

Western civilization

[History](#)



Western Civilization Civilization is described as the social process through which a society achieves an advanced stage of development and organization; moreover, it is used to illustrate the state of the society at a place. Western civilization is an accumulation of political, economic, social, and intellectual traditions, developed by ancient civilizations, and for this reason, western civilization is considered to have developed from the renaissance to modernity.

Renaissance describes the process in which artists and scholars attempted to rediscover as well as to revive works of arts and literature under the influence of classical models in the 14th-16th centuries. This paper seeks to explore the shifts in concepts and ideologies that occurred leading to western civilization.

Renaissance illustrates a period of cultural movement and its spread to the rest of Europe whereas Italy is considered the birthplace of the Renaissance, which saw the outlook and institutions of the middle ages merge. Therefore, during this period radical change would be experienced at all levels of the society, giving rise to the European civilization, which later transformed to the modern western civilization.

The central government within the political organization grew stronger in the wake of the rebirth but at the expense of feudalism. Feudalism was an arrangement in which persons regarded as nobles exercised public power, formerly held by kings since the existing monarchs could not guarantee the safety of their subjects. The notion that those regarded as the wellborn can influence policies and rule over others behind closed doors is still among the western civilization where stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process.

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Commercial and industrial activities expanded significantly, which introduced new and more efficient products to the society. As a result, capitalism in most city-states replaced most primitive forms of economic organization (Perry et al 293). This is a defining characteristic of the modern western civilization whose commercial activities are based on capitalism. The adoption of capitalism by the earlier civilizations enhanced pre-existing social inequalities, which for instance widened the gap between the rich and poor. At the height of the booming commercial activities, people in the middle-class level of the society increased in number as they amassed wealth, which played a crucial role in the economic and cultural life.

In addition, religious reforms were introduced following the fragmentation of unity in Christendom, which came about by the presence of secularism. This prompted questioning of ideas that had been traditionally accepted by the society. Consequently, the clergy lost their monopoly on learning, giving rise to humanist scholars who were independent thinkers and would challenge existing ideas.

The scholars would write about their life experiences, as well as humanly feelings, in addition, literary works and artistic achievements used perspective to depict human emotion through gestures and expressions. They also portrayed the human anatomy in a more precise manner; moreover, artistic expressions also changed the perception of the society, which was later used for architecture.

Following this revolution, religious reforms were achieved indicating the need for transparency in issues concerning the society. New forms of literature were established and prepared by humanistic scholars, which enlightened the society on various issues. In addition, the printing press

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encouraged literacy among the members of the society as well as arousing curiosity and changing the way people think, thus, members of the society gained interest in social issues.

Work Cited

Perry Marvin, et al. *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics and Society*.
Stamford: Cengage Learning, 2008. Print.