitation to consecrate the last Friday of the fasting month is mainly addressed to the Muslim masses of the world as suggested by the remarkable repetitions "I have been warning Muslims," "I call on the Muslims of the world," and "I invite all Muslims all over the globe." It shows that he is pinning hope on the masses, and not their governments, as they have the power to mobilize once organized. Another reason behind his reliance on the people is indicated by his remarks,

It is a day [Quds day] when committed individuals are preferred over hypocrites. Dedicated people consider today as Quds day and act as they are obliged. The hypocrites—as well as those who are secretly acquainted with the superpowers and are friendly with Israel—are indifferent today or do not allow the nations to demonstrate on this day.¹⁸

Quality as represented by “committed individuals” are favoured over quantity as represented particularly by “the hypocrites”—alluding to those in the high echelon of the governments in the Muslim world—who, according to the Imam, “are indifferent and do not allow the nations to demonstrate today.”¹⁹

Thirdly, in this message, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution points to the true nature and scope of the Quds day as the day of all the oppressed and deprived people in confrontation with the world devourers and oppressors: “Quds day is a global day. It is not a day exclusively for Quds. It is a day when the oppressed confront the oppressors.” If it is named “Quds Day” it is only because the Palestinian question is a paradigmatic example of an oppressed nation under the yoke of a regional power fully backed by superpowers. Besides, in this clash between the oppressed and the oppressors, the *modus operandi* proposed by Ayatullah Khomeini is for the oppressed unified front to exhibit their existence and resistance against the arrogant powers and their surrogate agents in a bid to demonstrate their power of unity, will, and dedication: “It is a day when the Islamic society should make its presence known to all superpowers and their pulp.”²⁰

Fourthly, by declaring that “The day of Quds is not only the day of Palestine, but it is the day of Islam,” the Imam made clear the true essence and orientation of the Palestinian issue. If for the past three decades then the issue had been reckoned as confined within the bounds of Arabism—particularly during the apex of Nasserism in the Arab world—in this communiqué it is asserted that the matter is an Islamic one and therefore, it concerns all the Muslims of the world. And bearing in mind that it is an Islamic question involving the entire Muslim ummah, he reminds them of their spiritual and material strength as he admonishes: “All Muslims must be warned and understand how strong their spiritual and economic powers are. Muslims are one billion people, supported by God, Islam, and the power of faith. Why should they be afraid?”²¹

Lastly, taking into account the Islamic nature of the issue, which is supposed to have a place in the heart of every true believer, Imam Khomeini views the International Quds Day as a distinguisher (*faruq*) and criterion (*furqan*) when he rightly argues:

The Day of Quds is the day that we will realize which regime and persons are cooperating with international conspirators and thus are opposing Islam. Those who do not participate in these demonstrations are opposing Islam and thus are in agreement with Israel. Those who participate and have demonstrations on this day are responsible people who are in stride with Islam and thus oppose Israel.²²

In summary, championing the legitimate cause of the Palestinians had been part of Imam Khomeini’s agenda long time before the formation of the Islamic political establishment in Iran. International Quds Day is the day when the Muslim masses are called forth to go out and demonstrate their sense of solidarity and support to the Palestinian people. It is the day marking the conflict between the oppressed of the world and their oppressors. The Palestinian problem is an Islamic issue and is thus not only the business of the Arabs. Commemoration of Quds day, through participation in the demonstrations,

delineates those clinging to Islam from those subservient to Israel.

Subsequent International Quds Day Messages

The subsequent messages of Ayatullah Khumayni repeated the same central themes and points. In his remarks dated August 6, 1979—i.e. a day prior to the formal announcement of the last Friday of Ramadhan as International Quds Day—he called on all Muslims to keep Quds Day alive.²³

In his remarks on August 18, 1979, Imam Khumayni advanced the notion of Quds Day as a precursor to the International Party of the Oppressed (*hizb-e mustadh'afin-e jahani*).²⁴

One year after the announcement of the last Friday of Ramadhan as International Quds Day, in a speech delivered on August 6, 1980, the Founder of the Islamic Republic expressed his wish for the liberation of Quds where Muslims around the globe could pray there.²⁵

In his remarks three days after delivering the abovementioned speech (August 9, 1980), Ayatullah Khumayni stressed that if everyone shouted out on Quds Day, victory would be achieved. Elsewhere in his remarks, the Ayatullah also reiterated his wish for the prayer of unity to be held in Quds one day.²⁶

During the second year of the consecration of the last Friday of the Muslim fasting month as International Quds Day, Imam Khumayni suggested in a lengthy message (August 1, 1981) the use of machineguns relying on faith and the laying aside of political games in relation to the Palestinian Question. Elsewhere in the message, the Imam also advanced the notion of the Quds Day as the day of the deprived.²⁷

