



FINAL TRANSCRIPT

STRAND TITLE:	AA305: The Renaissance in Europe: A Cultural Enquiry	PRODUCT TITLE:	AA305 VC02
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PROGRAMME TITLE:	VC02: Politicised Space: Florence and Milan
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SYNOPSIS:

This 50 minute paginated video is in three main parts which discuss the way different political regimes require different uses for the city and its buildings. First: 'Republican Florence' in the 15th C looks at Civic Humanism and Patrician Power. It examines the way Florence was governed and how the use of Republican imagery reinforced the civic status as well as looking at the private palaces of the patrician families that made up the government. This is compared to part two: 'Autocratic Milan' which the Visconti and then the Sforza Dukes ruled autocratically, based on their chivalric status and allegiance to the emperor. It looks at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan and the Castello Visconteo in Pavia as well as the Certosa in Pavia, built as a family mausoleum. Part three is 'Ducal Florence' in the 16th C, when the government was overthrown and the Medici took over as autocratic ducal rulers. It examines the changes they made to republican institutions in Florence and how they adopted a system of chivalric splendour in contrast to their republican forbears.

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AA305 VC 02: POLITICISED SPACE: FLORENCE & MILAN

REPUBLICAN FLORENCE

Music: Giorio Ambrogio: Voltate: Vienna Lyra Ensemble Musica Antiqua 11th -15th C (47'') Sonoton: Track 12 Shots of Florence	As the Florentine Machiavelli wrote in his Discourses: “ government by the people is better than government by princes.” It was republican sentiments such as these that helped shape Florence as a city and gave it an independent status of enormous importance in the 15 th century.
STILL: CATENA Print (MAP) Florence: Kupferstichkabinett Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Florence walls by Forte Belvedere Arno - centre of Florence - Cathedral Cathedral	The different governments of Florence and Milan shaped and decorated their urban spaces for distinct political purposes. The city of Florence is divided by the river Arno which drove the mills that in the 14 th and 15 th centuries made the woollen cloth it was famous for. The main part of the city lies on the north side of the river centred around the Cathedral. This was the spiritual centre of Republican Florence and an edifice of great civic pride. Begun in 1296 the Cathedral’s construction and embellishment concerned all sections of Florentine society for the next 150 years -culminating with Filippo Brunelleschi’s design for the largest self supporting dome since antiquity.
Cathedral	Its completion in 1436 helped establish Florence’s reputation in architecture and engineering at the beginning of the Renaissance. The other major focal point of the city was the seat of government, the Palazzo della Signoria.
Palazzo della Signoria	Built at the same time as the Cathedral it maintained the structure of a medieval fortress in order to defend the elected members of the government who ruled the Republic. They were known collectively as the ‘Signoria’ and were expected to live inside the building during their term of office. The Palazzo della Signoria was seen in the 15 th century as a bastion of the city’s independence and strength.
CATENA Print.(MAP) a/a Panoramic View.	One of the essential responsibilities of the government -otherwise known as the Commune, was the defence of the city. Great expenditure was made on maintaining the walls and gates which encircled the city and controlled the traffic going in and out.
Porta San Niccolo	One of the gates, with its fortified towers, is the Porta San Niccolo which still survives today.
walls from Piazza Michelangelo	Although the main purpose of the walls when they were built in the 14 th century had been defensive their tall flat design ceased to have much practical value once gunpowder became a standard element in military strategy in the 15 th century.
Palazzo Vecchio to Orsanmichele	The Republican government was funded largely by the considerable wealth of the patrician merchant families who operated a system of guilds which came to be centred around the church of Orsanmichele .
Orsanmichele	Orsanmichele had started as the city granary but by the 15 th century it had been converted into a church. Each of the Guilds had niches on the exterior devoted to their patron saints. These are the 4 Christian martyrs representing the minor guild of The Masters of Stone and Woodwork .

