

Al-Manara



al-Manara ('Arab al-Manara) - Tiberias Subdistrict

Al-Manara, also known as 'Arab al-Manara, was a depopulated Palestinian village in the Tiberias subdistrict. It stood on a hilltop overlooking Lake Tiberias in lower eastern Galilee, approximately 5 km south of the city of Tiberias and at an average elevation of about 225 meters above sea level.

The official 1931 Census of Palestine recorded 214 inhabitants, while the 1944/45 statistics recorded 490. The village's land statistics were combined with those of

neighboring Nasir al-Din into a single unit totaling 6,797 dunums.

Haganah forces attacked al-Manara in early March 1948. Eyewitness testimony collected by Palestinian historian Nafez Nazzal specifically dates the assault to 2 March. The villagers were expelled, some houses were destroyed, and the attack became an early step in isolating Tiberias from its Palestinian hinterland to the south.

Location of al-Manara

Al-Manara stood on a hilltop overlooking Lake Tiberias in lower eastern Galilee. Northeast of the village, a steep escarpment descended toward the lakeshore, while a gently sloping plain extended to the south.

A secondary road linked the village with a main road running northwest toward Tiberias.

Nasir al-Din, which Khalidi describes as al-Manara's twin village, lay approximately 3 km to the northwest.

Neighboring Villages and Areas

Palestinian local documentation and village maps place al-Manara within the following geographical surroundings:

Direction	Village / Area
North	Tiberias and its surroundings
Northwest	Nasir al-Din, approximately 3 km away
West	Lubya
South	al-'Ubaydiyya
Southeast	Samakh and its surrounding area
East	Lake Tiberias

These locations describe the village's geographical surroundings and should not

automatically be treated as exact cadastral boundaries without reference to original land-demarcation maps.

Name and Earlier History

Walid Khalidi suggests that the name al-Manara may have derived from Kefar Menori, a settlement that occupied the same locality during the Roman period.

The site was known as Menan during the Crusader period.

This identification is a historical and archaeological possibility rather than proof of uninterrupted settlement by the same population from the Roman period to the modern Palestinian village.

Archaeological Remains

The village itself occupied an archaeological site containing the ruins of older houses.

Additional archaeological remains were recorded at nearby Khirbat al-Manara and Khirbat Sarjuna.

The principal sources reviewed do not securely date every surviving feature, and the remains should not all be assigned to a single historical period without specialized archaeological study.

Built Environment

Al-Manara was a small and relatively compact village. Its built-up area was roughly square and its houses stood close together.

The official 1931 census recorded 33 occupied houses.

The 1944/45 built-up land category was combined statistically with Nasir al-Din, so the full land-use figure should not be attributed exclusively to al-Manara's physical built-up area.

Population of al-Manara

Year	Population	Nature of figure / Notes
1922	122	Official Census of Palestine: 121 Muslims and 1 Jew
1931	214	Official Census of Palestine; all Muslims, living in 33 occupied houses
1944/45	490	Official statistics for al-Manara itself; Nasir al-Din was separately recorded with 90 inhabitants
1948	568	Later estimate published by Palestine Remembered; not an official census
1998	3,491 refugees and descendants	Later demographic estimate published by Palestine Remembered

Palestine Remembered gives a 1945 figure of 580. This does not represent al-Manara alone: the official statistics record 490 for al-Manara and 90 for Nasir al-Din, producing 580 only if the two village populations are added together.

The village-specific official figure used here is therefore 490.

Number of Houses

Year	Houses	Nature of figure
1931	33	Official Census of Palestine
1948	87	Later Palestine Remembered estimate; not an official census figure

Land Ownership: al-Manara and Nasir al-Din Combined

The land statistics require particular caution because the 1944/45 records combined al-Manara and Nasir al-Din into a single land unit.

The combined area totaled 6,797 dunums.

Using Palestine Remembered's simplified terminology:

Ownership category	Dunums
Palestinian	4,185
Transferred to Zionists	1,410
Communal/Public	1,202
Total	6,797

The official categories are Arab, Jewish, and Public, with the same respective figures of 4,185, 1,410, and 1,202 dunums.

These land figures apply to al-Manara and Nasir al-Din together and must not be presented as the land area of al-Manara alone.

Land Use in 1944/45: al-Manara and Nasir al-Din Combined

Land use	Arab	Jewish	Public	Total dunums
Cereals	4,172	1,235	148	5,555
Built-up land	13	174	0	187
Non-cultivable land	0	1	1,054	1,055
Total	4,185	1,410	1,202	6,797

The categories balance exactly with the official ownership totals.

This also corrects a presentation problem in *Palestine Remembered*, where 4,320 dunums of cereals appear under the Palestinian category. The official breakdown shows that this figure combines 4,172 Arab dunums with 148 Public dunums.

Likewise, 1,054 dunums of non-cultivable land were Public land, while only one dunum in that category was Jewish-owned.

Economic Life in al-Manara

The inhabitants depended on agriculture and livestock breeding.

The principal crops documented by Khalidi were cereals, watermelons, and

tobacco. In 1944/45, 4,172 Arab dunums within the combined al-Manara–Nasir al-Din land unit were devoted to cereals.

Later Palestinian local documentation also mentions fishing in Lake Tiberias. Since Khalidi's core village entry emphasizes agriculture and livestock, fishing is best treated as supplementary local evidence rather than the principal documented livelihood.

Water Sources

Several springs were located near al-Manara, including a group of hot springs approximately 1.5 km northeast of the village on the shore of Lake Tiberias.

Palestinian local documentation also records 'Ayn al-Qasab north of the village and several wadis associated with the local drainage system, including Wadi al-Basas, Wadi al-Qasab, Wadi al-Dalba, Wadi al-Wasi', and Wadi al-Jardun.