In a message during the third anniversary of the declaration of International Quds Day (July 16, 1982), the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran highlighted the duty of nations on Quds Day.²⁸

In a speech delivered on the auspicious occasion of 'Eid al-fitr (feast marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadhan) on June 20, 1985 (Khordad 30, 1364 AHS), the Imam stated that the Quds Day rally rendered a blow to the superpowers.²⁹

Even in his reply message to the 'Eid al-fitr greeting telegram of Rashid ibn Sa'id al-Maktum (Deputy Head of State and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates) on June 2, 1986 (Khordad 12, 1365 AHS/Ramadhan 23, 1406 AH), the International Quds Day founder expressed hope “that at the threshold of the International Quds Day they (the people in UAE) would announce to the world their aversion and disgust of the crimes and acts of oppression of the world-devouring America and the usurper Israel.”³⁰

In his annual Hajj message on July 28, 1987 (Mordad 6, 1366 AHS/Dhu al-Hijjah 1, 1407 AH), Ayatullah Khumayni also touched on why the designation of a single day as “Quds Day” has made heads of Muslim countries panic.³¹

In his speech on August 23, 1987 (Shahrivar 1, 1366 AHS/Dhu al-Hijjah 27, 1407 AH) to high-ranking

Iranian officials regarding the deplorable tragedy of the massacre of pilgrims in 1987, Imam Khomeini noted that the issue of Quds which is important is separate from that of the control of the Two Holy Places in Hijaz.³²

From Street Marches to Cyber-Demonstrations

During the past twenty-eight years since the unprecedented sanctification of the last Friday of the majestic month of Ramadhan as International Quds Day by the Imam of the ummah, what has been the response of the global Muslims to this call for demonstration of camaraderie with the Palestinian people? Has the Quds day mass rally been restricted to Iran only?

An examination of the news around the world on every last Friday of Ramadhan shows that mass demonstrations in the different parts of the globe during the past two decades have gained momentum qualitatively and quantitatively. In major cities from Mindanao in the East to the United States in the West, from Scandinavia in the North to South Africa in the South, fasting demonstrators and marchers chant divergent slogans of sympathy for the plight of the Palestinians and condemnation of the crimes unabatedly perpetrated by the occupier regime in Tel Aviv.³³ Muslims and even non-Muslims including Jews, and Sunnis and Shias join together in observing this august occasion. In the end the participants usually release al-Quds Day resolutions and vows. Nevertheless, Quds Day rally is still banned in many cities in Muslim countries.

In 1999 the Morocco-based Arabic News reported that Islamic states should mark al-Quds day. It stressed that the commemoration of the day is “an opportunity for Muslims to renew their attachment to the third Islamic holy shrine and their refusal of the Zionist policy which seeks to obliterate the Arab and Islamic identity of the city.”³⁴

As posted in English-language news sites, International Quds Day is commemorated in the following countries: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan, Occupied Palestine, Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Syria, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

As many Muslims rely on the internet—including websites and email—as a primary source of news, information and communication about Islam, there emerges a radical new concept called “e-jihad” described in its many forms including online activism such as coordinating peaceful protests. This activism, such as those relating to International Quds Day, poses as a dominant zone in the notion of “Cyber Islamic Environment.”³⁵

In the Internet messages or manifestos of invitation—including newsgroup—messages to observe the International Quds Day are posted. There are articles featuring Quds Day. Web pages including those in the personal sites focusing on Quds Day and related activities, such as the schedule of Quds Day rallies in the different countries and cities, can be found. Last but not least are the news stories of events

related to the observance of Quds Day demonstrations in the different parts of the world as in the foregoing pages in the websites or Internet editions of mass media.

1. Messages/Statements

The following are examples of what is often posted in cyberspace: messages, statements, and addresses of Islamic groups and leaders of the Islamic movement on the International Quds Day. A good example is the messages of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatullah Sayyid 'Ali Khamenei, in different languages accessible in the web site of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting³⁶, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly (ABWA)³⁷, and Syed Hamid Ali Shah Moosavi of the Tehreek Nafaz-e Fiqh-e Jafariya, Pakistan.³⁸ Similarly, the addresses and speeches on Al-Quds Day of Mu'allim Ibrahim al-Zakzaki of the Islamic movement of Nigeria,³⁹ Hizbullah Secretary General, Sayyid Hasan NaSrallah⁴⁰ and a certain Dr. Obada Kayali at the Canberra Islamic Centre in Australia are accessible online.⁴¹

Described as Jews united against Zionism, the Neturei Karta International has issued statement on al-Quds Day on November 23, 2003.⁴² The statement reads,