<p>glazed terracotta roundel with guild device niche with St Stephen - Lana guild</p>	<p>Below is their emblem of an axe. Alongside is a stone relief showing them at work. No one could practice a craft or profession without belonging to a guild.</p>
<p>Agnus Dei device of Lana guild</p>	<p>The most powerful guild in the 15th century was the Major Guild of the Wool-workers. Their emblem was the Lamb of God *, a Biblical symbol for Jesus Christ, - appropriate for the wool trade.</p>
<p>Palazzo del Arte de Lana alongside Orsanmichele</p>	<p>Many of the leading patrician families maintained their power and wealth through this guild.</p>
<p>Piazza Signoria with Palazzo della Signoria and Tribunale from above.</p>	<p>Only by being a member of a major guild were Florentine citizens eligible for election to the Commune. So the smooth functioning of the guilds was essential to the stability of the Republic. Alongside the Palazzo della Signoria was the merchants court where guild members were able to settle trade disputes.</p>
<p>Stone and woodworkers guild and vintners.</p>	<p>The shields of over 20 guilds are displayed along the outside, reaffirming their importance in this public space.</p>

CIVIC HUMANISM: FLORENCE

<p>Piazza Signoria and Loggia dei Signoria</p>	<p>The layout of the piazza in front of the Palazzo della Signoria during the 15th century reflected the Republican system of government and was based loosely on accounts of the forum in ancient Rome. In particular there is the raised platform or <i>Ringhiera</i>, outside the palace entrance. Here the <i>Signoria</i> paraded and addressed the people who assembled in the piazza. Such places were an essential part of open Republican government - accessible to all.</p>
<p>base of Palazzo Signoria with Ringhiera</p>	<p>One can see in this 15th century fresco by Domenico Ghirlandaio how the Ringhiera and the Palazzo della Signoria formed an important focal point in the identity of the city for official events.</p>
<p><i>STILL</i> Domenico Ghirlandaio: Fresco from Sassetti Chapel, Santa Trinita, Florence</p>	<p>The Palazzo Signoria appears again in this portrait of a man in armour. One can see also how the Ringhiera was used to display the statuary and other symbols pertinent to the Republican regime. -</p>
<p><i>STILL: Francesco Granacci : Portrait of a Man in Armour National Gallery, London</i></p>	<p>This famous lion or 'Marzocco', as it was known by the Florentines , was carved by Donatello.</p>
<p>Marzocco and sculpture of Judith and Holofernes on Ringhiera Marzocco (spec shot)</p>	<p>The original is now preserved in the Bargello museum. The lion and its shield had become one of the heraldic devices of the city early in the Republic.</p>
<p>Judith & Holofernes by Donatello (spec shot)</p>	<p>Another copy of an original statue placed on the Ringhiera is Donatello's Judith and Holofernes . The original is inside the Palazzo. The Old Testament story relates how Judith, the beautiful Jewish heroine, cut off the head of Holofernes the enemy Assyrian general while he slept off the wine she had given him.</p>
<p>Donatello's signature</p>	<p>The statue had originally belonged to the Medici and had been commissioned from Donatello to be placed in their palace garden .</p>
	<p>After the Medici were exiled in 1494 it was requisitioned by the Commune as a symbol of liberty triumphing over tyranny. But almost immediately the <i>Signoria</i> began to have doubts about its public message glorifying a woman killing a man . So the statue was moved inside the Palazzo della Signoria.</p>

**STILL: Michelangelo: David.
Galleria del'Accademia**

The Commune had requisitioned another sculpture by the young Michelangelo. The original is now preserved in the Gallery of the Accademia. In 1504 the colossal marble David was appropriated by the city as a more virile symbol of Florentine liberty. -

It was dragged into place outside the Palazzo della Signoria where the replica now stands.

Alongside the Palazzo, on the right, is the 14th century loggia where the Signoria used to shelter when bad weather prevented them using the Ringhiera .

**STILL: Fresco from Sassetti
Chapel, Santa Trinita a/a**

It too can be seen in the fresco by Ghirlandaio. This *Loggia della Signoria* was a much grander platform and just as accessible to the public.

In keeping with its function it had been adorned with personifications of the four cardinal virtues:

Fortitude,
Temperance,
Justice and
Prudence.

Ancient philosophers had pronounced these virtues essential for governing city states.

Sala dei Gigli

Much of the interior of the Palazzo has been altered since the Republican period although there are still a few apartments that preserve the decoration used when they were state rooms. This is the so-called Room of the Lilies. Prominently displayed is the Marzocco shown here holding aloft the red cross of Florence.

On the other side another lion- half obscured now by a later door, holds the Lily of Florence, an emblem derived from the city's name meaning 'flower'.

The decorations were carried out in the 1470s and 80s. They were created to enhance the patriotic sentiment of the government. Even the immense coffered and gilded ceiling is embellished with the Florentine lilies.

