

# Nuova Rivista Storica

Anno CII, Settembre-Dicembre 2018, Fascicolo III

## Abstracts

GIULIO BIONDI, «Aremo grandissimo bisogno de...». La «robba» nelle lettere di Margherita Datini al marito Francesco (1384-1410)

*During the Late Middle Ages, “robba” was a general term used in documents to reference clothes, ornaments and objects such as caps, doublets, candles, knives, buttons, trimmings, and so on. The letters written by Margherita Datini to her husband Francesco, a wealthy merchant of Prato, between 1384 and 1410, inform us precisely of what consisted this so-called “robba”. If the first section of this paper will reason about the objects recorded in the Datini correspondence, a second part will reflected instead on the excellent surveillance, management and administration of these goods that made Margherita a good administrator and also a capable economic operator. Once acknowledged Margherita’s abilities, in this paper one intends to focus on the goods described by the merchant’s wife. Through a lexical analysis, said things and their different acquisition forms of registry will be studied: for example, sometimes she urged her husband to buy directly some of these items, while others, they were simply moved from one of their homes to another, since Francesco and Margherita did not live together. Besides this lexical aspect, this research will also try to shed light on the Datini’s practices and logistics in acquiring goods, especially on the time required for buying and receiving these objects, and on who was in charge to do this. Particularly regarding these purchases, the recipients of such merchandise as well as the prices of acquired goods will be, when possible, reported, as well as their origins and possible places where they were kept. After examining the “robba”, the third part of this paper will be dedicated to their administration and also to how Margherita managed the family’s financial resources. To better contextualize her role as an economic operator, this study, at last, will reason on the relationship between women and work in the Late Middle Ages.*

Keywords:

*Margherita Datini*

*Letters*

*Goods of a merchant’s wife in later Middle Ages*