As part of their expression of support for the Palestinian cause, representatives of Neturei Karta take part in protests, which draw attention to the Palestinian struggle, whenever they can. Therefore, on this al-Quds Day march, Neturei Karta would like to express its solidarity with the Palestinian People and explain the following points:

The ideology of Zionism is completely opposed to Judaism... Zionism in general and its conduct against the Palestinian People in particular is against the Torah, beliefs and the hopes of the Jewish people... The Jewish religious teaching is that the Jewish People have no right to rule in Palestine today... Exile means that Jews must be loyal subjects of the government of the countries in which they live and not attempt to attain political power over other peoples... According to the Torah and Jewish faith, the present Palestinian Arab claim to rule in Palestine is right and just...⁴³

Dubbed "Our Mission on Quds Day," the Islamic Movement in Nigeria posted in its website Quds Day 1426 AH manifesto signed by a certain Malam Abdulhamid Bello. It calls on all Muslims "to wake up from their deep slumber and do what is incumbent upon them." It continues: "with faith in God, the Exalted, and relying on the power of Islam and the power of faith, they should rise up and foreshorten the hands of the criminals from their lands."⁴⁴

Signed by a certain Muhammad Mukhtar and dated Ramadhan 28, 1427 AH (October 20, 2006), the Islamic Movement of Nigeria's International Quds Day Manifesto, whose copies were distributed to the marchers and spectators, declares thus: "Today the last Friday of Ramadhan is yet another historic occasion in which we commemorate the International Quds Day as marked by Imam Khomeini (ra). The occasion [has been] conducted by Muslims in Nigeria under the leadership of Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky

(h).”⁴⁵ It also stresses: “It is time to ‘enough is enough’. We are the vicegerents of Allah in this world and as such it is incumbent on us to rise against oppression and suppression exemplified against the weak people of Palestine.”⁴⁶

2. Invitations

Along with messages of Islamic groups and their leaders, which usually contain the call for participation of the Quds Day demonstrations, there are specific invitation campaigns for Quds Day participation in the Internet. For example, Yahoo! Newsgroups “4islam” and “islamiccommunitynet” posted Quds Day invitations in their Message Boards.⁴⁷

In an invitation where the date, time, venue, organizers, and contact numbers are indicated, the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) called on all Muslims “to support what is set to be the biggest protest rally [in London] against Israeli atrocities” in 2000. As mentioned by IHRC Chairman, Massoud Shadjareh, the purpose of the rally is “to voice our solidarity with occupied Palestine; to raise awareness of the plight of the Palestinian victims of Israeli violence and apartheid.”⁴⁸

The Innovative Minds has posted the 2001 Quds Day Rally details for London, Toronto, Washington, and Berlin—including the date, time, meeting point, closest underground station, contact, and additional information.⁴⁹ The annual Iran’s call to all Muslims and oppressed of the world for holding massive rallies on the Quds Day can be read online from even non-Iranian media outlets.⁵⁰

“Rally for the Liberation of Palestine” flyers for 2005 and 2006 Quds Day in Houston, Texas sponsored by the Worldwide Movement for Justice and Peace (WMJP) can be downloaded at the Arab Voices Radio Talk Show site.⁵¹

An invitation letter for al-Quds Day Program on October 20, 2006 at Suliman Nana Center (Brixton) in Johannesburg, South Africa including the program of activities is posted at the South African Muslims site.⁵²

A blogger in the United Kingdom posted in his blog an invitation for the 2005 Quds Day March in London by indicating the venue, time, speakers, and contact email.⁵³

The “al-Quds Day March: Make a Stand for Justice” flyer—an invitation for Quds Day march in London on October 22, 2006, in which the organizer, supporting organizations, and speakers are stated—is available online at the Ikhwan al-Muslimin site.⁵⁴ In its pertinent invitation page, IHRC states that “This year’s march will be held with a special focus on the rights of the Lebanese people who underwent brutal and inhumane treatment at the hands of the Israeli artillery.” It also boasts of

An unprecedented number of organizations taking part in the rally, namely: British Muslim Initiative, Crescent International, Friends of al-Aqsa, Hizb al-Tahrir, Islamic Forum Europe, Islamic Human Rights Commission, Islamic Student Association UK, Islamic Centre of England, Innovative Minds, International

Muslims Organization, Lebanese Communities, Muslim Association of Britain, Neturei Karta, Palestine Return Centre, Palestine Internationalist, Respect Party, Stop the War, and 1990 Trust.⁵⁵

Invitation messages for the 2006 Quds Day rally⁵⁶ and seminar⁵⁷ in Washington, D.C. on October 20 and 21, 2006, respectively, are posted at the Yahoo–based Northern Virginians for Peace & Justice newsgroup.