Lions and city emblems set in victory wreaths make up the gilded frieze that encircles the room.

fresco of St Zenobius + saints

The fresco designed by Domenico Ghirlandaio illustrates the priorities of Florentine Republicanism at this time. Central to its theme is one of the city's patron saints, St Zenobius.

He is shown conferring his blessing on the assembled Signoria, who would be conducting government business in the room.

Out of the painted window behind can be glimpsed the Baptistery and Cathedral with its newly completed dome - another emblem of civic pride.

The Florentine Chancellor and humanist, Leonardo Bruni had put forward the theory that Florence was founded during the Republican era of ancient Rome and that Florence was therefore the true heir to Roman Republican virtues .

Republican heroes

So the decorative scheme contains images of Republican heroes, whose feats of courage and self sacrifice acted as an inspiration.

Brutus

This is Brutus who founded the Republic by assassinating Tarquin the last King of Rome.

alongside are the soldiers Muscius Scaevola and Camillus.

Decius

On the other side of the room there are three later heroes Decius Mus and Scipio Africanus also Cicero holding up the fasces

Scipio & Cicero
Latin inscription
3 Republicans

- the ancient symbol of Consulship.
Below, their virtues were elaborated in Latin script.
Their portrayal in one of the state rooms of the Florentine government exemplifies the kind of civic humanism endorsed by the Florentine Chancellor Coluccio Salutati “The example of great citizens of the Roman Republic excites in us a desire for virtuous deeds and daring to act as they did.”

Cicero - Camillus

Music: My Robyne of the Greenwood: Robert Foster (1'38")
KPM 210 Track 28
intarsia door
statue of John the Baptist

Leonardo Bruni and others also saw a strong connection between the political system of the Florentine Republic and the revival of antiquity and the arts. On the opposite wall the door surround is a particularly fine example of this.

It is surmounted with a statue of St John the Baptist who was another of Florence's patron saints.

shield of Florence on frieze / festoon
/ centre shield
Dante and Petrarch

The door frame is carved with details taken from antiquity such as this capital with Venus and Cupid .

The doors themselves are of inlaid wood representing two of Florence's most famous poets Dante and Petrarch.
Dante recorded the deeds of the righteous and the damned in the Divine Comedy.
and Petrarch's book On Illustrious Men may well have inspired the decoration of the room.

Petrarch's books at base
Dante Books. Commedia + Vita
Nova

PATRICIAN POWER: FLORENCE

roof top view of Florence

You can still see today the remains of the medieval towers dotted around the roof tops of Florence. They represented the strongholds of the different patrician families that made up the Signoria in the 14th century.

towers

These fortified towers provided security for these patrician families from their rivals in the city, as well as an opportunity to display their wealth and importance.

The Acciaiuoli family for example were prosperous international bankers. With the improvement of civil security within Florence in the 15th century they expanded their property to build a larger house or 'palazzo' alongside. Even this was fairly modest.

Palazzo Strozzi

Palatial houses like this one, built by another great banking family- the Strozzi , retained a minimum of defensive features. The ground floor would originally have been a semi-public open arcade used for business. Above this level with its heavy stone rustication was the main reception floor or 'piano nobile' - with the living quarters for the extended family and servants above.

By the late 15th century the Strozzi used their immense wealth to expand their territory and erect a vast new palace whose size and scale was truly princely.

