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Lorenzo de' Medici

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In a lifetime, so many things come across to our lives. Some of them are regarded as the thing we 'should do' or at least we 'want to do.' Consider a life as a piece of pie. On its limited area, the pie may be divided into many small pieces, each containing part of our favor we contribute to in our lives. The pie may not be equally divided. The size of each depends on how we put our 'priority' on. The biggest piece of one's pie might be the part for nation, duty, responsibility, family, love or even 'arts.' It is of no doubt that one would devote his biggest interest to his first priority, but does the biggest pie of one's always contributes the biggest impact? Lorenzo de' Medici, a ruler of Florence during the Renaissance and a great patron of the arts, is an example of a person whose smaller piece of the pie eventually turned out to have more impact than his bigger one.

Lorenzo de Medici was born as the heir of the influential ruler family of Florence on 1 January 1449 in Florence, Italy. He was brought up in highly cultured values and intellect:¹studying Latin, Greek and Philosophy.² He grew up as an outstanding young man and doubtlessly later became a great successor of Florence in Florentine.

Born as the successor of the Florence ruler, the largest sector of his pie was inevitably allocated for the 'duty', the thing he 'should do'. After death of his father in

¹ Sonal Panse. "Lorenzo the Magnificent." *Buzzle, Intelligent life on the web*. 20 Jan. 2013.
<<http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/4-19-2004-53113.asp>>

² Sharon Fabian. "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Edhelper*. 26 Jan. 2013.
<http://edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_54_339.html>

1469, Lorenzo ascended his family's fortunes at his age of twenty.³ Under his rule, he maintained balance power of chief Northern Italian states and formed the alliances contributing strength and peace for the city. He also helped saving the city from the famine and supporting the banking and commerce. People at that time were very well-being and prosperous. Florence under his rule was very flourish.⁴

Lorenzo's biggest pie contributed a lot for Florence in Florentines. It was stated by the historians that Florence during that period was the brightest Florence ever. And the person who was behind this admiration was no one else but 'Lorenzo de' Medici.' He was even claimed to be the best ruler of Florence ever, too.⁵

What he should do had already been done, what he 'wants to do' then appeared. His second priority or his smaller piece of pie was dedicated for 'Arts', thing that 'he loved.' At the time, influential and rich people were interested in and bought a lot of art works. But for Lorenzo, he was actually an art lover himself. He grounded in many fields of arts including painting, music and especially in poet. Lorenzo was respected as a very talented Latin poet. He wrote much beautiful poetry about love and positive lives.⁶ His work appeared in such beautiful verse form- Sonetto, Trionfo, Canzone a ballo⁷, Terza, Ottava rima, and sestina, etc. The impression lied there because the verses he wrote were

³ Wikipedia contributors. "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 20 Jan. 2013.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorenzo_de'_Medici>

⁴ "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. 23 Jan. 2013. <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>

⁵ Sonal Panse. "Lorenzo the Magnificent." *Buzzle, Intelligent life on the web*. 20 Jan. 2013.

<<http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/4-19-2004-53113.asp>>

⁶ Sharon Fabian. "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Edhelper*. 26 Jan. 2013.

<http://edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_54_339.html>

⁷ Lorna de' Lucchi. "Lorenzo de' Medici, 1448-1492." *Elfinspell*. 23 Jan. 2013.

<<http://www.elfinspell.com/MediciPoem.html>>

truly for pleasing himself, not for any other pressure political reasons or fame like many others.⁸

Not only did he love literature himself, he also patronized others who shared his favor too. Poliziano, a Tuscan famous writer who wrote such the earliest plays in Italy was one who was patronized by Lorenzo. Many writers such as Luigi Pulci, and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola were all sponsored by him as well.⁹

Apart from literature, Lorenzo also patronized music. He sponsored the organist, Squarcialupi and the composer, Heinrich Isaak. And the two musicians did not disappoint him. They brought about considerable fame throughout Europe; many foreigners desired to visit Florence to hear them. Besides, this was also the pathway to the beginning age of Madrigal too.¹⁰

And the most manifest and important branch of arts which Lorenzo had contributed to a lot was the 'visual arts.' After the Medici library was built for academic scholars, Medici garden was also opened for supporting visual arts students.¹¹ The world famous sculptor, Michelangelo's talented was discovered here at the age of 15.¹² Lorenzo boosted many artists on the new arts such as copper, stones and gems carving, wood and metal inlaying and the mosaic.¹³ A lot of world famous art creators for example, Michelangelo,

⁸ A.L. Rowse. *Lorenzo dei Medici and Renaissance Italy*. 1960. p.129.