There is also an invitation for “Global al–Quds Day Program” at Dearborn, Michigan posted at a Google.com–based newsgroup with an attached flyer and opens with the following lines: “Please forward this info to your friends as a reminder. This is the least we should do to educate ourselves and to connect ourselves with the oppressed people under occupation.”⁵⁸

3. Feature articles

There are articles featuring Quds Day. See, for example: “Quds Day,” Islamic Digest Website;⁵⁹ Iqbal Jassat, “Quds Day: New Efforts to Ensure Israel’s Survival by Madiba Poses Further Challenges,” Media Review Net;⁶⁰ “al–Quds Day: A Time to Remember Martyrs” by a certain Firoz Osman at the Media Monitors site.⁶¹ The article begins:

In mosques throughout the world, the last Friday of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan has been devoted to highlight the problems facing the Palestinians in their struggle for freedom from Zionist occupation. Ever since the outbreak of the first intifadah (uprising) the spotlight in the Muslim world has been firmly focused on the valiant struggle being waged against the fourth most powerful country in the world—Israel.⁶²

Elsewhere in the article, it states: “The achievement of the Palestinians in the fourth year of the intifadah is remarkable. Making Israel a battleground has instilled such fear that almost a million Israelis have fled to the USA, demolishing the myth that Israel is a safe–haven for Jews.”⁶³

A poem on al–Aqsa sent to the editor of a national daily in Sri Lanka by a certain Siddiq Ghouse describes the Quds Day as follows: “The last Friday of Ramadan Muslims the world over hold as al–Quds day, to awaken a billion souls’ conscience to noble duty and struggle in Allah’s way.”⁶⁴ The World Service Section of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has posted the electronic version of a book on Imam Khomeini’s statements on Palestine,⁶⁵ a chapter of which focuses on the Imam’s announcement of the holy day.⁶⁶

In a recent article posted at a newly created site, the role of International Quds Day in “the awakening of the oppressed peoples in the world” is featured. The writer argues:

One of the most effective moves of Imam Khomeini (r) in bringing Islam and people to the Palestinian cause was announcing the international day of Quds. Of course it must not be forgotten that 30 years before the victory of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeini put the Palestinian issue on his lists of tasks

and expounded on and analyzed it on various occasions. A year did not pass after the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran that Imam Khomeini announced the day of Quds and invited the Muslims of the world and the Islamic nations to unity in order that they can come to the aid of the Palestinian people. In this manner the Palestinian issue was taken out of the dead end that it was in and has now become an international issue, especially in the Islamic world. It has become an issue of the whole Islamic world. The announcement of the international Quds day and the defeat of the enemy's front line in the occupied territories gave Islam strength, energy, and motivation to fight. The first steps of the intifada were made in this way. In the occupied lands groups of impulsive youth formed which did not depend on the famous political groups in any way. Slowly the chant of 'God is the greatest' was heard in protests and funerals and took over the Arabic and communist slogans of the past. Strong Islamic forces were formed amongst the new generation. 67

He also argues, thus:

[T]he Islamic resistance in southern Lebanon, made up of brave, pious, and intelligent individuals was formed. This resistance quickly was able to change into a dynamic sample, effective and comprehending world movement against the Zionist occupation. The continual military, security, ideological, and ethical victories of this resistance in south Lebanon and the base retreat of the occupiers from an important part of this country, and the 33 day resistance of Hizbollah in front of the fourth most advanced army of the world (and defeating them) has caused serious problems for the existence of Israel.⁶⁸

4. Web sites and pages

Many sites have also focused on the importance of the annual Quds Day such as the following: "The Worldwide Day of Quds" at the Muslim Students' Association Website;⁶⁹ "The Day of Qods," Islamic Thought Foundation site;⁷⁰ and "Al-Qods Day: The Day of Islam" posted in a Geocities personal site seemingly owned by a Lebanese student.⁷¹ The other pages of the site contain beautiful relevant portraits along with statements, mostly of Imam Khumayni, such as the following:

The world Qods day is the day for proclaiming commitment to accepting responsibilities for defending the honor and dignity of the Muslims. The Qods day is the day of unity among Muslims and their solidarity with the innocent Palestinian nation as well as the day of the awakening of the world people's conscience.⁷²

The initiation of the world Qods day is a framework for preservation of unity, solidarity, and active participation of Muslims for defending the Islamic holy lands and their non-submission to any form of force, insult or subservience.⁷³

The world Qods day has helped Muslims to further strengthen their ties with the Qods ideals so that the satanic designs of the Zionist entity would be rendered futile in creating a fissure in the strong tie that exists among Muslims.⁷⁴