Palazzo Medici	<p>The Medici family under Cosimo the Elder had set a precedent in the 1440's for trying to combine splendour and modesty in his new palace, as befitted private citizens under a Republican government. The compromise was to use stucco rustication on the ground floor, not real and expensive stone. While the immense exterior above was decorated with family emblems and devices only on the windows.</p> <p>In the palace courtyard the semi-public space revealed more of the humanist tastes of the family. It was a space where sculptures were exhibited- and a place for contemplation.</p>
<p>Music: By a Fountaine: Robert Foster: (1'09") Track 1 KPM 210 corner pillars - show medallions</p>	<p>The reliefs in the medallions were inspired by antique gems in the collection of Lorenzo dei Medici.</p>
Medici Balls	<p>These are the famous balls or 'palle' that formed the Medici coat of arms.</p>
Chapel: altar niche	<p>The private space of the small chapel, inside the Medici Palace, remains an impressive reminder of their dynastic ambitions. The chapel is ostensibly devoted to the Nativity as depicted in the altarpiece, originally painted by Filippo Lippi.</p>
<p>altarpiece Fresco of Three Kings by Gozzoli (specially shot)</p>	<p>Central to the religious theme are the frescoes which decorate the walls with the Procession of the Magi represented traditionally as Three Kings. These frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli, painted in the International Gothic style, continue around the walls of this intimate family chapel.</p>
Emperor John VII Paleologus	<p>The richness of the decoration, particularly the gold ornamentation of the kings, remains as dazzling as when it was painted. This decorative scheme was linked to the elite religious Confraternity of the Magi.</p>
procession up the hill	<p>It portrayed the regal splendour of the procession as it made its way to Bethlehem. However the scheme also allowed for dynastic claims to be suggested. Numerous portraits were included. At the end of the procession are members</p>
Medici family: senior members	<p>of the Medici family and their supporters. Leading these on a white horse is Piero the Gouty. Although frequently ill, Piero was the heir apparent to the Medici house at the time the frescoes were painted. His horse's harness is decorated with a variety of family emblems, including</p>
painted word: SEMPER	<p>Piero's own 'diamond ring' motif with the motto SEMPER meaning 'Always'. The retainer leading his horse also wears Piero's personal insignia.</p>
Cosimo de Medici	<p>Piero's father, Cosimo the Elder, who had consolidated the family fortune, built the palace and commissioned the frescoes appears modestly unadorned for a man of such real power and wealth.</p>
entourage to Lorenzo de Medici	<p>Their entourage follows behind one of the Three Kings dressed in particular splendour. Some people have identified this as Cosimo's eldest grandson destined to be known as Lorenzo the Magnificent.</p>
Emperor John VII	<p>The Byzantine Emperor John VII Paleologus is represented as the second of the three kings. On the left wall prominently placed in the procession is a youth surrounded by princely attributes including the cheetah's trained for hunting.</p>

Sigismondo

It has also been suggested that amongst the other dignitaries included in the retinue is Sigismondo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini.

Galeazzo Maria

This celebrated soldier and humanist was also a notorious opponent of Pope Pius II for which he was eventually excommunicated.

Next to him on the white horse is Galeazzo Maria Sforza, eldest son of the Duke of Milan.

He had been entertained by the Medici on a diplomatic visit to Florence in 1459. He was later assassinated after he inherited his dukedom.

In Republican Florence the Medici, as private citizens, could only adopt such princely imagery out of the public eye.

AUTOCRATIC MILAN

Graphic: Map of N. Italy

At the end of the 15th century the three most powerful states in northern Italy - both in size and influence were the Republic of Florence, the Republic of Venice and the Duchy of Milan. Unlike the two Republics, Milan was dependent on the autocratic power of its ruler.

Graphic : Map of Duchy of Milan

The Visconti dynasty had held power from the late 13th century slowly expanding their territory to include Pavia, Cremona, Piacenza and Parma. In 1395 Gian Galeazzo Visconti gained from the Emperor the title of Duke.

Ekta: Allegorical image of Milan with Visconti impresa.

The Visconti dukes quickly assumed numerous heraldic devices to present themselves with a chivalric status. However by the middle of the 15th century their dynastic power faltered.

Bibliothèque National, Paris

Relief of Filippo Maria

Duke Filippo Maria murdered his wife shortly after coming to power and died without a son.

Relief of Bianca Visconti

His illegitimate daughter, Bianca Maria, had however married the captain of her father's guard of mercenaries - Francesco Sforza.

Relief of Francesco Sforza

Francesco seized the Dukedom in 1450, appropriating the autocratic power of the Visconti, and started a new Sforza dynasty.

portal of Medici bank.

He was quick to broker an alliance with Florence through his contacts with the Medici. And in 1452 he invited the Medici to open a branch of their bank in Milan - of which only this handsome carved portal now survives.

Ekta 15th cent. Map of Milan

In contrast to republican Florence, very little of the fifteenth century city of Milan remains visible today. This map was drawn soon after Francesco Sforza seized power. Like Florence and most other cities of the time its encircled by a wall with forts. Yet unlike Florence its dominated by a large castle used by the Dukes to subdue the population. Another difference is that although there are numerous churches there is no prominent central cathedral to be seen.

Bibliothèque National, Paris

Milan Cathedral

The great Gothic Cathedral of Milan we see today was barely more than half built in 1450. The towering West facade was only completed at the beginning of the 19th century. Yet even in its early stages it became an important political power base and site for dynastic imagery.

Visconti shields

The East end had been started at the end of the 14th century under the first duke, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, who had adopted for his heraldic device the sunburst - traditionally reserved as the monogram of Christ, placing it centrally in the tracery of the great East window.

