

FLAME HOTLINE

Facts & Logic About the Middle East

July 16, 2019



The "Jesus was Palestinian" hoax: An old Big Lie gets new legs from Sarsour and Omar

Dear Friend of FLAME:

A remarkable component of the Palestinian Arab political strategy is a consistent, concerted effort to rewrite ancient history. For reasons we'll see, [the strategy is called the Big Lie.](#)

This Big Lie has three major objectives: 1) Establish a Palestinian people when there was none; 2) place Palestinian Arabs in the Holy Land long before Arabs actually arrived there; and 3) characterize Jews as religious adherents, not a people.

A brief, but explosive tweet from leftist Muslim militant Linda Sarsour recently managed to [pack all three lies into one statement.](#) She wrote, "Jesus was Palestinian of Nazareth and is described in the Quran as being brown copper skinned with wooly hair." She noted that this doesn't negate Jesus being a Jew, because "Palestinian is a nationality not a religion."

Of course, Sarsour's statement is full of contradictions, primarily since the Romans didn't change the name of this region from Judea to Palestine until about 135 CE, long after Jesus' death: [There was no Palestine](#) during Jesus life, and therefore no Palestinian nationality.

Of course, there also were no Arabs in the Holy Land until about 650 CE, so there couldn't be a Palestinian Arab nationality then, either. Indeed, there's [no historical mention](#) of a group of Arabs identified as Palestinians until the 1960s, so today's Palestinians were not called that until very recently.

Indeed, [the first Palestinians](#)—both in ancient times and in modern times were the Jews, who lived in the Holy Land when it was originally called Palestine and who in the early 20th century gave their institutions such names as the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, the *Palestine Post* and Palestine Electric Co.

But Sarsour is not the first Palestinian Arab partisan to force on Jesus a Palestinian nationality. Palestinian spokespeople have been [peddling this hoax for decades](#), most notably by Yasser Arafat advisor Hanan Ashrawi, who told the

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What is "Palestinian Territory"?

Mainstream media often refers to "the Palestinian territory" yet there is no such legal entity. **This land—Judea, Samaria—in disputed and awaits a peace agreement.**

The phrase "occupied Palestinian territory" implies a legal Israeli control over the ancient Jewish homeland. It is not. It is a political invention to justify the West Bank for so-called "Bibi's yellow paper" and the "Bibi's yellow paper" agreement with the Palestinians and international law.

What are the facts?

1. There is no historical or biblical basis for the claim that Jesus was Palestinian. He was Jewish and lived in the Holy Land, which was part of the Roman Empire at the time. The Holy Land was never a part of the Ottoman Empire, let alone the British Mandate for Palestine.

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FLAME is the only organization that defends Israel with paid editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide

Washington Jewish Week back in 2001 that "Jesus was a Palestinian."

More recently, Reverend William Barber II, speaking to the 2016 Democratic National Convention, referred to Jesus as a "brown-skinned Palestinian Jew"—in other words, a Palestinian national of the Jewish faith. By all accounts, hardly an eyebrow was raised at this bizarre notion by convention delegates.

On April 19, 2019, an op-ed in the *New York Times* by Eric V. Copage revived the hoax, claiming that "Jesus, born in Bethlehem, was most likely a Palestinian man with dark skin."

While the *New York Times* was forced to correct this Jesus-Palestinian lie, that didn't stop Muslim U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar from retweeting Copage's falsehood just a few weeks later.

This pattern of relentless hammering a blatant falsehood is of course not unknown. Nazi propaganda expert, Joseph Goebbels, maintained that, "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

Dr. Mordechai Kedar, a senior lecturer in the Department of Arabic Culture at Bar-Ilan University, explained Rep. Omar's (and by extension Sarsour's) use of the Big Lie to *Breaking Israel News* by observing, "Omar is stating that Jesus was Palestinian because he was born in Palestine. She believes this to be true for anyone and at any point in history, since Palestine has existed since the creation of the world. Therefore, any person who has ever lived here, including all the people described in the Bible and the New Testament, were Palestinians."

This Big Lie is least about Jesus and mostly about discrediting the right of the Jewish people to have a state in the Holy Land. Thus, because it is fundamentally an effort to delegitimize Jewish self-determination, it is fundamentally anti-Semitic.

While both Sarsour and Omar have long established their anti-Semitic *bona fides*, telling Big Lies about the Jewish people's inalienable rights to a state in Palestine is apparently no obstacle to many mainstream media and politicians who accept such calumnies without shame.

Suffice it to say that those who believe history is sacred—that it enlightens our present and guides our future—are obligated to rise up against those who trample the truth. The Big Lie can only be defeated by louder, more powerful voices.

I hope in your conversations with friends, family and colleagues you'll use the "Jesus was Palestinian" hoax as an object lesson for understanding—and triumphing over—those who practice the Big Lie.

In addition to advocating for an end to lies about Jews and Israel from Palestinians, I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to visit FLAME's lively new Facebook page and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new hasbarah campaign—a refutation of the myth of "Palestinian territories."

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson
President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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P.S. Critics of Israel, from *The New York Times* to BDS and the United Nations, usually base their condemnation of Israel on accusations that Israel's settlements (or its "occupation of Palestinian territory") are illegal. These accusations are false and deserve to be exposed once and for all. That's why FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called "[What Is 'Palestinian Territory'?](#)" I hope you'll review this hard-hitting paid editorial, which will begin running in national media this month. It provides a plain-English explanation of the legal issues surrounding Israel's historical and entirely legal presence in its Biblical homeland. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Pence and President Trump. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a donation now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate](#) now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Trump stay focused on Israel's critical role in protecting U.S. interests in the region—as well as protecting itself.

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