Why do people say "so-called Palestinians"? Are Palestinians a real people group? Are they the Philistines of old?

Palestinians constitute a population with a shared history and experiences, though not necessarily a unified nation in the traditional sense[1]. The term "Palestinian" has evolved over time, originally referring to anyone living in the region between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan River, regardless of ethnicity[2]. However, the modern usage primarily refers to non-Jewish, Arabic-speaking residents of this area[2]. The Palestinian identity has been shaped by common experiences of displacement, occupation, and a growing sense of nationalism, particularly since 1948[1].

The Philistines were a distinct people who settled on the coast of Canaan in the 13th or early 12th century BCE, originating from the Aegean area[3][4]. They were eventually defeated by the Israelites under King David and later came under the control of various empires[5]. Modern Palestinians, on the other hand, are described as descendants of a mix of local and regional peoples, including Arabs, who developed an Arab-Islamic culture over the past fourteen centuries[5][6]. Some Palestinian nationalists have claimed ancient roots, including connections to Philistines, but this is considered anachronistic by scholars[5][6].

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