

Laboratorio di Storia delle Alpi
Studies on Alpine History

Coordinamento editoriale
Tiziano Casartelli

Progetto grafico
Alberto Canepa

© 2017 Accademia di architettura, Mendrisio
Università della Svizzera italiana

Lavoro e impresa
nelle società preindustriali

Labour and Business
in Pre-Industrial Societies

a cura di /edited by
Roberto Leggero

Mendrisio Academy Press

Sommario

- 7 Introduzione.
Creare lavoro, salario e reddito nelle società preindustriali
Roberto Leggero
- 19 La “fabbrica” del lignaggio. Il ruolo delle reti parentali
aristocratiche urbane nella produzione di ricchezza
(XIII-XV secolo)
Mirella Montanari
- 47 Tra politica e professione. Gestire le risorse umane e sociali
a Merano nel Quattrocento
Hitomi Sato
- 59 Alcuni esempi di “industria alberghiera”
in area prealpina e alpina (XV-XVI secolo)
Stefania Duvia
- 79 Charitable Organizations as Social Economic Facilitators.
The Case of the Ceppo of Francesco di Marco Datini
Paolo Nanni
- 103 Collective Resources, Work and Communication in the
Tyrolean Upper Inn Valley in the late Middle Ages and
Early Modern Times
Yoshibisa Hattori
- 127 «Con conueneuole ricompensa»: le fonti di reddito
del musicista nella prima età moderna
Daniele Torelli
- 149 Fare carriera politica nei baliaggi ticinesi
tra Cinquecento e primo Seicento
Leonardo Broillet

- 169 Fede che fa reddito.
L'oratorio di Sant'Anna a Morbio Superiore: un cantiere
di comunità (1692-1705)
Stefania Bianchi
- 191 "Effetto Buddenbrook". Imprese mercantili
e percorsi di mobilità sociale nella Bologna dell'età moderna
Massimo Fornasari
- 209 Fare impresa in età preindustriale:
riflessioni a partire dal caso lombardo (secolo XVIII)
Luca Mocarelli
- 229 The Industrious Revolution in Germany:
Constraints to Labour Supply and Working Motives around 1800
Ulf Christian Ewert, Felix Gräfenberg, Stephanie Klages
- 255 Abstracts

Charitable Organizations as Social Economic Facilitators. The Case of the Ceppo of Francesco di Marco Datini

Paolo Nanni

Late Medieval Charitable Institutions: Businesses and a Key to Interpreting Society

The economic size of charitable institutions is a very important subject in Europe¹ because of their role in the various historical contexts,² the variety of activities and forms of assistance,³ and the extent of their wealth and land holdings.⁴ Hospitals, *luoghi pii* or charitable institutions, and confraternities indeed played an important economic, political, and social role, and their history, albeit through various transformations, includes a centuries-long time span, from the late Middle Ages to the present day.

However, as stated in a recent book devoted to a comparative portrait of late medieval Italy, the historical reconstruction of charitable institutions was influenced for a long time by a number of well-known historiographical assumptions.⁵ For example, these assumptions include the idea that a charitable institution's business was essentially characterized by collecting donations and distributing alms (or various forms of assistance), considering as secondary other types of investment or uses of money. According to these perspectives, charitable institutions and their benefactors belonged to that period's devotional practices. Even managing the substantial land holdings accumulated from bequests was often regarded as lacking any productive investment: a judgment, again in this case, recently debated in light of existing data.⁶

These assumptions arise from an interpretive model that, in an "irreconcilable contradiction", tends to separate the sphere of a "profit economy" from that of a "charity economy".⁷ Giacomo Todeschini criticized this separation, displaying highly interesting and original elements for the history of econom-

ic thought itself through the languages and concepts developed in the Middle Ages as part of Franciscan thinking and the *Monti di Pietà* (Mounts of Piety).⁸ Sharing these reflections, Gabriella Piccinni showed the implications of such a culture using the actual case of a hospital like Santa Maria della Scala within the context of Siena's history in the late Middle Ages. The opening of the hospital's bank⁹ completes the historical reconstruction of Tuscany's largest charitable institution,¹⁰ pointing out that the same credit activities constituted an essential element of the forms of response to social needs before the *Monti di Pietà*.¹¹

Consequently, charitable institutions in the late Middle Ages are interesting for many reasons, at least as many as the historical implications of *caritas* in medieval urbanism, with charity as a theological virtue, but one that presided over civil life and the common good, as in the case of the depiction of the commune of Siena (*Commune Senarum*) identified as the "common good" (*Ben Comun*) in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of Good Government.¹² It was charity as *habitus*, a habit that becomes a personal action through individual choices,¹³ but also a public body with the creation of such socially useful enterprises as hospitals.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, historians have tried to redefine the economic conceptual framework with which to interpret these hospitals using terms like welfare or "non-profit" companies.¹⁵ Moreover, if there was talk of a "charity revolution"¹⁶ in the face of the various forms of poverty and need in medieval society, this "revolution" cannot be studied properly if we separate the religious sphere from the civil, social and economic one.

Returning to the previously mentioned summary work dedicated to Italian charitable institutions' use of money and wealth in the late Middle Ages, and thanks to the extensive studies and research of the most recent Italian historiography, the image of hospitals, charitable institutions, and brotherhoods today takes on more correct connotations in the light of historical data that invite a review of those historiographic assumptions briefly mentioned. Hospitals emerge as veritable public enterprises, carrying out true economic activities,¹⁷ including land holding management, food markets¹⁸ and various forms of credit,¹⁹ with very specific ways in the various urban contexts.

Furthermore, hospitals are presented as a key to interpreting medieval society. The "construction" of a "public charitable institution", as in the particular case of Siena's Santa Maria della Scala, can be considered «the most successful of the various forms of public social protection ever attempted»,

part of the same «urban culture of solidarity».²⁰ Through these organizations, with specific formulas that combined the public and the private in municipal governments, it was the communities as a whole that developed forms of response to the different levels of societal needs.

This is the interpretative key with which it is necessary to address the question of charitable institutions in the late Middle Ages.

