

(Al-Jura (Jerusalem



منزل خرب في الطرف الجنوبي للقرية (سنة ١٩٨٦) [الجورة]

Subdistrict: Jerusalem

Estimated population of al-Jura in 1948: 487

Probable date of occupation and depopulation: 11 July 1948

Military operation: Operation Dani

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

Israeli settlements established on village land after 1948: Ora

Al-Jura was located approximately 8.5 kilometres west-southwest of Jerusalem.

Al-Jura was a depopulated Palestinian village in the Jerusalem Subdistrict. Its population was estimated at 487 in 1948. A paved secondary road connected the village to the Jerusalem road, while unpaved roads and paths linked it with Ayn Karim, al-Walaja, Sataf, and Khirbat al-Lawz.

The village stood on the steep western slope of a mountain and overlooked several deep valleys. A small ravine ran from east to west along its southern perimeter.

A small hill separated al-Jura from Ayn Karim. A school and a convalescent hospital stood on this hill. Local descriptions associate this area with a compound known as al-Maskubiyya and a school referred to as “Miss Kerry,” although these names are not consistently recorded in the principal academic village surveys.

Several archaeological sites lay near the village, including Khirbat Sa'ida, Ayn al-Jadida, and Khirbat al-Qusur.

Boundaries of al-Jura

Al-Jura was surrounded by the following Palestinian villages and localities:

- North: [Al-Qastal](#).
- Northwest: [Sataf](#).
- West: [Khirbat al-Lawz](#).
- Southwest: [Ras Abu Ammar](#).
- South: [Al-Walaja](#).
- Southeast: the lands of al-Walaja extending into the area that later became part of the West Bank.
- East: [Al-Maliha](#).

- Northeast: [Ayn Karim](#).

Architecture of al-Jura

In the late nineteenth century, al-Jura was described as a small hamlet built on the slope of a ridge, with olive trees growing below it. Its original plan was rectangular, but later construction extended in an arc and gradually gave the village a crescent-like form. Its houses were built of stone.

Origin of the Name al-Jura

The Arabic name *al-Jura* means “the hollow” or “the depression,” probably referring to the village’s position relative to the surrounding heights and valleys. PalQuest records an average elevation of approximately 800 metres above sea level; consequently, the earlier figure of 725 metres should not be treated as definitive.

Population of al-Jura

Year	Population
1922	234
1931	329
1945	420
1948	487 (estimated)
Estimated number of refugees in 1998	2,992

The 1948 and 1998 figures are demographic estimates rather than contemporary census counts.

Number of Houses in al-Jura

Year	Number of houses
1931	63
1948	93 (estimated)

The figure for 1948 is a later estimate, not an official housing census.

Public Services in al-Jura

Al-Jura had few public facilities of its own. Its residents depended on neighbouring Ayn Karim and on Jerusalem for many services.

Economic Life in al-Jura

The villagers obtained drinking water from a spring west of the village. Other springs to the west and southwest supplied water for fruit orchards and vegetable plots. Al-Jura was known for the quality of its fruit, particularly its grapes. In 1944/45, 846 dunams were allocated to cereal cultivation, while 1,125 dunams of land under Palestinian ownership were irrigated or used for orchards.

Land Ownership in al-Jura

Ownership category	Land area (dunams)*
Palestinian ownership	3,909
Jewish ownership	247
Public land	2
Total	4,158

* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

Land Use in al-Jura, 1944/45

Land-use category	Palestinian ownership (dunams)*	Jewish ownership (dunams)*	Public land (dunams)*
Irrigated land and orchards	1,125	89	0
Olive groves	176	0	0
Cereal cultivation	846	0	0
Built-up area	27	0	0
Cultivable land	1,971	89	0
Uncultivated land	1,911	158	2

* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

Olive groves form part of the irrigated-land and orchard category and should not be added to it as a separate component. The two dunams of public land have been listed separately rather than included under Palestinian ownership.

Archaeological Sites near al-Jura

East of the village lay Khirbat Sa'ida and Ayn al-Jadida, where remains indicated Byzantine and later Crusader-period activity. Nearby Khirbat al-Qusur has been identified with the sixteenth-century settlement of Qusur. Archaeological features recorded in the surrounding area included ruined structures, foundations, arches, and a lintel bearing a Greek inscription.

Occupation and Depopulation of al-Jura

Circumstantial evidence indicates that Israeli forces occupied al-Jura during Operation Dani, which was conducted between 9 and 18 July 1948 as part of Israel's occupation of Palestine

during the Nakba. The village's exact date of occupation is not independently documented with certainty.

Walid Khalidi's account states that on 11 July Israeli units operating in the southern part of the Jerusalem corridor captured two hilltops overlooking Ayn Karim and began shelling that village before occupying it. Because these heights lay immediately beside al-Jura, Khalidi concludes that al-Jura probably fell at approximately the same time. Accordingly, 11 July 1948 should be presented as the probable date of occupation rather than as an incontrovertibly documented date.

Israeli Settlements on al-Jura's Land

In 1950, Israel established the settlement of Ora on land belonging to al-Jura, approximately 0.5 kilometres east of the former village site. Ora was therefore established on village land, but not directly over al-Jura's original built-up area.

Al-Jura Today

The only surviving structures recorded at the village site are two limestone houses on the valley floor at its southern edge. The larger is a rectangular, two-storey building whose upper floor contains two arched doorways, each flanked by arched windows. Almond groves cover a terrace on the valley floor, while fig, carob, and cypress trees, together with cactuses, grow across the site. Ruins of houses, stone stairways, and wells remain visible on the adjoining land, and cypress forests surround the former village.

Sources

- [PalQuest: Al-Jura.](#)
- [PalQuest: Operation Dani.](#)
- [Palestine Remembered: Al-Jura, Jerusalem.](#)

- Walid Khalidi, ed., *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948*, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992.