Castle

Below are the characteristic shields with the other Visconti device, taken from the Crusades, showing a viper swallowing a Saracen.

On their castle walls the Sforza appropriated the same Visconti insignia in an attempt to strengthen their claim to the Dukedom - particularly when they rebuilt the castle in Milan as the seat of their power.

The original Visconti castle had been destroyed in a popular uprising on the death of Duke Filippo Maria.

Piazza d'Arme

**Photograph: Armour -
Kunsthistorisches Museum,
Vienna.
Ekta. Design for Equestrian statue
of Francesco Sforza c. 1489.
Antonio Pollaiuolo. Staatliche
Graphische Sammlung, Munich.**

Francesco Sforza quickly asserted his authority, re-imposing an autocratic regime and rebuilding the castle large enough to contain a standing army. What survives today is largely a modern reconstruction.

Machiavelli observed at the time "The castle of Milan, built by Francesco Sforza, has caused and will cause more uprisings against the house of Sforza than any other disturbance. So the best fortress that exists is to avoid being hated by the people".

However Milanese forbearance with Sforza rule depended on the prosperity of the mercantile class, renowned for their textiles and metalwork, which they exported far and wide.

In particular the possession of a Milanese suit of armour, worth a fortune in itself, was a status symbol amongst the princes and nobility of Europe.

Francesco Sforza, himself a professional soldier, was to be commemorated with an equestrian statue dressed in a full suit of armour.

In the following years, having consolidated their dynastic control over Milan, Francesco Sforza's sons, Galeazzo Maria and Ludovico, transformed the interior of the castle to make it more palatial and appropriate for a court.

As wealthy patrons, the Dukes wished to adorn their court with prestigious works of art and entertainments, attracting famous artists to work for them.

Preserved inside, as part of a museum, are a set of rooms decorated with the ducal coats of arms the Sforza had inherited from the Visconti. -

Such dynastic imagery, surmounted with the Ducal crown, reinforced their claim to the dukedom.

The next room is frescoed entirely with the sunburst motifs.

The most impressive of these rooms to have survived was reputedly painted by Leonardo da Vinci for Ludovico Sforza known as Ludovico Il Moro - 'the moor'. The whole ceiling is painted as if the room was under a canopy of knotted mulberry branches, punning on the Italian for mulberry which is also 'moro.'

Among the painted Latin inscriptions in the room is one commemorating the honours Ludovico received from the Emperor.

PAVIA: A DYNASTIC POWER BASE

**Graphic of Dukedom of Milan
showing Pavia in relation to Milan
Ekta Map of Pavia showing town
'Pianta prosp. Inc. Merian. 17th C'
INDEX**

**Ekta: Fresco of Castello from 1522.
Bernadino Lanzani in San
Teodoro, Pavia INDEX.
Castello Visconteo**

The Sforza Dukes of Milan had sovereignty over the whole territory including the city of Pavia, famed for its university.

This ancient city had been founded by the Romans and still retained its original grid system of streets. The Visconti had built a castle on the northern edge of the city with vast residential apartments and the largest library in the world.

However it was also a military garrison and centre of power for the region.

Much of the castle still survives despite battle damage and neglect, inflicted after the fall of the Sforza.

In the 15th century the forbidding exterior proclaimed the authority of a military power centred on the Duke. Where ever he went the court accompanied him.

Music: Voltate: Giovanni Ambrogio: (1'32'') Sonoton Tr 12

Elegant loggias inside the castle provided a more secluded space away from the common people. The court life provided an opportunity for members of leading families from subject towns to gain advancement from the Duke. At the centre of the castle was the Court of Honour an arena for courtly pageant and display.

Very little remains of the interior decorations except a few fresco fragments, as in this room decorated for the marriage of Galeazzo Maria Sforza and Bona of Savoy. Her dove is combined with the sunburst.

The Dukes of Milan had been famous for the wealth of their luxury possessions: - tapestries and paintings, books and manuscripts, all of which are now dispersed.

Woman with tambourine

High born women were mostly excluded from an active place in the public, martial spaces of the castle. Many of them remained enclosed in a courtly world as passive spectators and objects of veneration.

Graphic : Map of Pavia with Castle and Park

To enhance his castle at Pavia, GianGaleazzo Visconti had enclosed behind it a vast walled park, filled with game for hunting , and created lakes and lodges for courtly diversions.

