

## **(Counter)solidarities in times of genocide. Historical and contemporary links of SEE societies with Palestine and Israel**

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The death toll in Palestine caused by the Israeli army increases progressively despite difficulties from Palestinian authorities to accurately account for those killed or missing as a result of destroyed infrastructure (Khatib et.al., 2024). This unprecedented violence is not new. According to the International Court of Justice, numerous reports of UN Special Rapporteurs on the Palestinian territories and a handful of international organisations, Palestinians have been living under conditions of apartheid and racial segregation since 1967. Despite the landmark ruling of the International Court of Justice on the plausible risk of genocide against the Palestinian people, across the west, solidarities with Palestine have been hushed, toned down (Bastašić, 2023) or outright policed (Thompson and Tuzcu, 2024). Elsewhere, solidarities with Palestine have been self-policed or erased in function of geopolitical calculations (Musliu and Rexhepi, 2024).

This roundtable takes stock of the historical and contemporary ties between the Southeastern Europe region and Israel / Palestine and discusses (counter)solidarities and structural complicities in times of genocide. Socialist Yugoslavia, as one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement, was instrumental in the recognition of Palestine as a full NAM member state in 1975 (Horvat, 2023). Both NAM and Socialist Yugoslavia contributed greatly to recognition of the Palestinian people's struggle for self-determination as a part of the circuits of decolonial solidarity that both helped to sustain (Baker, 2018). At the same time, socialist Yugoslavia also maintained economic links with Israel (Stubbs, 2020). Following the successful enactment of the Non-Aligned Movement, a good number of Palestinian doctors, nurses, pilots and educators studied in former Yugoslav cities (Lazić, 2021). Other countries in the region's relations with Palestine and Israel, such as Greece and Turkey, have also historically oscillated between strong support for the Palestinian cause and close ties to Israel.

Against this backdrop, over the last year and a half we are witnessing most SEE governments either abstaining or voting against so much as a ceasefire in Gaza, with other governments, such as Serbia, actively collaborating in arming Israel. From the grassroots level, however, the emerging social movements are challenging these complicities and silences of the regional governments while calling for boycott and organising transnationally. These transnational solidarity networks ground and build their symbolic and material actions both on the previous channels of mutual support and artistic collaboration, while at the same time creating new relations and entanglements.

Among these historical and contemporary ties and tensions, this roundtable discusses: a) what legacies of the post-Ottoman predicaments, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the 1990s wars can help us understand (counter)solidarities with Palestine; b) how can we read the popular and government responses towards the ongoing genocide in Palestine; c) what (counter)solidarities with Palestine are articulated in places heavily exposed to Western and American liberal interventionism (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo); NATO membership (e.g. Montenegro, Macedonia), capitalist disciplining (e.g. Greece); warfare technologies and externalization of migration (e.g. Turkey; Croatia).

**Track Classification:** South East Europe Working Group