

Mashriq

The **Mashriq** (Arabic: مَشْرِق, also **Mashreq**, **Mashrek**) is the historical region of the Arab world to the east of Egypt (sometimes including Egypt and Sudan).^[5] This comprises the modern states of Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq.^{[6][7][8][9]} Poetically the "place of sunrise", the name is derived from the verb *sharaqa* (Arabic: شرق "to shine, illuminate, radiate" and "to rise"), referring to the east, where the sun rises.^{[10][11]}

Geography

As the word *Mashriq* refers to countries bounded between the Mediterranean Sea and Iran, it is the companion term to *Maghreb* (Arabic: مَغْرِب), the western part of North Africa. Egypt occupies an ambiguous position: while it has cultural, ethnic and linguistic ties to both the Mashriq and the Maghreb, it is different from both, and is usually seen as being part of neither; however, when it is grouped with one or the other, it is generally considered as a part of the Mashriq, due to its closer ties to the Levant. Egypt and the Levant were often ruled as a single unit, as under the New Kingdom of Egypt, the Ayyubid dynasty, the Mamluk Sultanate and for a time, under Muhammad Ali of Egypt. Similarly, Libya may itself be seen as bifurcated between Mashriq and Maghreb influences, with its eastern part (Cyrenaica) seen as linked more to Egypt and the Mashriq.^[12]

These geographical terms date from the early Islamic expansion. This region is similar to the Bilad al-Sham and Mesopotamian regions combined.^[13] As of 2014, the Mashriq is home to 1.7% of the global population.^{[14][15][16][17][18][19]}

See also

- Fertile Crescent
- Cradle of civilization
- Greater Syria
- Levant
- Shaam
- Maghreb, "place of sunset", which contrasts Mashriq, "place of sunrise"

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Map depicting the area most conservatively known as the *Mashriq*.^{[1][2][3][4]}

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