Why Study Exemplary Cases? Charitable Institutions in Late Medieval Tuscany

These new interpretative keys confirm a fundamental fact: late medieval charitable institutions, especially as regards Italy, represent a special world, very different in its character and its historical role compared to social assistance in modern times. Although attempts at long-term comparisons may be somewhat interesting, it is fundamental to take into consideration these differences. I may take as one example an interesting study regarding the effect on the GDP of resources intended for social care,²¹ comparing Italy, the Netherlands, and Britain between the late Middle Ages and the modern age. In the light of historical reality and its proper reconstruction, one wonders to what extent such scales of analysis and interpretative models may be univocally acceptable with such diverse historical realities and contexts.

On the basis of these preliminary remarks, I believe an essential methodological observation for historical studies to be sufficiently clear: I am referring to the importance of specific studies on exemplary cases. Indeed, qualitative surveys represent a fundamental element of historical studies, also because of the original contribution that they may bring to economic history and quantitative surveys. It would be a bad mistake to consider the study of exemplary cases as mere descriptions limited to contingencies. To define a study matter through a concrete case represents a fundamental step in historical knowledge as well as a necessary condition for also establishing the possibility of long-term comparisons.

What was a medieval hospital? What aspects made up its role in the various historical contexts? What purposes, tools, and effects did they produce in late-medieval society? These are the kinds of questions that continuously give life to research in an attempt to understand, and make understandable to our

intended audience those tangible and intangible aspects of worlds so original and deeply rooted in the society of that time, with their common traits and important variations.

In late-medieval Tuscany, for example, the presence of charitable institutions was very widespread and therefore it has not been easy to draw up a complete inventory.²² Dozens of variously sized hospitals gravitated around such main cities as Florence, Siena, Lucca, Pisa, Arezzo, and Pistoia. However, some became quite large within these urban centers during the 13th century. Examples include the Spedale della Misericordia di San Luca in Lucca, sponsored by the Merchants' Guild; the Ospedale Nuovo in Pisa;²³ the *Fraternita dei Laici* and the Ospedale della Misericordia in Arezzo;²⁴ the Ospedale del Ceppo and of San Gregorio, founded by the Commune, in Pistoia.²⁵ Moreover, Florence and Siena represent two different models of charitable organizations: Siena, with the large Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala²⁶ and Florence, with a kind of specialization²⁷ divided between the Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova and those of San Matteo and of San Bonifazio, respectively sponsored by the Money Changers' and Wool Workers' Guilds. Others saw a decline in the 15th century (San Gallo, San Paolo, Santa Maria della Scala) also coinciding with the rise of the new Spedale degli Innocenti,²⁸ sponsored by the Silk Guild.

In such a rich context, the case study on which I want to focus my attention is the last business of Francesco Datini, the well-known "merchant of Prato", with the establishment of a charitable institution, the Ceppo Nuovo (to distinguish it from an already existing Ceppo) also known as the Ceppo Datini,²⁹ to which he bequeathed all his possessions. The story of the Ceppo Datini³⁰ represents a rather interesting case among the charitable institutions of late-medieval Tuscany, because of the possibility of very accurately reconstructing its planning and foundation thanks to the enormous availability of documents kept in the Datini Archive³¹ and in the Ceppo Archive, in addition to the fiscal sources of the 1427 Florentine Cadaster. The history of the Ceppo Datini has naturally had many ups and downs since its foundation until the contemporary age, first within the institutional framework of the Commune of Prato under the Republic of Florence and later under the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.³² The topic of these pages, however, leads us to focus on the first two decades of operation (1410-1427), namely the period of conception, design and creation of the Ceppo to highlight its economic

impact within Prato society. However, first of all, we must start with its creator and founder, the merchant of Prato, Francesco Datini. We will attempt to highlight the personal stamp he gave to his final enterprise from the very beginning: his objective and the choices he made according to the possibilities of that period.

The “Merchant of Prato” and his Economic Activity: Profit and Social Responsibility

Francesco Datini is a well-known figure in medieval economic history, thanks to the exceptional records preserved and to numerous studies.³³ It is known that Datini returned to Prato after a long stay in Avignon (1350-1382), where he had gone at a young age.³⁴ In Prato, instead of retiring from active life, he created his original business system, a holding company that operated in all commercial markets throughout Europe and the Mediterranean, consisting of trading companies in Avignon, Florence, Pisa, Genoa, Barcelona, Valencia, and Mallorca; manufacturing companies in Prato and Florence (wool, silk); a bank in Florence; and trusted agents in Milan and Venice.

An appraisal of his public figure has, however, remained divided between two factions that have highlighted his two contrasting facets. Economists have praised the businessman’s side, with the original holding company, and its mercantile network. The faction of historians interested in culture and its related mentality instead have reduced his stature, deeming him instead an example of the downward trend of Italian merchants and businessmen in the late Middle Ages. Moreover, Iris Origo’s well-known book *The Merchant of Prato*³⁵ certainly contributed to the definition of that stereotyped image of the hypocritical merchant, big in business but small and greedy in personal affairs, with the creation of this ambiguous Shakespearean definition. Within this historiographic context, even the founding of the Ceppo remained on the periphery of the historical reconstruction of Datini’s business activities and was considered the act of a belated repentant according to coeval devotional practices in the ambit of the period’s moral sphere and customs.

As I endeavored to show in a monograph,³⁶ I do not share these views. In fact, the extraordinary wealth of the Datini Archive allows not merely a reconstruction of the economic vicissitudes of his trading and manufacturing

companies, revealing through his papers,³⁷ and especially his personal letters (*lettere proprie*) to the partners of his holding company,³⁸ a much richer, more vibrant personality than had been previously thought. Indeed, writing for Francesco Datini was an essential tool of his company leadership: the company's structure made it particularly important to have trusted relationships with partners, who were not ordinary employees to whom he gave orders. The letters to his partners, furthermore, were not merely an exchange of information, but the tool through which Datini justified his choices and discussed how he interpreted and undertook mercantile and financial activities: his own correspondents recognized his argumentative ability, «to be able to write and speak using wise men's maxims».³⁹ Written in the context of interpersonal relationships, with no "literary" intentions, they are almost recordings of conversations that, through Datini's lively voice, represent a direct documentation of the mentality and culture of that time, opening unexpected windows on the medieval world. If Datini's undisputed originality is recognized, his correspondence nonetheless confirms the importance of merchants not simply as businessmen, but also, as noted by Giovanni Cherubini, as witnesses of their time.⁴⁰

Furthermore, if his reasoning was not just a means for conversing, but also for giving the reasons for what he said, Datini's letters clearly represent a document of his ideals and ideas, his aspirations and way of understanding economic activities up to formulating his testamentary bequest. I will limit myself to only a few examples, useful to the topic at hand.

