

**Invitation**  
**The Annual Conference of Institute for Palestine Studies**

**Intifada: History and Memory – 30 Years Later**

**(Commemorating the Thirtieth Anniversary of the First Intifada)**  
**24 and 25 November 2017**

In late 1987, a wave of popular demonstrations against the Israeli occupation broke out in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, soon turning into an organized populist uprising with unprecedented momentum and sustainability. The attempts to suppress the movement by the Israeli military occupation only intensified the resilience of the Palestinian population. The people were able to form versatile means of resistance. They also invented creative ways to face the exorbitant forms of violence that the occupation forces used to suppress their drive. They innovated cultural and artistic forms of defiance that added a novel expression to the Intifada, enabling a global wave of solidarity and identification with the Palestinian people and their longing to freedom.

At the time, the Intifada came as a great surprise for observers, for leaders of the Israeli occupation, for the Arabic and the international public opinion, and for the official Palestinian leadership as well. The Intifada attracted wide areas of international media coverage, which culminated with the entry of the Arabic word 'Intifada' into the international lexicon. The Palestinian masses were able to strip Israel from the fig leaf it maintained as a benign occupier. There is a virtual consensus among historians that the Intifada forced the Israeli leadership to accept the principal of negotiation over the occupied territories, and to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Thirty years down the road, with long years of political inertia and the failures of negotiations, and with the escalating and worsening construction of the settlements, and the transformation of the socio-economic structure, the question now arises regarding the meaning of the Intifada today, and lessons derived from it.

How do we conceive and reconceive the Intifada after thirty years? How much did the Palestinian collective memory maintain of that event? What are the factors that led to it? What impact did it leave on society, culture, politics, and on the image of the Palestinians worldwide? Does the Intifada have an exceptional historical peculiarity in terms of factors and deterrents that lead to it? Or is it replicable?

The Institute for Palestine Studies will devote its annual conference of 2017 to pose such questions and others. In addition to the thirtieth anniversary of the first Intifada, the year 2017 also coincides with other anniversaries that constitute pivotal moments in the contemporary history and struggle of the Palestinian people, with profound impacts. Among these milestones: 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Balfour Declaration; the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Partition Plan of Palestine; the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the June 1967 defeat; and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the internal Palestinian split. The reason behind focusing on the Intifada amongst this bleak list of anniversaries is to highlight dynamic aspects of the Palestinian situation, while maintaining objective evaluation, analysis and research, and moving away from mere nostalgia. The conference, therefore, welcomes critiques contributions that would deepen our knowledge and understanding of the event.

The conference invites presentations contributing to a new historiography of the intifada, through which the Intifada can be perceived as a point in the broader historical processes.

### **For those wishing to submit proposals of papers/interventions:**

IPS accepts proposals of scholarly papers, or testimonies, on the central themes of the conference (see below) till **15 June 2017** (with proposals ranging from 300-500 words). IPS will provide peer revision of research papers for those interested in later scientific publishing.

### **Proposed Conference Themes:**

(Note: Researchers can add topics or incorporate existing ones within their suggestions)

#### **Theme I:**

##### **Roots, Causes, Organizational Forms, and Socio-cultural Expressions:**

1. Sociological and political background of the Intifada - why did the Intifada take place in 1987?
2. The importance of the populist set-up of the Intifada and its forms
3. The various popular initiatives of mobilization and alternative development
4. Alternative education initiatives and projects
5. Idiosyncratic struggle experiences of individuals/institutions/regions (rural, city, refugees camp), or distinctive popular struggle initiatives
6. The Intifada from the perspective of family history: How did the Intifada affect the fate of individuals or families?
7. Class and gender dimension of the Intifada
8. Cultural forms that accompanied the Intifada or was developed as a result (art, music, dance, theatre, cinema)
9. Retrogressive aspects of the Intifada and the inner causes of its weakness (*this perspective can be integrated into other topics*)

#### **Theme II:**

##### **The Impact of the Intifada on the Performance of Political Organizations and Movements.**

The relationship between the Unified Leadership and the leadership of the PLO in exile

1. Redefining the relationships among the Palestinian communities and their respective roles in the struggle
2. The Intifada in the context of the occupation's quest to form alternative leadership(s) and the establishment of "Rawabit al-Qura" (Village Leagues)
3. Trajectories of the Intifada in the occupied territories in the absence of the PLO and its fighting factions after their departure from Lebanon
4. Emergence of Hamas during the Intifada
5. The growth of other Islamic organizations during and after the Intifada
6. Left vs Right in the ranks of UNLU
7. The Intifada in the context of the end of the Cold War, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc
8. The Intifada and the Gulf War.

#### **Theme III:**

##### **Israeli Policies and the Intifada**

1. The Intifada in Israel's security paradigm and practice
2. Forms of oppression, detention, and prisons
3. The closure of schools and universities, the intensive use of curfews, and the geographical segmentation of the Palestinian communities
4. The impact of the Intifada on the Israeli street and civil society
5. The Intifada versus the geography of colonial occupation, and the policies of colonial domination
6. How did the Israelis tackle the events of the Intifada academically and in media coverage? Israeli and Jewish solidarity movements with the Intifada and their impact

**Theme IV:**

**New Palestinian, Arab, and the Global Perspectives**

1. The Intifada among the refugee camps outside Palestine
2. The interaction of the 1948' National Forces with the Intifada
3. The Arab interaction with the Intifada--the popular and the official levels
4. The impact of the Intifada on the image of the Palestinian worldwide
5. Diplomatic facets in the international arena and within the United Nations

**Theme V:**

**The Intifada from a Comparative Perspective, and as a Subject of Research, and Object of Memory**

1. The Intifada in the context of other historical uprisings of the Palestinian people
2. Comparing the first and second intifadas, in terms of causes, progressions, and results
3. The Intifada, people's revolutions, revolutionary violence, and armed struggle: comparative studies with the Arab world and globally
4. The first and second Intifada and their impact on the Arab "Spring" uprisings of 2011-2013
5. Reviewing research sources and archives on the Intifada, including Hebrew literature and sources
6. Remerging and recalling the Intifada: oral memory relating to the participating generation
7. The impact of the Intifada on contemporary Palestinian culture
8. Lessons learned and not learned for the Palestinian political movement: Can the Intifada occur again?
9. What is common and what is peculiar in the 1987 Intifada?