The commemoration of the world Quds day is a means to demonstrate the Muslims' abhorrence of and anger at the Zionist usurpers who are occupying the holiest precincts of Islam.⁷⁵

Quds could not be freed through negotiations with the usurper Zionist regime and that jihad and struggle is the only way left open for freeing the holy city of Quds.⁷⁶

Other articles are "Quds Day" in the site of a certain Jamia Uloom-e-Islami;⁷⁷ "Jordan-Imam Khomeini" available at the site of the Lebanese Islamic Resistance;⁷⁸ "al-Quds: the Focus of Muslims' Grief" at the Geocities-based Ahlul-Bayt Islamic Library;⁷⁹ and "Quds Day," Innovative Minds Website.⁸⁰ The Innovative Minds site is not only active in Quds Day activities but also in the Israel Boycott Campaign,⁸¹ which resulted in the closing down of its original site⁸² in what it describes as "Zionist terrorism in cyberspace."⁸³

The Shaheed Foundation has made downloadable a series of free Al-Quds Day wallpapers on the wallpaper gallery of its site.⁸⁴ Another personal site allocated "Al-Quds Day or Jumat-ul-Wida (Last Friday of Ramadan)" page where four pictures of al-Aqsa Mosque are posted.⁸⁵ A seemingly Arab blog-owner posted brief information about Quds Day in his blog.⁸⁶

In 2003, activists have reportedly launched on the 17th of Ramadhan "Al-Quds International Day on the Internet" "to remind millions of Web visitors about the history and importance of the holy city for Muslims worldwide as well as the need to stand firmly against Israeli Judaization schemes." According to Mohamed al-Sayyed of the Hamasna Web site, co-organizer of the Day, "a cohort of leading Muslim figures and activist from Malaysia, Egypt, Palestine, Algeria, and Morocco" are supposed to contribute to the International Day which would be translated into three languages—English, French, and Spanish—extend for a week on the internet, and be circulated through thousands of e-groups in Europe, the United States, and the Arab world.⁸⁷

Recently, an Arabic website was entirely dedicated to International Quds Day where statements, messages, and speeches in Arabic of different political figures and activists from such countries as Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, France, and Sweden are posted.⁸⁸

Muslim Judicial Council of South Africa's "Al-Quds Institution" declares in its newly opened web site, the revival of "the International Quds Day in various forms and in all countries" as one of its means to achieve its goals.⁸⁹

5. News and audio/visuals

Last but not least are the news stories of events related to the observance of Quds Day demonstrations in the different parts of the world—as in the section, Quds Day in the Real World: Street Marches—on websites or Internet editions of mass media. Along with this news coverage of the street march rallies around the world are the relevant photos and audio-video clips of the rallies.

The Innovative Minds site has web pages that show photos with interesting captions as well as audio clips of the slogans chanted and du‘as (supplications) recited on the 2000 and 2001 London Quds Day processions.⁹⁰ The al-Quds Day 2002 photo report is accessible at the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHCR) and the United Islamic Students Association of Europe sites.⁹¹ This is while the photo account of the 2003 march from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square is featured in the sites of the anti-Zionist Jewish Neturei Karta⁹² and Kanoon Towhid, a seemingly Iranian London-based Islamic Student Association.⁹³ Islamicdigest.net has so far two movie clips on Quds Day: “Quds Day Special”⁹⁴ and “Quds Day Demonstration (London) Promotion Movie.”⁹⁵

In Bahrain, an audio-visual coverage of the November 2002 (1423 AH) and 2004 (1425 AH) Quds Day marches and demonstrations with eight images and four video clips in the former year⁹⁶ and 45 images and a 25-minute video clip in the latter year⁹⁷ is available at al-imam.net. The Mirsta-based Zainabiya Islamic Center has displayed photos with captions of the Quds Day procession in Central Stockholm of the same year.⁹⁸

A blog described as “al-Musawwir” allocated a page titled “Al Quds Day” that contains pictures of 2006 Quds Day rallies in Lebanon, Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran as well as a video clip of a Tehran rally.⁹⁹ In its invitation page for 2006 Quds Day march in London,¹⁰⁰ IHRC added a link to an audio advertisement in addition to the usual information such as date, time, venue, organizers, and speakers.¹⁰¹

In another blog, 67 pictures of Quds Day demonstrations on October 20, 2006 taken and captioned by international news agencies in countries like Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, and Palestine are posted along with negative comments by the blog owner.¹⁰²

In a photography site, eight pictures of the 2006 Quds Day event in Tehran are posted along with a short introduction of the annual event.¹⁰³

In recognition of “Universal Quds Day,” One Ummah Network presents a video presentation in mpeg1 format “in expression of our solidarity with the Palestinian people.”¹⁰⁴

The Cyberpower of International Quds Day

As a result of the interaction between the routine and knowledge under discussion for the past almost three decades, there emerged a social order: the inclusion of Quds Day in the calendar of Islamic holidays.