Completely immersed in business, the merchant of Prato did not separate the pursuit of profit from his overall aspirations: «I do many things to care for others and for my satisfaction rather than for profit (gain), because I was never greedy for money; and thank God I do not need it, since I have no heirs or relatives, let alone friends, that can be found less frequently than giants».⁴¹ This "caring for others" was not only donations or almsgiving, which also appear widely in Datini's documentation.⁴² In a passage from another letter, written on the same day (23 April 1396) to the same partner from Pisa, Manno d'Albizo, he explicitly stated that it was precisely because he was a merchant that, as such, he had expanded from an individual dimension to a company one, from business to life, from almsgiving to profits: «If I had put my hope in having the world [profit], I would not have wasted my time building [his palace, his house in the countryside and other residences] and left

governing [the companies] to you and the other [partners], who give me little pleasure. (...) I did not need to raise the Tower of Babel, to lower mountains and create plains (...) as I do not want too many of the things of this world, but rather of my life (...) And with compassion, I wanted to do good for many and in many ways: giving for God [alms] and giving for profit; to some in one way and to some in others».⁴³

What surprises in this passage is the idea that not only almsgiving, the “giving to God”, but the very constitution of trading companies, letting himself be “governed” by partners, was taken as evidence of not having wanted only wealth for himself, his own individual profit: even building companies and “giving for profit” was a way of “doing good for many”, almost alluding to a kind of corporate social responsibility. Moreover, if the expression “do-good” occurs repeatedly in his letters, in the last years of his life, especially after a brief retreat to Bologna to escape a new wave of the plague (1400-1401), his resolutions redoubled. Before dying, he wanted to settle his businesses and intended to return the goods «that God has loaned me».

To dispel the image of a conflict between economic action and the ethical sphere, between an ethics of profit and one in the moral field, it suffices to again recall Datini’s own words. The keystone to his way of acting, which joined his way of living and the fact he was a merchant, was the criterion of reasonableness, in other words, a critical evaluation of his goals and the appropriate tools: «when man does something to a good end, and with reason in hand, things go well most of the time».⁴⁴ As confirmation of this way of thinking, this typically medieval mindset, he referred to the important *ex-empla* of the inherited culture: «I stand by the words of Solomon who said that, all things considered, given that he had had the wealth and status of the world, its delights and pleasures more than any other man, in the end, he said that there was nothing in them except living a good life: and he who lives well approaches [things] with reason».⁴⁵

The reference to Solomon constituted not only a reflection on life and the world, but also on the superiority accorded to a reasonable relationship with reality, subjected to the test of truth, as in the case of the famous “judgment”: «Things are not going nowadays as ordered by those valiant men who ruled in the past and made the laws. Solomon did not judge between (...) those two women who each asked for that boy child. Moreover, despite the fact that the one who was right agreed that the other should have him, Solomon did not

agree. Indeed, he wanted the woman who was the real mother to have the child. Today this is no longer the way: it is sufficient that the parties agree and the rector [judge] does nothing».⁴⁶

The explicit reference to the “wisdom of Solomon”, correctly quoted in its argumentative value, represents an element of great interest also in light of the latest research on argumentation in context, dedicated to the broader concept of reasonableness with respect to that of rationality.⁴⁷

With this reasonableness and realism, Datini led not only his life as a merchant from the years of his economic rise, but also the blueprint of what he would leave after his death.

Planning and Development of the Ceppo: from Holding Company to Public Enterprise

Francesco Datini had a plan («un fine buono», a good purpose) for his birthplace, the “land” of Prato, which he pursued with methodical reasonableness and realism («con la ragione in mano», with reason in his hand) developing first his holding company and later a unusual public company that was to continue for a long time. It was a plan influenced by the events of his life (Datini was an orphan and had no heirs other than an illegitimate daughter) and by the customs of his time, where his personal ambitions and aspirations took shape, as well as by his attachment to his home town.

Datini had worked on his will since 1406, rejecting the initial alternatives of his possessions being sold after his death to then be donated or of distributing his assets to existing institutions.⁴⁸ He shared these worries with his notary and friend Lapo Mazzei, worries which derived from the fear of seeing his assets dissipated by the greed and incompetence of the ecclesiastical and civil powers that burdened Prato, divided between the Diocese of Pistoia and Florentine dominion. Thus, he decided to set up a new organization, the *Ceppo pe' poveri*, entrusting its care and management to his commune of Prato, and providing specific rules for its administration. The idea was already fully developed by 1407, as he wrote to a partner, «I remember that I must die and get my affairs in order; and I want to transform my home into a Ceppo for the poor, and I do not want others to do what I can do».⁴⁹

In fact, apart from a number of specific donations,⁵⁰ among which also ap-

peared 1000 florins to establish a new hospital for orphans in Florence that later would become the Spedale degli Innocenti, the Ceppo took its final form in Datini's last will and testament prepared a few days before his death (August 1410). The Ceppo's beneficiaries were the poor, according to the usual distinction: the "public poor", beggars, and those who were not seen in the streets, or the "secret ones" and the "shameful ones" (impoverished). In addition, in his will, he worked out the structure of this new plan with the same care he had used to form his companies: from organizing the economic bases that would guarantee the future of his new venture up to defining the institution's legal status, its management structure, and the transition of his assets to the Ceppo.

The Ceppo's economic bases centered on inalienable land ownership – «he wanted and ordered that farms, lands, and immovable property be bought» – whose «sale, alienation, and long-term rent» was forbidden. Nevertheless, Datini had already begun these investments in the final years of life. At the time of his death the merchant's land holdings consisted of about 50 hectares of land, 35 of which were purchased beginning in 1406. Another acknowledgement of the new enterprise getting underway are the two specific registers opened in 1408: the *Libro delle Possessioni*, Register of Real Estate, (25 March) and the *Libro di Pigionali e lavoratori*, Register of Tenants and Peasants, (26 April).

