

# Western civilization to 1550 what is the west

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Submitted Western Civilization to 1550 " What is the West" Western Civilization has finally begun around 1300 after emerging within several thousand years and taking its form for several hundred years (King xxii). During this time, the attainment of maturity, production of creative innovations in culture, technology, politics, economics and influence around the world has been embraced by the West. But many children have had little information or lost of interest of the Western civilization particularly the development of the West itself.

However, King argued, " What is the West" (xvi). He proposed two ways of looking at the West: as a geographic location and as a culture and ethnicity. The latter is much more preferred by King as the definition of the West. According to King, looking at the West geographically is like standing outside the gates of the old Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England wherein an imaginary line called the Prime Meridian cuts the globe in half (xvi). This is the first and last of the boundless series of lines of longitude where East or West location can be signified precisely by its exact variation in hours, minutes, and seconds from Greenwich time. The East is mostly Europe, certainly England as one of the countries who are part while West involves America or the Western Civilization. The question " Where is the West" is answered through its heartland: Europe. It is the continent where the cultural, social, and political customs developed their modern form. When Western civilization has been transplanted in Europe after 1500, the West expanded and included regions of European settlements (xvii). But not all countries within Europe are part of the East and not all countries within the America are part of the West alone.

King stressed that the West is not a fact, a place, a specific people or race or <https://assignbuster.com/western-civilization-to-1550-what-is-the-west/>

even a set of nations (xvi). In fact, the West is " a body of ideas, values, customs, and beliefs" that was copied on the continent of Europe by the more advanced civilizations of the East at that time (King xvii). Western merchants, travelers, armies, and governors followed forth in almost all of the corners of the inhabited globe. King stated that the West is ideas, values, customs and beliefs which is the true meaning of the West.

There Western habits and values that constitute the core meaning of the West (King xvii). One of the principles is the principle of dignity which states that every human being is equal in terms of rights which cannot be taken away and that every human being is free. Another is the ideal of justice that says " no person should be unfairly privilege above another." The value of democracy is also included which affirms that the power of shaping the future is held by the people and not by selected leaders. Another concept is the method of rationalism " which assumes that all phenomena may be subject to the critical scrutiny of the human mind." Also included is the inclination to progress and the willingness to work toward goals that should be achieved in the future. Lastly is the habit of self-examination which states human beings are examining themselves in order to test whether their promises and responsibilities are fulfilled or not. These are the habits and values that defines Western Civilization and directs the way of development it has.

#### Reference:

King, Margaret L. *Western Civilization: Since 1300*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Laurence King Publishing Ltd., 2003.

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