It is interesting to note the first 200 results of a Google search for “quds day”, for instance, reveal that the acceptance of the resultant social order is not only confined to the Muslim circles; this is manifested by the non-Muslim religious, cultural, political, and business group and institution websites’ inclusion of the Quds Day in the list of Islamic holidays.

Among these groups and institutions are the following: Inter-Religious Council of San Antonio; The

Inspiration Station; America's Service Commissions; Jewish Genealogical Society of Los Angeles (JGSLA); Faiths Religion Communities; Religious Tolerance; Calendar Math; Human Relations Commission of Tempe City; Weaving our Worlds (WOW); Metamorphosis; Immigration Minister of Australia; State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training); Migrant Information Center of Eastern Melbourne; The Bahai World; Knowledgeable Neighbors Embrace the World; Heart's Home; Dawodu.com (Nigeria); International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (Canada); Lutheran Campus Ministry Waterloo (Canada); Calendar Mine; Marktheday.com; Fort Campbell; Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA); WPSAPD Table Tennis (South Africa); Surrey RCMP (Canada); Web of Creation, Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE); Digi-Labs, Inc.; GoErie.com; DeskDemon.com; the Institute of Interfaith Dialog; United Steelworkers (USWA) (Canada); The Boy Scouts of America; Vancouver Island Spirit Network; Interfaith Calendar; The International Globe; The Temple of Universality; Issues Magazine; Chamber of Secrets; Fredskultur; The Netherlands Unitarian Universalist Fellowship; 105 Leeds Primary Care Trust NHS; and GreatDreams.com, among others.¹⁰⁶

Quds Day as an Islamic holiday is also reflected in the websites of the following universities and educational centres: Harvard University; Monash University (Australia); University of New Orleans; University of Melbourne (Australia); Purdue University (West Lafayette, Indiana); Graduate Theological Union; Denison University; University of Connecticut; University of Wollongong (Australia); University of Sydney (Australia); University of Newcastle (Australia); St. Mary's International School (Japan); Franklin and Marshall College (Pennsylvania); Scarlet Letter of St. Lawrence University; the Center for Cultural Pluralism of the University of Vermont; Loughborough University (Leicestershire, UK); Cornell University.¹⁰⁷

In a certain personal, Holiday Festival and GreatDreams.com websites, as well as in the Human Relations Commission of Tempe City and the Temple of Universality, it is acknowledged that Quds Day is "a recent addition to the [Islamic] calendar, in memory of Jerusalem."¹⁰⁸ In an interfaith calendar, Survivorship's November ritual dates, and the Minneapolis-based Spiritual Opportunities for Life's calendar for November, as well as in the ReligiousTolerance.org, Metamorphosis, Knowledgeable Neighbors Embrace the World, Heart's Home, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, the University of New Orleans, and Denison University websites, Quds Day is described as the "Islamic time of proclaiming solidarity in support of oppressed Muslim people."¹⁰⁹

The Niue¹¹⁰-based Fredskultur gives the following description of Quds Day: "al-Quds Day (Jerusalem Day) is a day of support for the Palestinian people. It was initiated primarily to condemn Israel's occupation of Jerusalem and U.S. support for Israel."¹¹¹

This is how Quds Day is described in November 2003 and November 2004 issues of Conscious Evolution web site's online newsletter dubbed "Metamorphosis: Changing Ourselves and the World Through Love": "The last Friday in Ramadan is an Islamic day of rallies in support of Muslim

Palestinians and against oppression of Muslims anywhere.”¹¹²

In the website of a Western-run school in Morocco, Quds Day is even considered as among the “important dates in Islamic history.”¹¹³ The International Globe describes Quds Day in this manner: “Quds Day is a day that all Muslims show their support for the oppressed Muslims of the world and, in particular, those in Palestine. Rallies are held in every capital of the world.”¹¹⁴ Calendar Mine has a relatively more elaborate description of Quds Day:

Quds Day is observed on the last Friday in Ramadan. On this day, Muslims around the world pray for the city of Jerusalem, and demonstrate their support for the city’s oppressed Muslims. Jerusalem, also known as al-Quds, is a holy city for Muslims, Jews, and Christians.¹¹⁵

Thus, the routine of demonstrations on every last Friday of Ramadhan since its declaration as International Quds Day in August 1979 establishes the commonly and collectively held knowledge that the day is commemorated by Muslims through demonstrations throughout the world. This common, collective knowledge, in turn, ‘normalizes’ the persistency of the said routine of global demonstration on the particular date. This continuous interaction between the routine and the knowledge of the routine produces a social order as time passes—Quds Day as an Islamic holiday—a social order increasingly acknowledged by non-Muslim entities and institutions.