With great precision, the will also established the charity's structure: his palace was to become «ceppo, granary, a private and not sacred house» in no way subject to ecclesiastical authority or to other powerful men (magnates). The Ceppo was to have a secular administration run by the commune of Prato, which was to control its management and defend it against other powers. Each year the commune was to appoint four rectors and a chamberlain who had to administer the patrimony; and four accountants to perform the accounting audit and control the rectors' work. In order to bring the balance of his assets and the transfer of his wealth to the Ceppo to a close, the will provided for closing all of his companies and establishing a new temporary company for a period of five years, consisting of the Ceppo and two partners (Luca del Sera and Francesco di ser Benozzo).

Upon its establishment, the Ceppo immediately inherited the merchant's wealth (palace, lands, and houses). Over the next five years, it received the funds deriving from the liquidation of the economic activities. These funds

were used to purchase lands, from the 50 hectares left by Datini, the land holdings had increased to about 355 hectares at the time of the 1427 Florentine cadaster. With its remarkable inheritance, the Ceppo Datini became one of Prato's charitable institutions, which, in the early 15th century, also included other hospitals and charitable institutions, among which stood out the hospitals of the Misericordia, the Dolce and the Ceppo Vecchio.

Prato's Charitable Institutions

Just a few words to outline some facts regarding Prato in the late Middle Ages. Prato was a "terra", land, according to the definition of the time and did not have the title of city. It was not a bishopric (it fell under Pistoia) and its commune was under Florence's authority, although with specific degrees of autonomy.⁵¹ However its demographic size and economic and manufacturing activities were of some significance, equal to those of many urban centers in the region.⁵² At the time of the 1427 cadaster, there were about 3,500 inhabitants in the town of Prato, with about 4,700 living in the district.⁵³ Considering the economic conditions resulting again from the cadaster, 54% of the city's population and 67% of the district lived in poverty,⁵⁴ slightly less with respect to sample areas in the Florentine countryside (76%).⁵⁵

In the field of assistance, however, Prato was a very special case in late-medieval Tuscany because of the significant impact of the value of the charitable institutions' assets⁵⁶ and the impressive services offered by the hospitals and charitable institutions in relation to population.⁵⁷ This proportion remained constant throughout the modern age, with significant aspects of both the services offered and the importance of professional specialization in the various roles of administrators that were required to manage these institutions.⁵⁸

However, to state the importance of Prato's charitable system, one essential contribution stemmed in particular from Francesco Datini's Ceppo. In fact, comparing the asset data for Prato's charitable institutions, the Datini Ceppo represented approximately 53% of the value (table 1), and possessed about 47% of the land held by Prato's charitable institutions, with land holdings of 355 hectares (table 2).

Charitable Institutions	Real estate (florins)	%
Ceppo Nuovo (Francesco di Marco Datini)	25.049	53,1
Ceppo Vecchio	6.491	13,8
Spedale della Misericordia	11.833	25,1
Spedale del Dolce	3.080	6,5
Spedale di San Giuliano	560	1,2
Spedale di San Lorenzo	105	0,2
Total	47.120	100,0

Table 1. Real estate (taxable) of Prato's charitable institutions (*Catasto* 1427).

Charitable Institutions	Landed property (hectares)	%
Ceppo Nuovo (Francesco di Marco Datini)	354,9	47,6
Ceppo Vecchio	108,1	14,5
Spedale della Misericordia	215,4	28,9
Spedale del Dolce	66,6	8,9
Total	745,0	100,0

Table 2. Landed property of Prato's charitable institutions (*Catasto* 1427).

Economic Aspects of the Ceppo Datini: Wealth, Donations, Market

Focusing on the Ceppo Datini, some striking elements can be highlighted with reference to its wealth and use of resources. Investments in land ownership were also accompanied by agricultural rationalization, completely integrated with the economic trends of the time.⁵⁹ In addition, for annual agricultural production, the Ceppo was involved not only in charitable activities but also in the food market. The resulting proceeds were a tool used by the commune for various public works.

Rationalization of landed property

Agricultural production of the landed properties and the rents from houses or scattered pieces of land represented the Ceppo's income. The agricultural products were used to meet the needs of the poor, while the sale of foodstuffs (especially grain and wine) and the rents ensured the availability of money. Before considering the use of the Ceppo's resources, attention must be drawn to the organization of the landed properties (which increased from 50 hectares in 1410 to 350 in 1427) and the rationalization achieved by the rector in the first two decades of its operation. In the Tuscan countryside, this involves a discussion of farms and sharecropping.

In the agrarian history of medieval Tuscany, the importance of the development of sharecropping (*mezzadria poderale*), especially around Florence and Siena starting in the 13th century, is well known.⁶⁰ It was an essential element in the formation of the countryside's agrarian structure.⁶¹ This contract (limited in time and renewable annually) provided for dividing operating expenses (seed) and annual products (grain, wine, oil) "a mezzo", or in half and spread as the most effective form of land management in medieval Tuscany. *Mezzadria* could be applied to various sizes of plots of land, but was mainly associated with the creation of farms of about 8-10 hectares (formed by combining not necessarily contiguous parcels of land), with a house for the sharecropper (at the time called *lavoratore*, farm worker) and other outbuildings such as a well, a farmyard, an oven, and sometimes a shed. A lease agreement was instead used for small pieces of land or in marginal areas.

An examination of sample areas in the Florentine countryside at the time of the 1427 cadaster established a very high incidence of *mezzadria* on individual private properties (about 88%), compared to those of ecclesiastical institutions and hospitals (57%), where choices oriented towards securing a set amount of products and the land fragmentation resulting from bequests and donations had hindered its spread. For example, the Fraternalita dei Laici (Santa Maria della Misericordia) in Arezzo avoided direct investments in its own lands, limiting itself to collecting a fixed rent of wheat for distributing bread to the poor and giving priority to leases with rents in kind, similar to what some Florentine hospitals were found to be doing, such as the Society of Orsanmichele and the hospital of San Gallo.⁶² Only the largest

Florentine hospitals or, in Siena, Santa Maria della Scala, pursued plans to rationalize production. In the case of the Sieneese hospital, with the Statute of 1318, they in fact set up “grance” (from the French *grange*), real farms that controlled and administered the considerable landed properties, with the spread of the most advanced production system of the time: *mezzadria* or sharecropping.⁶³

Turning to Prato’s situation, here again the rent represented the type of tenancy most used by the oldest charitable institutions. The firm stance of the Ceppo Datini’s rectors was instead different. The two farms (*poderi*, averaging 4.5 hectares) in 1410 increased to 22 farms (averaging 9 hectares) in 1427. The sharecropping contract was however used by the Ceppo on other agrarian properties, thus covering much of the landed properties (83%), with the exception of pastures and a few scattered pieces of land.