These details help reconstruct the village environment while distinguishing between the core Khalidi account and later Palestinian geographical documentation.

Education and Services

Khalidi's village entry does not document a formal school in al-Manara.

The Palestinian Encyclopedia states that the village lacked formal public services, which is consistent with the absence of a documented government school or other public institution.

No school, founding date, or enrollment figure has therefore been inferred without supporting evidence.

Religious Life

The 1931 census recorded all of al-Manara's inhabitants as Muslims, and the 1945 statistics listed its population in the Arab category.

The principal village sources reviewed do not provide securely documented information about a mosque or a named shrine within the village, so none has been added without evidence.

al-Manara before the Nakba

Al-Manara's position south of Tiberias gave it military importance because it overlooked approaches to the city from the south.

As fighting intensified in early 1948, the Haganah increasingly targeted villages in the hinterlands of Palestinian cities in order to isolate those cities and weaken the morale of their inhabitants.

Al-Manara became one of the earliest villages in the Tiberias area to be attacked in this context, more than a month before the city itself fell.

Occupation and Depopulation of al-Manara

Khalidi dates the fall of al-Manara generally to early March 1948 during an attack that served as a prelude to the eventual capture of Tiberias.

Palestine Remembered lists 1 March 1948 in its summary data. Eyewitnesses interviewed by Palestinian historian Nafez Nazzal, however, specifically dated the Haganah assault to **2 March 1948**.

According to those testimonies, Haganah soldiers expelled the villagers, destroyed some houses, and left leaflets warning the inhabitants not to return because the village had been mined.

The most accurate formulation is therefore that al-Manara was attacked and depopulated in **early March 1948, with eyewitness testimony specifically dating the assault to 2 March**, rather than treating 1 March as an unquestionably exact date.

The Attack and the Isolation of Tiberias

The assault on al-Manara was directly connected to the struggle over Tiberias.

Its capture cut an important southern approach to the city and contributed to a growing sense of encirclement and demoralization among Tiberias's Palestinian population.

It was thus an early step in isolating the city from its Palestinian hinterland. Tiberias itself did not fall until 18 April 1948.

Military Unit

The military organization securely identified in the attack on al-Manara is the **Haganah**.

Khalidi's village-specific account does not name a particular brigade or battalion.

The attack should therefore not automatically be attributed to the Golani Brigade merely because Golani later attacked nearby Nasir al-Din in April 1948. The two village assaults occurred more than a month apart and the sources do not justify transferring the unit identification from one village to the other.

Occupation Chronology

Stage	Date	Details
Growing military pressure around Tiberias	Early 1948	The Haganah increasingly targeted villages around Tiberias as part of efforts to isolate the city from its Palestinian hinterland.
Palestine Remembered summary date	1 March 1948	This date appears in the site's summary box but is less precise than the eyewitness account preserved by Nafez Nazzal.
Haganah assault	2 March 1948	Eyewitness testimony collected by Nafez Nazzal identifies this as the date of the attack.

Stage	Date	Details
Expulsion of the villagers	2 March 1948	Witnesses stated that Haganah soldiers drove the inhabitants from the village and destroyed some houses.
Warning against return	Immediately after the attack	Leaflets were reportedly left warning residents not to return and claiming that the village had been mined.
Further isolation of Tiberias	March–April 1948	The loss of al-Manara helped cut Tiberias off from the south and increased pressure on its Palestinian inhabitants.
Fall of Tiberias	18 April 1948	The Palestinian population of the city was displaced more than a month after the attack on al-Manara.
Destruction of al-Manara	Later; exact date not established	Most of the village site was eventually levelled, although no single documented demolition date is provided by the core source.

Refugees from al-Manara

Palestine Remembered estimates al-Manara's population in 1948 at approximately 568. This is a later demographic estimate rather than an official British Mandate census figure.

The same source estimates that refugees from the village and their descendants numbered approximately 3,491 in 1998.

Israeli Settlements on al-Manara Village Lands

Walid Khalidi and PalQuest state that **no Israeli settlement was established on al-Manara's village lands.**

Khalidi identifies Poriyya, established in 1949 to the south, as the closest settlement but does not classify it as being built on al-Manara land.

Some later Palestinian reference works differ in identifying nearby settlements.

This article retains the more cautious village-specific conclusion of Khalidi and PalQuest unless original cadastral evidence establishes otherwise.

al-Manara Today

In Walid Khalidi's field description, the village site had been levelled and was strewn with pieces of black stone.

Dark stone walls remained at the northern edge of the site, with doum palms growing among them.

A multilingual sign identified the location as an archaeological site and asked visitors to protect it.

This description does not constitute direct field verification of conditions in 2026. It derives from the fieldwork conducted for *All That Remains* before the book's publication in 1992.

Palestine Remembered also hosts later community photographs and documentation of the site, which are useful for tracing subsequent changes but do not by themselves constitute a comprehensive contemporary field survey of all former village lands.

Sources

- [PalQuest – al-Manara](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – al-Manara, Tiberias District](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – al-Manara entry from Walid Khalidi's All That Remains](#)
- [Institute for Palestine Studies – Walid Khalidi, All That Remains](#)
- [Institute for Palestine Studies – document including 1948 population figures for the Tiberias-area villages](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine 1922](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine 1931](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Village Statistics, April 1945](#)

- [Palestinian Encyclopedia – al-Manara](#)
- [Palestinian Villages Encyclopedia – al-Manara / 'Arab al-Manara; local documentation on boundaries and water sources](#)
- [PalQuest – All That Remains: Methodology and Field Research](#)