

al-Khayriyya



Subdistrict: Jaffa

Estimated population in 1948: 1,647

Date of occupation and depopulation: 29 April 1948

Military operation: Operation Hametz

Military unit: Alexandroni Brigade

Settlement established on the village's traditional land before 1948: Kfar Azar (1932)

Settlements established on village land after 1948: Ramat Pinkas (1952) and Ramat Ef'al (1969)

Al-Khayriyya: A Depopulated Palestinian Village

Al-Khayriyya was a Palestinian village situated approximately 7.5 kilometres east of Jaffa. Zionist forces occupied and depopulated it during the 1948 Nakba. Most of its buildings were subsequently demolished, and part of its land was later used as a major waste-disposal site.

Location and Surroundings

Al-Khayriyya stood on level ground in the central coastal plain, at an average elevation of approximately 25 metres above sea level. A network of roads passing through or near the village provided access to Jaffa, al-Lydd, al-Ramla and the surrounding villages.

The village was situated on the northern bank of Wadi al-Musrarah. The lower reaches of the nearby al-‘Awja River were locally known as Nahr al-Jarisha. The principal coastal road passed to the east of the village.

The village’s original name was Ibn Baraq, preserving the name of the ancient settlement of Beneberak. In 701 BCE, the Assyrian king Sennacherib mentioned Bana’i-Barqa among the towns of the Palestinian coastal plain encountered during his military campaign. The village was known as Beneberak during the Roman period and as Bombrac in Crusader sources.

During the British Mandate, its inhabitants adopted the name al-Khayriyya to distinguish the village from the Zionist settlement of Bnei Brak, founded approximately six kilometres to the north in 1924.

Boundaries of Al-Khayriyya

Al-Khayriyya was surrounded by the following villages and localities:

- North and northeast: agricultural land and neighbouring Zionist settlements.
- Northwest and west: [Salama](#).
- Southwest: [Yazur](#).

- South: [Bayt Dajan](#).
- Southeast: [Saqiya](#).



The Depopulated Palestinian Village of Al-Khayriyya

Population of Al-Khayriyya

The village's inhabitants were predominantly Muslim, though a small Christian community was also recorded. Its population increased from 546 in 1922 to 1,420 in 1945. The estimated population immediately before the Nakba was 1,647.

Year	Population
1596	154
1922	546
1931	914
1945	1,420
1948	1,647
Estimated number of refugees in 1998	10,116

Number of Houses in Al-Khayriyya

Year	Number of houses
1931	212
1948	382

Economic Life

Agriculture and livestock raising formed the basis of the village economy. Citrus cultivation was particularly important. In 1944–1945, Palestinian farmers cultivated 3,359 dunams with citrus, 2,395 dunams with cereals, and 1,275 dunams with irrigated crops or orchards. Several

artesian wells supplied irrigation water.

Al-Khayriyya also contained a range of shops and small businesses, including a butcher's shop, cafés, bakeries, grocery and textile shops, and facilities for manufacturing bricks.

Land Ownership in Al-Khayriyya

Ownership category	Area in dunams
Palestinian-owned	7,182
Jewish-owned	5,842
Public land	648
Total	13,672

* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

Land Use in 1945

Land-use category	Palestinian land (dunams)	Jewish land (dunams)
Citrus plantations	3,359	2,623
Irrigated land and orchards	1,275	122
Cereal cultivation	2,395	3,097
Built-up area	26	0
Total cultivable land	7,029	5,842
Uncultivable land	775	0

* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres. Some agricultural categories overlap within the broader total for cultivable land.

Education

A boys' school was established in al-Khayriyya in 1920. Eight dunams of land were attached to it for practical agricultural training. By 1946, the school had approximately 183 pupils. A girls' school was founded in 1945 and had approximately 69 pupils by 1946.

Occupation and Depopulation

Al-Khayriyya experienced repeated military threats during the months preceding its occupation. On 15 December 1947, the Palestinian newspaper *Filastin* reported that the villagers had dug defensive trenches and organised rotating guard duties in response to attacks on the neighbouring villages of Salama and al-'Abbasiyya.

On 12 February 1948, a Zionist force entered one of the village's citrus groves and demolished a house with explosives. No casualties were reported in that incident.

Al-Khayriyya was subsequently attacked during Operation Hametz, a Haganah offensive intended to encircle Jaffa and occupy the surrounding Palestinian villages. The Alexandroni Brigade seized the village on 29 April 1948. The attack and occupation resulted in the displacement of its inhabitants.

Some databases give 25 April—the opening phase of Operation Hametz—as the village's occupation date, while other accounts associate the villagers' flight with the night of 28 April. The principal village study, however, dates the Alexandroni Brigade's seizure of al-Khayriyya to 29 April 1948.

Settlements Established on Village Land

Kfar Azar was established in 1932 on land traditionally belonging to al-Khayriyya. After the village's depopulation, Ramat Pinkas was founded on its land in 1952, followed by Ramat Ef'al in 1969. Urban expansion within the eastern Tel Aviv metropolitan area subsequently covered additional parts of the village lands.

Al-Khayriyya Today

Most of the village was demolished. A small number of houses and one of its two school buildings survived. One of the remaining structures was a two-storey house belonging to Ahmad al-Tibi; other surviving buildings were left abandoned or incorporated into the surrounding urban landscape.

A large waste-disposal site was later established on al-Khayriyya's land. The landfill, commonly known as Hiriya—a name derived from al-Khayriyya—received waste from the Tel Aviv metropolitan region for several decades. It closed in 1998 and was subsequently included in a major environmental rehabilitation project associated with Ariel Sharon Park.

Sources

- [Walid Khalidi, *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948*, Institute for Palestine Studies.](#)
 - [Palestine Remembered: Al-Khayriyya, Jaffa Subdistrict.](#)
 - [Bibliographic record for Walid Khalidi's *All That Remains*.](#)