Two considerations are appropriate here, an agrarian economic one and a social one.

In terms of classical agrarian economics, the incorporation of lands and the creation of farms – specifically in the hills and plains of Tuscany – was a clear-cut managerial choice, directed at increasing production and land capital (the value of agricultural holdings that includes land, buildings and multi-year tree-like crops like grapevines and olive trees). Moreover, the sharecropping contract offered farmers not just “spare working capital” (tools, work animals, seeds, and supplies) but also “circulating working capital”, such as the advances for other needs related to agricultural crops or the peasant family’s life, which were offset by additional work or with product quotas within the contract, without resorting to other loans.

Turning our attention to the social aspects, one might assume that the attitude of the charities was different and less oppressive than that of the private owners. However, beyond suppositions that are difficult to document, the history of the Ceppo Datini contains some interesting traces in this regard. In 1575, Florence’s nine *conservatori*, the magistracy that oversaw charitable institutions, asked Prato’s council to transform the sharecropping contracts into leases. The request perhaps came with the purpose of ensuring an income without operating expenses (in the case of rents in kind); or increasing cash revenues (cash leases) in order to expand the institution’s financial resources. The council’s response was unanimous and against the request: maintaining the land management *a mezzo* (in half, *mezzadria*) allowed «feeding many poor

working families [peasants]», who otherwise «would be downtrodden in other ways».⁶⁴ A meaningful assessment of the sharecropping contract emerges from this response, which guaranteed access to land and the availability of working capital as opposed to the lease. This is also an interesting element in the context of the charitable institution's social role.

Donations

As we have seen, the essential purpose set by Datini in his will was to meet the needs of the poor. This intention was realized from its early years, with the distribution of grain, flour and bread, as well as other minor cereals (barley, rye), legumes (broad beans), wine, olive oil, poultry, and sugar (which the Ceppo acquired for the sick from apothecaries).

Through the book of 1415-1416 *Entrata e Uscita*, the first to be drawn up with methodical precision, we can examine more closely the case of wheat in the Ceppo's early years of operation. In that accounting year, the rectors administered wheat output of 224 quintals,⁶⁵ with 161 destined for donations (121 quintals of flour) and the rest was placed on the market. These were donations of flour after the wheat was ground by millers, with a part being sent to bakers to make bread weekly, which was then donated to the poor who came to the door of the Ceppo, monks of various religious orders in Prato, prisoners, and wayfarers.

Some further considerations, however, are deserved for the charity carried out during the course of business, which can give an idea of the impact that the Ceppo had on Prato's population. Examining the specific list of families to whom the 121 quintals of flour was directed, we know that donations averaged 1-4 bushels (about 12-48 kg) per year per family. Nevertheless, running through the names, we know that 543 families both in the city center (322) and the district's hamlets (221) received these donations, equal to about one-third of Prato's hearths!⁶⁶

However, these figures should be considered in the context of an early stage of settlement. As we have seen over the years 1411-1427, the Ceppo acquired much land, thus increasing the very availability of foodstuffs. Already in the following two accounting periods (1416-1417, 1417-1418), in the face of a greater number of actual grain outputs, of 324 and 472 quintals, respectively,

there was a wide variation in the proportion of grain intended for charity versus that sold: charity overall dropped to 50% in 1416-1417 and to 24% in 1417-1418, with a corresponding increase in the part intended for the market.

The market for agricultural products and credit

These trends appear to have been completely established at the time of the cadaster. The total wheat distributed had again grown (the property was increased) with over 90% of the 715 quintals grown in 1427-1428 (600 in 1428-1429) intended for sale, whereas about 50 quintals of wheat were used to make bread for the needy. A similar proportion also related to wine with, again in this case, 90% of the approximately 1,500 barrels produced (520 hl) destined for the marketplace. Oil, used mainly for lighting, was a different matter. Only small quantities were sold, while the main expenditures were donations to the friars and prisoners, and to meet the needs of the Ceppo's premises.

It is necessary to make two observations in order to place the rector's choices within the historical context, especially in the case of wheat, a basic dietary element. Indeed, the price of wheat in Florence decreased sharply between 1415 and 1427, going from an average of about 26 *soldi* per bushel in 1415 to 14 *soldi* in 1427.⁶⁷ It is clear that these downward price trends must have eased the pressure on the population, especially the very poor or the impoverished, perhaps making it less urgent to turn to the Ceppo's donations of flour. In addition, another fact must be highlighted. As time passed, all sales were made on credit, thus facilitating access to foodstuffs.

In addition to individual buyers of even small quantities (half a quintal) of the Ceppo's wheat, the buyers included millers and bakers in Prato, with many buyers also coming from Florence (about one-third of the purchases). Furthermore, monasteries and hospitals outside the land of Prato turned to the Ceppo. The nuns of San Piero Martire in Florence bought several lots for a total of over 100 quintals in the 1427-28 accounting year. In the following accounting year, the hospital of San Jacopo d'Altopascio bought nearly two quintals of wheat from the Ceppo. Overall, the Ceppo traded a significant amount of grain in Prato and Florence, thus acquiring a prominent role in the grain market.



Figure 1. Filippo Lippi, *Madonna of the Ceppo*: Francesco Datini and the Ceppo's officers, Prato 1453.

Staying within the sphere of economic activities, the documentation also records forms of pawns and small loans, in addition to credit sales, which had to be paid during the year in accordance with the commune's regulations.

