

# The Medici Family

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**THE HOUSE OF MEDICI**

- GONFALONIER
- POPE
- CARDINAL
- QUEEN
- DUKE
- ILLEGITIMATE SON

GIOVANNI DI BICCI DE' MEDICI  
1360-1429

COSIMO  
1389-1464

PIERO  
1416-1469

GIOVANNI  
1421-1463

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT  
1449-1492

GIULIANO  
1453-1478

PIERO  
1471-1503

GIOVANNI  
(LEO X)  
1475-1521

GIULIANO  
1478-1516

GIULIO  
(CLEMENT VII)  
1478-1534

LORENZO  
1492-1519

IPPOLITO  
1511-1535

CATHERINE  
(m. HENRY II OF FRANCE)  
1519-1589

ALESSANDRO  
1510-1537

# SUMMARY:

- Who: Giovanni, Lorenzo, Cosimo, Pope Leo X and Catherine de' Medici
- When: The late 14<sup>th</sup> century to the early 16<sup>th</sup> century
- Where: FLORENCE
- What: The Medici family were bankers that earned their status through commerce. They held great power in the city-state of Florence, and eventually, the papacy. Their wealth helped fuel the Renaissance, in not only art but also the study of classics and humanistic ideas. Their family gained power all throughout Europe through the help of political marriages and their relationship to the papacy.
- Why: Due to the Medici's wealth, the Renaissance was centered in Florence. Their political power caused numerous problems and corruption within Florence, surrounding city-states and the papacy.

# Before Prosperity

- Originally started out as part of the patrician class
- Seen as a friend of the common people
- They became wealthy from the wool trade in Florence
- They acquired great wealth in the 13th century, as well as political influence
- Members of the family became the Gonafaliere (the high ceremonial office) of Florence.
- Gonafaliere Salvestro de'Medici led the common people in the revolt of the *Ciompi*, the speaker of the wool maker's guild.
- Salvestro became the dictator of the city and was eventually banished in 1382.
- The family's fortune fell.

# Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici

- 1360-1429
- He received a humanistic education, where he developed a close relationship with the arts.
- Rose to fame by using commerce, instead of war and marriage
- Created the first Medici Bank
- He supported the return of the papacy and was rewarded by becoming the personal banker of the papacy.
- Giovanni was gonfaliere in 1421
- He is responsible for the Medici family becoming one of the wealthiest families in Europe

# Cosimo de'Medici



- 1389-1464
- *Pater Patriae*: father of the fatherland
- He never had an official political position but he controlled the city behind the scenes
- He was exiled by a rival faction for a year.
- Florence expands to Pisa, Arezzo, and Livorno
- He makes an alliance with the new ruler of Milan
- Cosimo focuses on maintaining a balance of power between the city-states of Italy. This keeps trade and art flourishing in Florence.
- He sponsors numerous artists, such as Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Alberti, Fra Angelico, and Ucello
- He creates the Platonic Academy, Laurentian library and two other libraries in Florence
- He was a strong advocator for the humanist movement and he helped it flourish in Florence

# Lorenzo The Magnificent

- 1469-1492
- Not a good banker but he was good at making enemies
- Pazzi family (rival bankers), the archbishop of Pisa and a nephew of the pope, Sixtus IV, all want Lorenzo and his brother, Giuliano died.
- Papal changes its account from Medici to Pazzi
- An assassination attempt kills Giuliano but Lorenzo survives and Florence remains loyal to Medici family
- He is excommunicated by the Pope. The pop orders the King of Naples to attack Lorenzo's rule of Florence
- Lorenzo convinces the new pope to make his son, Giovanni, a cardinal. Giovanni eventually becomes Pope Leo X
- Lorenzo continued to pour money into the arts but the Medici's wealth had gone down considerably since Cosimo.

# Who Let the French in?

- Son of Lorenzo, Piero, lacks the money to rule Florence without opposition
- Milan invites the French to invade Naples, for them to do so they have to pass peacefully through Florence.
- Piero de' Medici travels to the French king's camp without informing the official government of Florence
- Their peace arrangements ends with the loss of Pisa, Livorno and several key castles.
- The government of Florence hear of this arrangement and run the Medici family out of Florence.
- Dominican friar, Savonarola, rules Florence as the religious leader

# Continuation of Medici Rule

- The Medici and Tuscany: 1512-1737
- Giovanni convinces the papacy to have the Medici return to Florence.
- Giovanni becomes pope in 1513. His cousin is elected in 1523 as Pope Clement VII
- The Medici benefit from the military support of Rome's allies, which is mainly Spain
- The Medici use the Spanish army to squash a final attempt to rid Florence of the Medici.
- The Medici change Florence from a republic to a city-state with hereditary dukes.
- The pope, in 1569, crowns the Medici patriarch, Cosimo (again), the grand duke of Tuscany, with Florence as its capital.
- Catherine de' Medici is married off to King Henri II of France. She rules the country from behind the scenes of her young sons.
- Eventually, in 1737, Medici patriarch Gian Gastone dies without an heir, ending the dynasty