Diagrammatically, we have the following:



From the foregoing discussion, we can conclude that on one hand, the emergent social order—Quds Day as Islamic holiday—is an indication of globalization of its observance. On the other hand, the same social order can indirectly fortify the already ongoing globalization of support to Palestine taking into account the routine-knowledge interaction.

In other words, the produced social order (Quds day as Islamic holiday) can potentially pave the way for the appearance of a ‘higher’ social order—i.e. even further globalization of support to Palestine. This ‘higher’ social order may assume the form of boycott campaigns against “products and/or companies supporting Israel”¹¹⁶ which is gaining momentum in some respects.¹¹⁷ However, the fact that some of these products are openly patronized in the Islamic Republic of Iran¹¹⁸ shows that the prospects of evolution and maturization of this higher social order at a global scale is still open to question in the near future at least.

Given this global trend, Quds Day is verily a day to be reckoned with. It is a legacy bequeathed to us twenty-eight years ago—a legacy which, if properly observed, can be enough of an arm to liberate al-Quds al-Sharif. And to my understanding, its proper observance is to count every day as Quds Day.

Conclusion

The holy city of Quds or Jerusalem and the al-AqSa Mosque or Bayt al-Muqaddas/Maqdis feature prominently in the events before and after the reappearance of the Imam of the Age ('atfs). In the corpus of Islamic traditions, Mecca is mentioned as the point of origin of his uprising and then Iraq, the city of Kufah in particular, as the military-political capital of his government. It is reported that the last Imam ('atfs) will march toward Sham (Syria) and liberate Bayt al-Muqaddas.

The Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran's conception of 'waiting' [intizar] is characterized by activism and dynamism. This understanding of positive waiting was elucidated by him in his speeches, messages, writings, and most importantly, in action. As a manifestation of this positive 'waiting' espoused by the Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution in a macro-state level, he initiated many bold steps in paving the ground of the reappearance of the Imam of the Age ('atfs). Among these steps is the declaration of the last Friday of Ramadhan as 'International Quds Day in which he urged all Muslims and oppressed peoples of the world to stage global marches and demonstrations for the liberation of al-Quds. Since this declaration, he touched on this issue in his subsequent speeches, messages, and even letters until his demise nine years after.

During the past twenty-eight years since the unprecedented sanctification of the last Friday of the majestic month of Ramadhan as International Quds Day by the Imam of the ummah, what has been the response of the global Muslims to this call for demonstration of camaraderie with the Palestinian people? Has the Quds day mass rally been restricted to Iran only?

An examination of the news around the world on every last Friday of Ramadhan shows that mass demonstrations in the different parts of the globe during the past two decades have gained momentum qualitatively and quantitatively. In major cities from Mindanao in the East to the United States in the West, from Scandinavia in the North to South Africa in the South, fasting demonstrators and marchers chant divergent slogans of sympathy to the plight of the Palestinians and condemnation of the crimes unabatedly perpetrated by the occupier regime in Tel Aviv.

On the Internet, messages or manifestos of invitation including newsgroup messages to observe the International Quds Day are posted. There are articles featuring Quds Day. Web pages—including those in the personal sites focusing on the Quds Day and related activities, such as schedules of Quds Day rallies in the different countries and cities—can be found. Last but not least, there are news stories of events related to the observance of Quds Day demonstrations in the different parts of the world as in the foregoing pages in the websites or Internet editions of mass media.

As a result of the interaction between the routine and knowledge under discussion for the past almost three decades, there emerged a social order—inclusion of the Quds Day in the calendar of Islamic holidays. The acceptance of the resultant social order is not only confined to the Muslim circles as evident by the non-Muslim religious, cultural, political, and business group and institution websites'

inclusion of the Quds Day in the list of Islamic holidays. And the produced social order (Quds day as Islamic holiday) can potentially pave the way for the appearance of a 'higher' social order—i.e. even further globalization of support to Palestine. This 'higher' social order may assume the form of boycott campaigns against “products and/or companies supporting Israel” which is gaining momentum in some respects.

Given this cyberpower of Quds Day that may even turn into a higher social order, the goal of the said declaration could play a pivotal role in the advent of al-Mahdi ('atfs) and his confrontation in the Holy City of Quds (Jerusalem) with the anti-Christ or al-Dajjal—the epitome of falsehood, injustice, and oppression—as prophesied in the corpus of hadith literature.

