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Cosimo de' Medici

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Billions of people were born and died an ordinary life that no one will remember. Some other individuals though live a very special life that just by themselves can have so much impact on the world. Adolf Hitler, Plato, Che Guevara, Napoleon Bonaparte, Leonardo Da Vinci and many more make a change in history. Among these men were Cosimo de' Medici. Many people might not know who he is, but to The Florentine, he is like a virtue. Since his born, Florence, Italy, actually, this world have never been the same. Cosimo died at the age of seventy-five. On his grave is the only gravestone ever permitted into the Church of San Lorenzo labeled, Cosimo, Pater Patriae, meaning "Father of his Country".¹ During his lifetime, he is very important, but he is even more influential after his death. He made a significant change for the world in terms of education, arts, politics, and humanism. Especially his actions of establishing libraries, supporting arts and humanities, began the Platonic academy, and developing the system of democracy that led to some of the biggest inspirations for his and later generations. This inspiration made so much impact to the modern world.

¹ M. Evans. *Florence and the Hill Town*. 1960. P.20-23, P.46-48

Born on 27 September 1389 in Florence, Cosimo de' Medici inherited both wealth and business from his father, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici.² At age of forty, he had already become a very successful businessman, built up his father's fortune and established business connections all over Europe.³ Although he represented himself as a normal public citizen, he managed to control Florence from behind the scene.⁴ He even used his wealth to control votes so that he can remain his power.⁵ When he took power he was determined to make Florence a leading state in Europe. At that time, Cosimo was so influential that he can decide peace and war for his state by himself as example in "Wars in Lombardy" between Florence, Naples, Milan, and Venice.⁶ He also involved the city successfully in several wars and became the first Godfather of the Renaissance.⁷ Cosimo also had interest in politics and philosophy especially of Plato's.⁸ He also had a part in developing what is today a system of democracy and is one of the first generation of humanists.⁹ He inspired so many younger humanists to also believe in democracy like he

² Wikipedia contributors. "Cosimo de' Medici." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 6 Sep. 2012 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosimo_de'_Medici>

³ M. Evans. *Florence and the Hill Town*. 1960. P.20-23, P.46-48

⁴ Encyclopedia Britannica contributors "Cosimo de Medici." *Britannica Online*. 14 Sep. 2012 <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/372301/Cosimo-de-Medici>>

⁵ Wikipedia contributors. "Cosimo de' Medici." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 6 Sep. 2012 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosimo_de'_Medici>

⁶ Wikipedia contributors. "Wars in Lombardy." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 9 Sep. 2012 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wars_in_Lombardy>

⁷ PBS contributors. "Medici: Godfather of the Renaissance." *PBS Online*. 14 Sep. 2012 <<http://www.pbs.org/empires/medici/rap/cos1.html>>

⁸ Renaissance-Spell contributors "Cosimo de' Medici." *Renaissance-Spell teams*. 14 Sep. 2012 <<http://www.renaissance-spell.com/Cosimo-de-Medici.html>>

⁹ Renaissance-Spell contributors "Cosimo de' Medici." *Renaissance-Spell teams*. 14 Sep. 2012 <<http://www.renaissance-spell.com/Cosimo-de-Medici.html>>

did and ultimately began a platonic academy.¹⁰ Imagine that without him, democracy might be a totally different one today. But as powerful in politics as he had been, his other aspects are even more admirable.

From a young age, Cosimo was always eager to learn. He had a lot of admired in learning, culture, arts, and architecture.¹¹ He generously supports many artists and architectures in which he think was the best of his time such as Lippi, Donatello, Ghiberti, Michelozzo, and Gozzoli.¹² He continued to be a patron for the building of many great cathedrals, churches, and public institutions, also commissioning the most talented artists of his time to decorate them. He also hired the Michelozzo to build the magnificent Palazzo Medici (The Medici's Palace).¹³ His admirable in arts make the city of Florence became the cultural center of Europe. Many remarkable views of Florence that can still be seen today are commissioning to build and remodeling by him. Not only the city of Florence was flourished, because of him but so did the Renaissance. Many of Renaissance masterpieces such as David (by Donatello), Judith Slaying Holofernes, and Santa Maria del Fiore came to exist because of Cosimo.¹⁴ Today not only people in Italy, but from all over the world travel to see the remarkable sight of Venice thank to him. The one who started the boom of cultural and arts in the city, encouraging his descendants to

