

(Al-Mansura (Safed



Subdistrict: Safad

Estimated population in 1948: 418

Date of occupation and depopulation: 25 May 1948

Military operation: Operation Yiftach

Military force: Haganah forces, including Palmach units operating in the Safad region

Israeli settlements established on village land before 1948: She'ar Yashuv, established in 1940

Israeli settlements established on the built-up site after 1948: None

Al-Mansura was a depopulated Palestinian village in the Safad Subdistrict, situated

approximately 31 kilometres northeast of the city of Safad. It stood near the western bank of the Banyas River and close to Palestine’s former boundary with Syria. The village name, al-Mansura, is derived from the Arabic root associated with victory.

The village occupied level ground surrounded by agricultural land. Nineteenth-century travellers described it as a settlement of stone-and-mud houses built on a plain near a river. Its modern inhabitants were all Muslims. Several archaeological tells and khirbas were located in its vicinity.

Boundaries of al-Mansura

Al-Mansura was situated among the following Palestinian villages and localities:

- North: [al-Shawka al-Tahta](#).
- West: [al-Khisas](#).
- Southwest: [Qaytiyya](#).
- South: [al-‘Abisiyya](#).
- East: the Syrian Golan, occupied by Israel since 1967.

Economic Life in al-Mansura

Al-Mansura’s economy depended principally on agriculture and livestock raising. The village was surrounded by cultivated land, and in 1944/45, 1,249 dunams under Palestinian ownership were irrigated or used for orchards. A further 175 dunams in the same land-use category were under Jewish ownership.

Land Ownership in al-Mansura

Ownership category	Land area (dunams)*
Palestinian ownership	1,254

Ownership category	Land area (dunams)*
Jewish ownership	175
Public land	115
Total	1,544

* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

Land Use in al-Mansura in 1945

Land-use category	Palestinian ownership (dunams)*	Jewish ownership (dunams)*	Public land (dunams)*	Total (dunams)*
Irrigated land and orchards	1,249	175	0	1,424
Built-up area	5	0	0	5
Cultivable land	1,249	175	0	1,424
Uncultivated land	0	0	115	115

* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

Population of al-Mansura

Year	Population
1931	89
1945	360
1948	418 (estimate)
Estimated refugees in 1998	2,565

The official British Mandate census recorded 89 inhabitants in 1931. The village population was recorded as 360 in the 1945 statistics and has been retrospectively estimated at

approximately 418 by mid-1948. The figure for 1998 is a demographic estimate of the village's refugee population and descendants rather than an official census count.

Number of Houses in al-Mansura

Year	Number of houses
1931	18
1948	84 (estimate)

Archaeological Sites near al-Mansura

Several archaeological localities were recorded around the village. Tall al-Turmus, al-Nabi Huda, Khirbat al-Buhayrat and Khirbat al-'Umayri lay to its east, while Tall al-Mun'atifa was situated to the northeast. The available sources identify these as archaeological localities but provide limited information about their dates or historical functions.

Occupation and Depopulation of al-Mansura

Al-Mansura experienced several armed encounters during the opening months of 1948. On 12 February, a British patrol clashed near the village with a larger Arab force, probably a unit of the Arab Liberation Army. One British soldier was killed; the contemporary report did not give a figure for casualties among the Arab force.

According to the Palestinian newspaper *Filastin*, a fifteen-man Haganah platoon reached the outskirts of al-Mansura on 5 March 1948. A brief exchange of fire followed, during which one resident of the village was wounded.

Al-Mansura was depopulated on 25 May 1948, near the conclusion of Operation Yiftach. Walid Khalidi, drawing in part on Benny Morris, attributes its depopulation to a combination of psychological-warfare tactics and direct military pressure that also displaced the inhabitants of

other villages in northeastern Palestine. A contemporary intelligence report likewise recorded the departure on 25 May and identified a Haganah “whispering” campaign as the immediate cause, with villagers crossing into Syria.

The date of 31 October 1948 and the attribution to the Carmeli, Oded, Seventh and Golani brigades appear to conflate al-Mansura’s depopulation with Operation Hiram, conducted months later in another phase of Israel’s occupation of Palestine during the Nakba. The better-documented date for al-Mansura is 25 May 1948, during Operation Yiftach.

Israeli Settlements on the Lands of al-Mansura

She'ar Yashuv was established in 1940 on land traditionally belonging to al-Mansura, approximately one kilometre northeast of the village site. No Israeli settlement was subsequently established directly over the former built-up area. The identification of Netu'a as a settlement on al-Mansura’s site is not supported by the principal Palestinian reference works and appears to result from confusion with another depopulated village bearing the same name.

Al-Mansura Today

The village was completely demolished, leaving few readily identifiable traces of its buildings. The site was later converted into a fish-rearing facility containing a series of ponds. A narrow strip of thorny vegetation and trees remains between the ponds.

Sources

- [PalQuest, “al-Mansura”](#).
- [PalQuest, “Israeli Intelligence Report on the Depopulation of Palestine, 30 June 1948”](#).
- [Palestine Remembered, “al-Mansura—Safad”](#).
- Walid Khalidi, ed., *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and*

Depopulated by Israel in 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992.

- Government of Palestine, *Census of Palestine, 1931*.
- Government of Palestine, *Village Statistics, April 1945*.
- Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949*.