Public works and construction of an identity

Also the commune of Prato made good use of the inheritance received from the merchant of Prato. In fact, the Ceppo Datini's economic resources were also used for public works (the aqueduct as well as road and public building maintenance), or to meet other civic needs, such as the salaries of various teachers (arithmetic, grammar, medicine, and the organs).⁶⁸ To confirm the centrality of the Ceppo Datini for the community of Prato, the complaints by Prato's Priori against Pistoia's can be mentioned as a result of damages caused by Pistoia's inhabitants to the Ceppo's peasants (sharecroppers): "whoever harms the Ceppo damages the life and heart of this land [Prato]".⁶⁹ Datini and his Ceppo were also of great importance in developing Prato's identity. The Datini Palace, home of the new Ceppo, was frescoed to create a memento of his economic activities and his institution to meet the needs of his place of birth. Inside Palazzo Datini, Filippo Lippi also carried out (1453) a panel painting of the Madonna of the Ceppo amid Prato's patron saints (St. Stephen and St. John the Baptist) with Francesco Datini and the *Buonomini*, namely the Ceppo's officers (fig. 1).

However, the same communal iconography also bears the unforgettable figure of Datini. Indeed, the painted image of Prato in the town hall's council chamber, the work of Pietro and Antonio di Miniato (1413), depicts, according to the standard of the times, the prominent buildings in the urban fabric (the cathedral, the castle, and the city walls along the Bisenzio River), with Palazzo Datini towering among them. Two distinguished public figures are set to the sides of the image, along with the patron saints (St. Stephen and St. John the Baptist): Pietro Dagomari, to whom is owed the gift of the relic (the sacred girdle of Mary) preserved in the cathedral, and Francesco Datini, in the act of donating his "Ceppo" to Prato (fig. 2).

During the 15th century, the Ceppo became a promoter and patron of an artistic season that characterized the Prato of that period,⁷⁰ including the expansion of the selfsame Palazzo Datini, seat of the Ceppo, for the "benefit of

the Ceppo” and as an “ornament of the land of Prato”:⁷¹ or rather it is an example of the “beautiful and useful”, the typical pillars of the construction of medieval cities that is also reflected in a minor center like the land of Prato.⁷²

Features of a Public Enterprise: a Social Economic Facilitator

Although characterized by a variety of unique stories (origins, transformations, and forms of government) and a specific role (political, economic and social) assumed in various historical contexts, charitable institutions were actually public economic enterprises that developed original forms of assistance and solidarity, thus creating a sort of welfare system in the late Middle Ages. Thanks to the donations they received, they became large landowners, fully integrated in the forms of agricultural rationalization and in the food market. They were collectors of resources through which the communities and their communes carried out a redistribution of wealth through assistance, alms, public works, credit, and a money market before the advent of the *Monti di Pietà*.⁷³

With his Ceppo, Francesco Datini did not invent anything new but, as in the case of his holding company, he brought together the practices and tools of his time in an original way. What he did was a combination of resources and purposes that he carried out by making clear choices: an institution meant to last for a long time (engaging future generations), whose foundations were laid on land ownership (committing land and working capital), and which was to serve the needs of his home town and, above all, those of the poor; yet it was also for a wider range of possible needs (committing the responsibility of the first executors and successive rectors under the commune’s government). The Ceppo Datini was a unique player in the agricultural and food chains, producing commodities and ensuring access to land and the availability of working capital. It arranged the processing of products directly (wine, oil) or indirectly (grain and bread), contracting with millers and bakers. It was a player in the food market with its own products as well as by providing basic micro-credit tools for purchases.

Medieval charitable institutions not only supplied specific services such as admission to hospital for the ill, donation of bread, etc., but, as we have seen,



Figure 2. Pietro and Antonio di Miniato, Francesco Datini donating his “Ceppo” to the “Land” of Prato, Prato 1413.

also offered a community the tools, resources and goods thanks to which what had been difficult to achieve – farm management, savings, and public works – became possible in an easier way. In this perspective, also the donation of estates, as in the case of Francesco Datini’s will, must be explained as a form of investment whose purpose was to achieve a result: in this case not

profit but a civil, social and religious outcome. These many-sided dimensions and interactions represent the most interesting aspect in the history of charitable organizations: an appropriate key for interpreting medieval society.