At the furthest edge - GianGaleazzo also founded a Carthusian monastery to act as a family mausoleum.

The church and monastery took over a century to complete; much of the lavish facade was not undertaken until the 16th century. Alongside the door are relief panels relating episodes in the building of the church. Here GianGaleazzo , the first Duke, lays the foundation stone in 1396.

GianGaleazzo laying stone
Consecration panel

In another panel the church is shown 101 years later being consecrated during the reign of his great grandson Ludovico II Moro. Clearly shown behind the church is the enclosed park which connected the monastery to the castle.

Only in 1474 was the main purpose of the church as a family mausoleum realised with the transfer here of GianGaleazzo's remains in a solemn religious ceremony.

Music: Ave Maria: JohnTaverner (55'') CHAP C28 Tr 10
tomb

The decoration of the church and the building of GianGaleazzo Visconti's tomb were only undertaken after his great grandson, Ludovico II Moro, claimed the dukedom after the suspiciously early death of his young nephew.

Ludovico's desire to embellish the family mausoleum, underlining his descent from the first Visconti duke, had strongly political overtones when the legitimacy of his ducal status was in dispute.

transept apse with Visconti fresco

He commissioned the Lombard painter, Bergognone, to depict the family accordingly. Here in the apse over the South transept are his Visconti ancestors kneeling before the Virgin with GianGaleazzo presenting her with a model of the church, his robes emblazoned with sunbursts.

GianGaleazzo

Opposite in the North transept are the Sforza dukes - that is to say Ludovico's father, Francesco Sforza. Neither Ludovico's assassinated brother or nephew are included. However Ludovico had himself portrayed kneeling contritely before the Virgin. Yet for all the expense of the decoration it was to no avail. His fate was to die dispossessed of his power, a prisoner in France.

Francesco Sforza

Ludovico

Ludovico' and Beatrice's tomb

Only his effigy, along with his wife Beatrice d'Este of Ferrara, are now preserved in the church.

Beatrice

Although Ludovico had been a great humanist patron he was no soldier.

Ludovico

It was he who Machiavelli had in mind when he wrote “princes who have thought more of their pleasures than of arms have lost their states”.

DUCAL FLORENCE

panorama of Florence

In 1530 the last Republic of Florence fell, after a long siege, to the soldiers of the Medici pope Clement VII and the Emperor Charles V - and the Medici were reinstated as rulers.

Fortezza tilt up and ZI to centre of Florence.

As the historian Guicciardini observed : ‘the power of the Medici has become more absolute and practically regal. Florence is bereft of money as a result of so long and dreadful a war, deprived of many of its inhabitants and more than ever divided against itself’.

Ekta: Duchetto View of Florence. British Library.

With in 50 years the appearance of Florence had undergone a transformation: the fortifications had been modernised and extended and a great castle, the Fortezza da Basso, had been erected, cutting into the northern walls of the city..

Ekta.: Fortezza “Bonsignori” map Museo di Firenze Com’era INDEX

This reflected the major change in the government of the city after the overthrow of the Republic, with the Medici commandeering this formerly Republican gateway.

The erection and positioning of the castle is reminiscent of the policy adopted by other Italian princes: it was not only for defence against external enemies but also to overawe the population. The Florentines had become subjects rather than citizens.

Ekta: Portrait of Duke Alessandro Medici by Giorgio Vasari INDEX

The Pope installed his young cousin, Alessandro dei Medici, as ruler of Florence- portrayed here as a soldier and statesman, wearing a magnificent suit of armour.

Within the year the Emperor gave him the title of duke, as another step in transforming Florence into an autocratically ruled state under Imperial control.

Alessandro didn’t destroy the republican institutions of government so much as ignore them, employing a personal staff of bureaucrats.

The commercial vitality of Florence began to fail and the old guild system, which had been a support of civic liberty, declined.

Alessandro believed in the security of the Fortezza for his own protection. Its star shape design and construction embodied new developments in response to the use of gunpowder.

“Bonsignori” map Museo di Firenze Com’era a/a Fortezza da Basso

Its thick low walls were built to resist cannon fire and provide defensive vantage points to cover all angles of fire.

The great state-of-the-art bastion, which supported the Duke’s private apartments, was decorated all over with the Medici ball insignia or *palle*. It was ironic, therefore, that in 1537, Duke Alessandro was murdered there by rivals from within his own family.