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1. Quds is the Arabic word for Jerusalem and means 'the holy.' Jerusalem is revered as the third holiest city in Islam, after Mecca and Medina. *Palestine from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini* (Tehran: International Affairs Department of the Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, Autumn 1999), ft. 2, p. ii. In this paper, wherever the term is spelled as “Qods” or “Ghods” in direct quotations and Internet addresses, I retained the alternative spellings.

2. “Message of Imam Khomeini on the Occasion of the Day of Quds,” *The Dawn of the Islamic Revolution: The Dawn of the Islamic Revolution: Echo of Islam Magazine Special Issue*, vol. 1, p. 202.

3. The abbreviation, “atfs” stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, ‘ajjalallahu ta’ala farajahu al-sharif (may Allah, the Exalted, expedite his glorious advent), which is invoked after mentioning the name of Imam al-Mahdi ('atfs).

4. 'Asqalan: a city in Sham which is a dependency of Palestine and along the seashore. It is located between the cities of Gaza and Bayt al-Jabrayn. See *Mu'jam al-buldan*, vol. 3, p. 673.

5. 'Iqd al-Durar, p. 201. Quoted in Najmuddin Tabasi, *An Overview of the Mahdi's ('atfs) Government*, trans. Mansoor Limba (Tehran: Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly, forthcoming).
6. Ibid., p. 218. Quoted in Tabasi, op. cit.
7. Ibn Hammad, Fitan, p. 84; Ibn al-Munadi, p. 47; Darmi, Sunan, p. 98; 'Iqd al-Durar, p. 126; Ibn Tawus, Fitan, p. 49. Quoted in Tabasi, op. cit.
8. Ibn Hammad, Fitan, p. 106; 'Iqd al-Durar, p. 143. Quoted in Tabasi, op. cit.
9. 'Iqd al-Durar, pp. 97, 319; Ibn Tawus, Malahim, p. 81; Hanafi, Burhan, p. 88. Quoted in Tabasi, op. cit.
10. 'Iqd al-Durar, 201; Shafi'i, Bayan, p. 114; Ihqaq al-haqq, vol. 13, p. 229. Quoted in Tabasi, op. cit.
11. 'Iqd al-Durar, p. 166. See 'Abd al-Razzaq, Musannaf, vol. 11, p. 401. Quoted in Tabasi, op. cit.
12. The abbreviation, "r" stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, rahmatullah 'alayhi, rahmatullah 'alayha, or rahmatullah 'alayhim (may peace be upon him/her/them), which is mentioned after the names of pious people.
13. Sahifeh-ye Imam, vol. 21, speech on April 3, 1988 [Farvardin 14, 1367 AHS / Sha'ban 15, 1408 AH] on the different understandings of 'waiting' for the advent of Imam al-Mahdi ('atfs).
14. This is in accordance with the criterion set by Prophet Muhammad (S) who says to the effect that any saying (hadith) attributed to him is to be assessed according to the Qur'an; if it agrees with the Book of Allah, it is to be accepted and if not, it should "thrown against the wall," i.e. to be rejected as it is a fabricated one.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., pp. 202-205; Palestine from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini, pp. 137-139; "Announcement of International Quds Day."
17. For Imam Khumayni's speeches, messages, and interviews espousing his unflinching stance against the State of Israel in support of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, see Sahifeh-ye Imam: An Anthology of Imam Khomeini's Speeches, Messages, Interviews, Decrees, Religious Permissions, and Letters Vols. 1-5 (Tehran: The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 1379 AHS).
18. Palestine from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini, loc. cit.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid., pp. 140-141.
24. Ibid., p. 140.
25. Ibid., pp. 141-142.
26. Ibid., pp. 142-143.
27. Ibid., pp. 143-145.
28. Ibid., p. 146.
29. Sahifeh-ye Imam, vol. 19. The glorious presence of the Iranian people in Quds Day rallies was also mentioned by the Imam in his speech to a group of teachers of the Islamic seminary in Qom on June 30, 1985 (Tir 9, 1364 AHS) and in another speech on June 9, 1986 (Khordad 19, 1365 AHS/Shawwal 1, 1406 AH) on the auspicious occasion of 'Eid al-fitr to high-ranking Iranian officials and Muslim diplomats residing in Tehran. Ibid., vol. 20.
30. Ibid., vol. 20.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Murray Kahl, "One Picture is Worth a Thousand Lives," Conference for Middle East Peace (CMEP), <http://www.cmep.com/temple1.htm>; [10] <http://www.eretzisroel.org/~jkatz/tunnel> [11]. html, March 2, 1997. Accessed: November 11, 2004.
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