- _1. *Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa. Sec. XIII-XVIII*, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini", FUP, Firenze 2013.
- _2. G. Piccinni, *Documenti per una storia dell'ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala di Siena*, "Summa", 2-5, 2013, pp. 1-29; G. Albin, *Ospedali e società urbana: Italia centro-settentrionale, secoli XIII-XVI*, in *Assistenza e solidarietà*, cit. note 1, pp. 385-397; A. Benvenuti, *La municipalizzazione della solidarietà confraternale: esempi dalle città toscane*, ibidem, pp. 465-478; A.J. Greco, L. Sandri (eds.), *Ospedali e città. L'Italia del Centro-Nord, XIII- XVI secolo*, Le Lettere, Firenze 1997; M. Gazzini (ed.), *Studi confraternali: orientamenti, problemi, testimonianze*, Reti Medievali-FUP, Firenze 2009, pp. 239-269.
- _3. G. Pinto (ed.), *La società del bisogno. Povertà e assistenza nella Toscana medievale*, Salimbeni, Firenze 1989.
- _4. G. Pinto, *Formazione e gestione dei patrimoni fondiari degli istituti assistenziali cittadini (Italia, secoli XIII-XV)*, in *Assistenza e solidarietà*, cit. note 1, pp. 169-178; A. Pastore, M. Garbellotti (eds.), *L'uso del denaro. Patrimoni e amministrazione nei luoghi pii e negli enti ecclesiastici in Italia (secoli XV-XVIII)*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2001.
- _5. M. Gazzini, A. Olivieri, *Presentazione*, in M. Gazzini, A. Olivieri (eds.), *L'ospedale, il denaro e altre ricchezze. Scritture e pratiche economiche dell'assistenza in Italia nel tardo medioevo*, «Reti Medievali Rivista», 17, 1, 2016, pp. 1-7 (<http://rivista.retimedievali.it>)
- _6. G. Pinto, *Formazione e gestione dei patrimoni fondiari*, cit. note 4.
- _7. G. Piccinni, *Ospedali, affari e credito prima del Monte di Pietà*, in M. Gazzini, A. Olivieri (eds.), *L'ospedale, il denaro*, cit. note 5, pp. 133-154.
- _8. G. Todeschini, *I mercanti e il tempo. La società cristiana e il circolo virtuoso della ricchezza fra Medioevo ed età moderna*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2002; Id., *La riflessione etica sulle attività economiche*, in R. Greci, G. Pinto, G. Todeschini (eds.), *Economie urbane ed etica economica nell'Italia medievale*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2005, pp. 151-228; Id., *Ricchezza francescana. Dalla povertà volontaria alla società di mercato*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2004.
- _9. G. Piccinni, *Il banco dell'ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala e il mercato del denaro nella Siena del Trecento*, Pacini, Pisa 2012.
- _10. G. Piccinni, *Siena 1309-1310: il contesto*, in N. Giordano, G. Piccinni (eds.), *Siena nello specchio del suo Costituto in volgare del 1309-1310*, Pacini, Pisa 2014, pp. 15-36; M. Pellegrini, *La comunità ospedaliera di Santa Maria della Scala e il suo più antico statuto (Siena, 1305)*, Pacini, Pisa 2005; S. R. Epstein, *Alle origini della fattoria toscana. L'ospedale della Scala di Siena e le sue terre (metà '200 - metà '400)*, Salimbeni, Firenze 1986.
- _11. P. Avallone (ed.), *Prestare ai poveri. Il credito su pegno e i Monti di Pietà in area mediterranea (secoli XV-XIX)*, CNR, Roma 2007.
- _12. G. Piccinni, *Ospedali, affari e credito*, cit. note 7.
- _13. M. C. Rossi, *La vita buona: scelte religiose di impegno nella società*, in *La ricerca del benessere individuale e sociale. Ingredienti materiali e immateriali (città italiane, XII-XV secolo)*, Centro Italiano di Studi di Storia e Arte (Pistoia 15-18 maggio 2009), Viella, Roma 2011, pp. 231-258.
- _14. M. Garbellotti, *Per carità. Poveri e politiche assistenziali nell'Italia moderna*, Carocci, Roma 2013.
- _15. F. Bianchi, *L'economia delle confraternite devozionali laiche: percorsi storiografici e questioni di metodo*, in M. Gazzini (ed.), *Studi confraternali*, cit. note 2, pp. 239-269.
- _16. M. Mollat, *Le pauvres au Moyen Age. Etude sociale*, Hachette, Paris 1978.
- _17. M. Gazzini, A. Olivieri, *Presentazione*, cit. note 5; M. Gazzini, *La fraternita come luogo di economia. Osservazioni sulla gestione delle attività e dei beni di ospedali e confraternite nell'Italia tardo-medievale*, in *Assistenza e solidarietà*, cit. note 1, pp. 261-276; L. Palermo, *Gestione economica e contabilità negli enti assistenziali medievali*, in M. Gazzini, A. Olivieri (eds.), *L'ospedale, il denaro*, cit. note 4, pp. 113-131; A. Pastore, M. Garbellotti (eds.), *L'uso del denaro*, cit. note 4.
- _18. Epstein, *Alle origini della fattoria toscana*, cit. note 10; S. Sonderregger, *The Financing Strategy of a Major Urban Hospital in the Late Middle Ages (St. Gallen 15th Century)*, in *Assistenza e solidarietà*, cit. note 1, pp. 209-226; G. Piccinni, *Siena, il grano di Maremma e quello dell'ospedale. I provvedimenti economici del 1382*, "Bullettino senese di storia patria", CXX, 2013, pp. 174-189.
- _19. R. A. Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 2009; L. Sandri, *L'attività di banco di de-*

- posito dell'Ospedale degli Innocenti di Firenze. Don Vincenzo Borgbini e la 'banca rotta' del 1579, in A. Pastore, M. Garbellotti (eds.), *L'uso del denaro*, cit. note 4, pp. 153-178; P. Avallone (ed.), *Prestare ai poveri*, cit. note 11.
- _20. G. Piccinni, *Documenti per una storia*, cit. note 2.
- _21. B. Van Bavel, A. Rijpm, *How important were formalized charity and social spending before the rise of the welfare state? A long-run analysis of selected western European cases, 1400-1850*, "The Economic History Review", 69, 1, 2016, pp. 159-187.
- _22. M. Frati, *Gli ospedali medievali in Toscana: osservazioni preliminari*, in S. Beltramo e P. Cozzo (eds.), *L'accoglienza religiosa tra medioevo ed età moderna. Luoghi, architetture, percorsi*, Viella, Roma 2013, pp. 61-87.
- _23. M. Ronzani, *Nascita e affermazione di un grande «bospitale» cittadino: lo spedale nuovo di Pisa dal 1257 alla metà del Trecento, in Città e servizi sociali nell'Italia dei secoli XII-XV*, Centro Italiano di Studi di Storia e d'Arte (Pistoia, 9-12 ottobre 1987), Pistoia 1990, pp. 201-235; G. Patetta, *Gli ospedali a Pisa nel Medioevo, in Strutture sanitarie a Pisa. Contributi alla storia di una città sec. XIII-XIX*, Pacini, Pisa 1986, pp. 49-75.
- _24. A. Moriani, «Questo presente libro sia et esser possa consolazione de' poveri di Christo». Il sistema documentario della Fraternita dei Laici di Arezzo tra XIV e XV secolo, in *Città e campagne del Basso Medioevo. Studi sulla società italiana offerti dagli allievi a Giuliano Pinto*, Olschki, Firenze 2014, pp. 229-243; A. Moriani, *Assistenza e beneficenza ad Arezzo nel XIV secolo: la Fraternita di Santa Maria della Misericordia*, in G. Pinto (ed.), *La società del bisogno*, cit. note 3, pp. 19-35.
- _25. E. Coturri, *Spedali della città e del contado a Pistoia nel Medioevo, in Città e servizi sociali*, cit. note 23, pp. 259-275; F. Neri, *Attività manifatturiere, mercato e arti*, in G. Cherubini (ed.), *Storia di Pistoia*, vol. II, *L'età del libero comune. Dall'inizio del XII alla metà del XIV secolo*, Le Monnier, Firenze 1998, pp. 121-153; A. Cipriani, L. Cipriani, *Lo Spedale del Ceppo. Storia, arte, cultura*, Gli Ori, Pistoia 2012.
- _26. G. Piccinni, *Il banco dell'ospedale del Santa Maria della Scala*, cit. note 9.
- _27. G. Pinto, *L'ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova nella Firenze di Dante*, in Id., *Il lavoro, la povertà, l'assistenza*, Viella, Roma 2008, pp. 163-172; L. Sandri, *Aspetti dell'assistenza ospedaliera a Firenze nel XV secolo*, in *Città e servizi sociali*, cit. note 23, pp. 237-257; Ead., *Ospedali e utenti dell'assistenza nella Firenze del Quattrocento*, in G. Pinto (ed.), *La società del bisogno*, cit. note 3, pp. 61-100; Ead., *La specializzazione ospedaliera fiorentina: gli Innocenti e l'assistenza all'infanzia (XV-XVI secolo)*, in A. J. Greco, L. Sandri (eds.), *Ospedali e città*, cit. note 2, pp. 51-66; E. Diana, *San Matteo e San Giovanni di Dio. Due ospedali nella storia fiorentina*, Le Lettere, Firenze 1999.
- _28. L. Sandri (ed.), *Un ospedale, un archivio, una città*, SPES, Firenze 2005.
- _29. In Tuscan vocabulary, the term "ceppo" means "gift". The origin of this term goes back to the use of collecting alms, at the foot of the altar, in a hollow tree trunk, i.e., a *ceppo*. The largest hospital in Pistoia was called "Ospedale del Ceppo", and there also existed a "ceppo" in Prato, founded in 1282 by Monte Pugliesi.
- _30. P. Nanni, *Impresa pubblica e proprietà fondiaria. Il «Ceppo pe' Poveri di Cristo» di Francesco di Marco Datini (Prato, XV secolo)*, "Rivista di storia dell'agricoltura", LIV, 2, 2014, pp. 93-130; Id., *L'ultima impresa di Francesco Datini. Progettualità e realizzazione del «Ceppo pe' poveri di Cristo»*, in M. Gazzini, A. Olivieri (eds.), *L'ospedale, il denaro*, cit. note 5, pp. 281-307.
- _31. The exceptional Datini Archive is located in the Prato State Archives. The whole collection of more than 160,000 letters has been digitized and can be directly consulted on the internet site. About the Datini Archive: D. Toccafondi, *Il mercante, l'archivio e la casa*, in J. Hayez, D. Toccafondi (eds.), *Palazzo Datini a Prato. Una casa fatta per durare mille anni*, Polistampa, Prato 2013, pp. 245-255; C. Guasti, *Proemio*, in L. Mazzei, *Lettere di un notaro a un mercante del XIV secolo*, Firenze 1880, pp. I-CXLIII; F. Melis, *Aspetti della vita economica medievale. Studi nell'archivio Datini di Prato*, Olschki, Siena 1962; B. Dini, *L'Archivio Datini*, in Id., *Manifattura, commercio e banca nella Firenze medievale*, Nardini, Firenze 2001, pp. 199-208; J. Hayez, *L'archivio Datini. De l'invention de 1870 à l'exploration d'un système d'écrits privés*, "Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Âge", 117 (2005), pp. 121-191.
- _32. V. Vestri, *Per una storia istituzionale della Casa*

