

Having trouble viewing? [View this mailing online.](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO THE FLAME HOTLINE](#) [DONATE TO FLAME](#)



March 28, 2023



## How the Palestinians Got Their Name: The True Story

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

Arabs who live in what Jews call the Land of Israel, including Judea and Samaria (aka the West Bank) today call themselves Palestinians. But as a people, until only recently, they have not been identified with the region's name, "Palestine."

Notwithstanding, many Arabs in the region—and their sympathizers—attempt to co-opt the words Palestine and Palestinian to give their national movement a sense of longevity, credibility and even ownership it doesn't possess. In fact, the word Palestine is not even Arab or Middle Eastern in origin.

Rather, the regional name Palestine dates back some 1900 years, and is derived from a people *also* not native to the region—the Philistines.

While by the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE the Philistines had disappeared from history, the name associated with them did not. The Romans, in a fit of spite, reapplied the term "Palestine" to the Land of Israel centuries later in 135 CE.

In effect, the Romans sought to erase the association between the Land of Israel and the Jewish people.

The Palestine moniker stuck long after the Roman Empire fell. When the Muslims conquered the region in 629 CE, they Arabized the name to "Filastin." Nonetheless, this term cannot be found in the Koran, though the name Israel is mentioned in the book several times.

In any event, the regional name Palestine continued to endure, though for nearly two thousand years, it never referred to a country or a group of people.

After World War I, Palestine's modern contours were established. The British Mandate of Palestine originally consisted of present-day Israel, Gaza, Judea and Samaria, and Jordan.

[HOME](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[DONATE](#)

[PR FOR ISRAEL](#)

[HOTLINE ARCHIVE](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

**THIS MONTH'S AD  
APPEARED IN  
PUBLICATIONS  
REACHING 10 MILLION  
READERS**

**YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...**

**Demand Justice for Jewish Students**  
**New report shows skyrocketing attacks on students' Jewish identity—rooted in anti-Zionism, a modern disguise for classic antisemitism. It's time to fight back.**

Despite rising campus attacks on Israel, most Jewish students and support the Jewish state. But anti-Zionism based in the classroom and public square forces many students to hide their Jewish identity. Greater enforcement of Title VI anti-discrimination laws promises a cure to this injustice.

**What are the facts?**  
According to a new report by ANSCHA Institute, bullying and intimidation of Jewish students on university campuses spiked in the last year, while attempts to censor Zionism increased on 644 U.S. campuses. Jewish identity trips on Israel increased nearly 20-fold. Retention of Jewish persistence in 1980s. But Germany, near 90% of U.S. Jewish students are they hide their Jewish identity, according to a 2021 poll by the Brandeis Center for Human Rights.

**Antisemitic attacks on campus must be prosecuted**  
While discrimination against most ethnic minorities is strictly covered on campus, university administrators have generally failed to protect Jewish students from attacks against them. Furthermore, a spike of complaints recently filed with the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) now demand action under Title VI anti-discrimination statutes. Currently, George Washington University, City University of New York, University of Vermont, University of Illinois and University of Southern California are among schools facing OCR investigations for alleged antisemitism violations.

**Not surprisingly, the ANSCHA report registered pro-Palestinian groups, such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), are responsible for targeting Jewish students.**  
Indeed, the report found that anti-Zionist groups like SJP were the largest overall contributors to attacks on Jewish identity. Despite their pattern of making antisemitic hate, to date only a single chapter of SJP has been prosecuted, that done on a U.S. campus at New York's private Fordham University. The hat was upheld in court.

ANSCHA report also noted the contribution of nationally Jewish anti-Zionist groups and individuals to the assault on Jewish identity. One such group is Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), which now espouses Jewish identity as a cover for antisemitism.

But enough that Jewish students are targeted for persecution by their peers, but can even when university faculty support the persecution. No wonder, according to ANSCHA, that universities with faculty who support the BDS movement were three to seven times more likely to suffer attacks on Jewish identity. In fact, ANSCHA found that "twenty percent of threats to Jewish identity took place at events supported by academic faculty."

**Sadly, without federal intervention, these's little hope universities will stop antisemitic attacks.** Tragically, Jewish students who hid their Jewish identity is educational can ultimately only that schools' harassment policies to protect them. Their

FLAME is a non-profit, nonprofit strictly organized to pursue a free movement movement that supports movement in the field for the cause to be made "for the national contribution on antisemitism."

**To receive free FLAME updates, visit our website: [www.factsandlogic.org](https://www.factsandlogic.org)**

**FLAME**  
Facts and Logic About the Middle East  
PO Box 1010, Berkeley, CA 94703  
James Steinbock, President  
Giovanna D'Amico, VP, President

This message has been published and paid for by



**IF YOU SUPPORT  
PUBLISHING FLAME'S  
BOLD PR MESSAGES,  
PLEASE HELP US!!**

Arab nationalism in this region largely emerged in response to the Zionist movement. Indeed, during the British Mandate, the term Palestinian often referred to Jews living in the Mandate, as well as their institutions.

It was not until the 1960s that Arabs began to use the term to denote the Arabs of the former British Mandate. Today, many again use the name Palestine to disassociate the Jewish people from their native homeland, just as in Roman times.

While “Palestine” has no connection to any indigenous people of the Holy Land, several prior names connect it to the Jews—Eretz Bnei Israel (Land of the Children of Israel), Eretz Israel (Land of Israel) and Judah from which the term “Jew” derives.