Cosimo

The next duke chosen, Cosimo I, came from a junior branch of the Medici family.

He quickly asserted himself as a firm and stable ruler free from the city’s factional traditions, intent on rebuilding Florentine prosperity.

Relief

Over the next 35 years he skilfully loosened his ties to the Emperor, doubled Florentine territory by annexing the neighbouring Republic of Siena and subsequently styled himself as the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

His open glorification of the Medici dynasty, and the new alliances he formed with the noble families of Europe, gave him undisputed authority. This equestrian statue by Giambologna is a deliberate reference to

EKTA. Marcus Aurelius Equestrian statue: INDEX

a famous statue of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius *, that had survived in Rome.

statue in Piazza Signoria	Commissioned by his son, Grand Duke Francesco, the placement of Cosimo's statue in the Piazza Signoria, was a deliberate statement to emphasise the new dynastic control over the space which contained the former headquarters of republican government - the Palazzo Signoria.
Palazzo Vecchio	During Cosimo's rule the Palazzo Signoria was renamed the Palazzo Vecchio or Old Palace. Inside he transformed the Hall of the Five Hundred, where in the last years of the Republic the Grand Council of the people had assembled, making it into a vast audience chamber to eulogise the Medici dynasty.
Salone dei Cinquecento	The walls were decorated with battle scenes celebrating the Florentine victories over their neighbours - particularly Siena and Pisa. These Florentine assaults on their traditional rivals had helped establish the new boundaries of Grand Ducal Tuscany and provided Cosimo with popular support in Florence. In this ceiling panel the triumphal image of Victory is welcomed entering Florence with the Ducal troops as they progress alongside the River Arno.
Ceiling panel of Triumph	As a Renaissance prince, Cosimo had himself portrayed as a learned patron of the arts as well as a soldier and statesman. Here he is shown studying the plans for the new fortress built to control Siena.
Victory	
Cosimo in his study	
whole ceiling	The summation of this vast propaganda exercise is the central image. As an allegory taken from antiquity, it shows Cosimo's apotheosis - his transformation into a celestial god, dressed as a Roman emperor and crowned with a victory wreath and ducal diadem.
Apotheosis	
View of Florence	Cosimo's self promotion was more than simple vanity. He transformed the position of Duke from that of leader amongst equals to unchallenged chief of state.
Pal. Vecchio - roof of Uffizi	Intent on creating a modern state, he built alongside his power base in the Palazzo Vecchio a vast set of government offices to house the bureaucracy for the administration of Tuscany. These offices are called the Uffizi.
Uffizi	The architect, Giorgio Vasari, provided the Uffizi with elegant public arcades at street level, but these were not designed for the assemblies of popular government. The assassination of his predecessor made Cosimo ever watchful of his security. So he also commissioned Vasari to extend the Uffizi by attaching to it a raised walkway.
Cosimo's statue through arcade	This formed a private passage, that followed a route across the river to the new ducal palace on the southern edge of the city.
Uffizi - walkway over Ponte Vecchio	Without ever needing to pass through the public streets, Cosimo and his privileged entourage were protected from potential civil unrest.
Galleria by Uffizi	
Pitti palace	The new ducal residence - the Pitti palace, had been obtained from an old patrician family. Purchased by Eleanor of Toledo, Duke Cosimo's wife, the building was gradually transformed by successive generations into a sumptuous royal palace with a vast forecourt. The first stage of development under the Grand Duchess Eleanor's direction was the building of the courtyard at the back in the mannerist style
Music: Grace & Beauty: Robert Foster: (1'11") KPM 210 Tr 39	
	It is a set piece example of 16 th century court architecture - grandiose and sophisticated. The rusticated stone, catches the light and fascinates the eye in a design that plays on the traditional use of classical details.
Boboli Gardens	Behind the Pitti Palace, Cosimo and his heirs built a vast walled space - the Boboli gardens, on the scale of a park, designed for their recreation and amusement.

***Ekta. Lunette of Pitti, gardens and
fortress by Giusto Utens in Museo
di Firenze Com'era. INDEX***

Their layout with panoramic walks and fountains has changed since the sixteenth century, but their significance remains. They provided a separate and guarded space for the Medici, which further distanced them from their subjects.

As can be seen in this panel, painted at the end of the 16th century, the Pitti Palace still maintained the outward appearance of a patrician palace, with extensive formal gardens behind. However the small protective fort built on the hill above implies that the role of autocratic prince was still far from secure.

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