⁹ Sharon Fabian. "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Edhelper*. 26 Jan. 2013.
<http://edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_54_339.html>

¹⁰ Sonal Panse. "Lorenzo the Magnificent." *Buzzle, Intelligent life on the web*. 20 Jan. 2013.
<<http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/4-19-2004-53113.asp>>

¹¹ A.L. Rowse. *Lorenzo dei Medici and Renaissance Italy*. 1960. p.114-115.

¹² Brenda Harness. "Lorenzo de' Medici, Art Patron Extraordinaire." *Finearttouch*. 30 Jan. 2013.
<http://www.finearttouch.com/Lorenzo_de_Medici_Art_Patron_Extraordinaire.html>

¹³ "Lorenzo de' Medici and the Arts." *Renaissance-spell, The Renaissance History Source*. 2 Feb. 2013.
<<http://www.renaissance-spell.com/Lorenzo-De-Medici-Arts.html>>

Donatello, Leonardo da Vinci, Buonarroti, Sandro Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, Domenico Ghirlandaio, and Andrea del Verrocchio were all patronized by Lorenzo.¹⁴ They were sponsored financially and supported by Lorenzo to rely on art creation as major source of income.¹⁵ There would not be many of those impressive paintings and sculptures reflecting the Renaissance arts for the descendants to absorb the beauty like we have today if there was not such the great devoted patron, Lorenzo de' Medici.

The arts in Florence during the 14th and 15th century were glorious. Due to the continual supports of great patron of art, Lorenzo de' Medici, Florence came up with many famous and outstanding writers, musicians and artists. Crowded by many of art creators, Florence became origin place of Renaissance- the rebirth of arts era¹⁶ and was the 'art central' of Italy and Europe too.¹⁷

His name as a successful politician might appear in many of historical books for his success in ruling Florence during 1469-1492.¹⁸ But 500 years after his ages had passed. Florence now might no longer be the political center as it used to be in Lorenzo's age. When his age ended, the rule of Florence was ascended into another person's hands. His political contribution to Florence remained in Florence just in his days, not in others' days any more.

¹⁴ Sonal Panse. "Lorenzo the Magnificent." *Buzzle, Intelligent life on the web*. 20 Jan. 2013.

<<http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/4-19-2004-53113.asp>>

¹⁵ Sharon Fabian. "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Edhelper*. 26 Jan. 2013.

<http://edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_54_339.html>

¹⁶ Wikipedia contributors. "Renaissance." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 20 Jan. 2013.

<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance>>

¹⁷ Wikipedia contributors. "Florence." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 20 Jan. 2013.

<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence>>

¹⁸ Wikipedia contributors. "Lorenzo de' Medici." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 20 Jan. 2013.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorenzo_de'_Medici>

But his name as a dedicated patron of arts is not lying only in the historical arts books but it is appearing behind the amounts of beautiful and famous paintings and sculptures of famous artists and sculptors whom he patronized. *The statue of David*¹⁹, *the Mona Lisa*²⁰, *the Birth of Venus*²¹, etc. would not be finished by only the capabilities of talented art creators but also by the devotion of the patron, Lorenzo de' Medici as well. And the most proud thing is that his name is tightly lying behind the reputation of Florence, 'Florence, the central of Arts.' Ones who have visited Florence would have heard of the Medici and especially, one of the Medici who was very respected and admired for his devotion in patronizing the arts on those days, Lorenzo de' Medici. And his patronage on arts on those days did not contribute just the flourish during that time but it left such great impacts and values for the descendants until today and surely also in the foreseeable future.

Lorenzo de' Medici really proved us that the divided smaller piece of pie can also create such greater impacts to the rest of the world even than the bigger one. One more thing people might not notice about Lorenzo is that his success in every piece of his pie was absolutely derived from his true determination. He truly loved doing what he did and he did not hesitate to do what he loved. He gave us a lesson that it does not matter how we design to divide our life-pie but it matters how much we give our heart doing it.

Thanks to Lorenzo de' Medici, a ruler of Florence during the Renaissance and a great

¹⁹ Wikipedia contributors. "Michelangelo." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 2 Feb. 2013. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelangelo>>

²⁰ Wikipedia contributors. "Leonardo da Vinci." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 2 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo_da_Vinci>

²¹ Wikipedia contributors. "Sandro Botticelli." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 2 Feb. 2013. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandro_Botticelli>

patron of the arts for being the most important one who leave the descendant ourselves
such the beautiful arts today and also for the little life lesson he left for us too.