The place name “Palestine” has its origins with the Philistines—a people from the Aegean Sea, closely related to the ancient Greeks. They lived on the coast of what are now the Gaza Strip and Israel, but became extinct by the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

After the Second Jewish Revolt of 132-135 CE was crushed, the Romans were determined to wipe the existence of the Jewish people from their land once and for all.

They tried to do this by changing the name of the territory from Judea to Syria Palestina. The Romans chose this name to insult the Jews and remind them of their ancient enemies, the Philistines.

During the Middle Ages, “Palestine” fell into common use in early modern English and was used by the Crusaders.

However, throughout the centuries “Palestine” was never attached to any ethnic or religious group. In short, in most of history, there were never any “Palestinians.”

After World War I, the Holy Land became a British Mandate. During the Mandate period, it was actually common for the media to refer to Jewish residents of the territory as Palestinians.

Indeed, before Israel’s founding, several prominent Jewish and Zionist organizations incorporated the name “Palestine”—including *The Palestine Post* and the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, which are now the *Jerusalem Post* and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra respectively.

Nevertheless, the term “Palestinian” was still neither an ethnic nor a religious identity, and “Palestine” was never a country. In fact, many Arabs in British Mandate Palestine considered themselves part of Greater Syria rather than “Palestinians.”

No surprise, then, that in 1937, a local Arab leader told the Palestine Royal Commission, “There is no such country [as Palestine]. Palestine is a term the Zionists invented! Our country for centuries was part of Syria.” Arab historian

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

**DONATE NOW »**

 **SUBSCRIBE FREE**

**FLAME'S WEEKLY  
HOTLINE  
E-NEWSLETTER**



FLAME's Hotline e-newsletter keeps you up to date on the most important pro-Israel advocacy issues and features our choice of the week's most informative and thought-provoking article on Israel and the Middle East. If you only subscribe to one pro-Israel news service, make it the FLAME Hotline.

**SUBSCRIBE NOW »**

Philip Hitti echoed this sentiment shortly before Israeli independence, saying, “There is no such thing as Palestine in history, absolutely not.”

The watershed moment for the “Palestinian” national movement came after the 1967 Six Day War, when Israel won control of Judea and Samaria from Jordan. The words of author Walid Shoebat of Bethlehem sum up a profound shift in local Arabs’ identity: “On June 4, 1967, I was a Jordanian and overnight I became a Palestinian.”

Since 1967, a whole national mythology has been created around the terms “Palestine” and “Palestinian”. For instance, the Arab Palestinians have claimed ancestry to the Canaanites who preceded the ancient Israelites and Philistines in the Holy Land.

In 2018, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told the United Nations’ Security Council “we are the descendants of the Canaanites that lived in the land 5000 years ago and continued to live there to this day.”

However, most Palestinians trace their origins among prominent tribes in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Egypt. Yasser Arafat was born in Egypt. Even the Kanaan family in Nablus (Shechem) trace their ancestry to Syria. In any case, the Canaanites were extinct more than 1600 years before the Arabs first arrived in the Holy Land.

Preposterously, Palestinians have even asserted that Jesus Christ was Palestinian. In a Christmas message in 2013, President Abbas called Jesus a “Palestinian Messenger.” In 2019, Palestinian-American activist Linda Sarsour posted on Twitter saying, “Jesus was Palestinian of Nazareth.”

We beg the pardon of Mr. Abbas and his fellow fantasists, but Jesus Christ was a Jew from Judea, so named because it was, and still is, the homeland of the Jewish people.

I urge you in conversations with friends, colleagues and family—and in letters to the editor—to point out that while the Arabs of the region are free to call themselves whatever they want, they are not free to co-opt the 3000-year history of the Holy Land for themselves.

Emphasize, too, that the name “Palestine” represents the Jews’ original dispossession of their homeland 1900 years ago. In fact, it is the original “Nakba”—the Arabic word for “catastrophe,” often cynically applied to Israel’s founding in 1948.

I hope you’ll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME’s lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME’s new *hasbarah* campaign —“Demand Justice for Jewish Students”—which exposes rising attacks on Jewish college students’ identity and how these acts of antisemitism can be defeated.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, Publisher

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. You've surely seen headlines describing increasing attacks on Jewish students—in the classroom and in the public square—by radical anti-Zionist students, as well as faculty members. So far, university administrators have failed to prevent this kind of antisemitism on campus. At the heart of this discrimination, Israel's enemies outrageously claim that Zionism is not part of being Jewish. No wonder more and more Jewish students are hiding their Jewish identities on campus. I think you'll agree that we supporters of Israel need to speak out. FLAME's new hasbarah---explanatory message—“[Demand Justice for Jewish Students](#)” —tells how recent law suits based on Title VI anti-discrimination laws are putting pressure on college administrators to protect Jewish students from such attacks. I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME intends to publish in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Star Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Newsmax*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to [support us](#).

As of today, more than 15,000 Israel supporters receive the FLAME Hotline at no charge every week. If you're not yet a subscriber, won't you join us in receiving these timely updates, so you can more effectively tell the truth about Israel? Just go to [free subscription](#).



Facts and Logic  
About the Middle East  
PO Box 3460  
Berkeley, CA 94703

Copyright 2023 FLAME. All rights reserved.

[Unsubscribe](#)