¹⁰ James Hankins. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. 1990. P.144-162

¹¹ PBS contributors. "Medici: Godfather of the Renaissance." *PBS Online*. 14 Sep.2012
<<http://www.pbs.org/empires/medici/rap/cos1.html>>

¹² M. Evans. *Florence and the Hill Town*. 1960. P.20-23, P.46-48

¹³ M. Evans. *Florence and the Hill Town*. 1960. P.20-23, P.46-48

¹⁴ Wikipedia contributors. "Cosimo de' Medici." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 6 Sep. 2012
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosimo_de'_Medici>

follow his will and do the same in supported so many other great artists. ¹⁵Without his passion, obsession, vision, benevolent, self-sacrifice, and total devotion to his beloved city, mankind would have no chance of enjoying and learning so much from the Renaissance. The Renaissance that, not only its fine arts that we learn about, but also its development of science, culture, architect, education, humanism, and literatures. ¹⁶

Cosimo de' Medici also have an awareness of how important education is. His awareness led to the first public library in Europe at St. Mark's Convent. ¹⁷ He also kept many priceless ancient Latin and Greek manuscripts in which he hired many professionals to translated. ¹⁸ Later on, his obsession in Plato philosophy leads to the beginning of Platonic academy. ¹⁹ This particular Platonic academy asserted the thought that even though Platonism and Christianity had different views, they held some truth in common ²⁰. His establishing of Platonic academy leads to study of ancient works. His effect on education was huge. By building the first public library, it encourages and give opportunity to many people at that time and cause a wide spread of knowledge. Many of the things that we know and learn about the Greek culture today are from the manuscript

¹⁵ PBS contributors. "Medici: Godfather of the Renaissance." *PBS Online*. 14 Sep. 2012
<<http://www.pbs.org/empires/medici/rap/cos1.html>>

¹⁶ Samir. "What were the impacts of Renaissance on art, architecture, science?" *Preservearticles*. 6 Sep. 2012 < <http://www.preservearticles.com/2011090713152/what-were-the-impacts-of-renaissance-on-art-architecture-science.html>>

¹⁷ M. Evans. *Florence and the Hill Town*. 1960. P.20-23, P.46-48

¹⁸ Encyclopedia Britannica contributors "Cosimo de Medici." *Britannica Online*. 14 Sep. 2012
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/372301/Cosimo-de-Medici>>

¹⁹ Renaissance-Spell contributors "Cosimo de' Medici." *Renaissance-Spell teams*. 14 Sep. 2012
<<http://www.renaissance-spell.com/Cosimo-de-Medici.html>>

²⁰ Renaissance-Spell contributors "Cosimo de' Medici." *Renaissance-Spell teams*. 14 Sep. 2012
<<http://www.renaissance-spell.com/Cosimo-de-Medici.html>>

that he collected and shared. The Platonic academy also encourage people at that time to think more, learn more and not just to believe what the church told them to believe.

Cosimo and later his Medici's family impact on the renaissance are so influential to how human lived. History, art, and literature were studied by all type of people during the age of renaissance. Especially art in the renaissance that is not just only to glorify god, learning also became more of a purposes in study art than ever before.²¹ People during the Renaissance were able to learn more, see more, and understand more thanks to him. He must understand Plato's allegory of the cave, which is why he devoted himself in educated people one way or another. If he is to see that people nowadays are able to think and live freely, he must have been satisfied. Today, many Florentines and people from all over the world still visit the church of San Lorenzo to pay respect to him, a man who did so much for humanity.

²¹ Ray Smith "The Beginning of the Renaissance." 14 Sep. 2012
<http://www.all-about-renaissance-faires.com/renaissance_info/the_renaissance_begins.htm>