- Pia dei Ceppi tra i secoli XIV e XIX*, in J. Hayez, V. Toccafondi (eds.), *Palazzo Datini a Prato*, cit. note 31, pp. 269-291.
- _33. F. Melis, *Aspetti della vita economica*, cit. note 31; G. Nigro (ed.), *Francesco di Marco Datini. The Man the Merchant*, FUP, Firenze 2010.
- _34. The 1348 plague (Black Death) led to the death of his parents, sister, and one of his two brothers. In 1350, at the age of fifteen, Datini went with other Florentine merchants to Avignon, then the papal seat and an important commercial center in Provence.
- _35. I. Origo, *The Merchant of Prato*, Jonathan Cape, London 1957.
- _36. P. Nanni, *Ragionare tra mercanti. Per una rilettura della personalità di Francesco di Marco Datini (1335ca.-1410)*, Pacini, Pisa 2010.
- _37. The Datini Archive contains over 160,000 letters sent and received by his holding company, divided according to type: commercial, specialized (insurance etc.), and private correspondence. About 7,000 letters were written or dictated by Francesco Datini. Of these, 6,000 are related to his business correspondence and 1,000 to private correspondence addressed to family members (including those to Margherita), partners, employees, business correspondents, friends (like the notary Lapo Mazzei), and various individuals with whom he had relationships. See: L. Mazzei, *Lettere di un notaro*, cit. note 31; V. Rosati (ed.), *Le lettere di Margherita Datini a Francesco di Marco*, Prato 1977; E. Cecchi (ed.), *Le lettere di Francesco Datini alla moglie Margherita (1384-1410)*, Società pratese di Storia Patria, Prato 1990.
- _38. There are 233 letters addressed to his companies' partners: Boninsegna di Matteo Boninsegna (2) and Tieni di Benci (5) in Avignon; Stoldo di Lorenzo in Pisa and Florence (54); Manno d'Albizo Agli in Pisa (8); Andrea di Bonanno in Genova (4); Luca del Sera in Barcelona, Valencia and Florence (24); Cristofano di Bartolo in Pisa, Florence, Majorca and Barcelona (52); Simone d'Andrea Bellandi in Prato and Barcelona (75); to Simone, Cristofano and Luca together (4); to Cristofano and Simone together (5). See: P. Nanni, *Ragionare tra mercanti*, cit. note 36.
- _39. Bassano da Pessina to Francesco Datini (16 March 1384): L. Frangioni, *Milano fine Trecento. Il carteggio milanese dell'Archivio Datini di Prato*, Opus Libri, Firenze 1994, vol. I, p. 28.
- _40. G. Cherubini, *Ha senso studiare ancora i mercanti?*, in Id., *Firenze e la Toscana. Scritti vari*, Pacini, Pisa 2012, pp. 131-141; I. Ait, *Il commercio nel Medioevo*, Jouvence, Roma 2005; L. Tanzini, S. Tognetti (eds.), *«Mercatura è arte». Uomini d'affari toscani in Europa e nel Mediterraneo tardomedievale*, Viella, Roma 2012.
- _41. Francesco Datini to Manno d'Albizo Agli (23 April 1396): P. Nanni, *Ragionare tra mercanti*, cit. note 36, p. 209.
- _42. Datini maintained twenty-five needy families during his life: Melis, *Aspetti della vita economica medievale*, cit. note 31, pp. 88-91.
- _43. Francesco Datini to Francesco Datini and Manno d'Albizo Agli and comp. (23 April 1396): P. Nanni, *Ragionare tra mercanti*, cit. note 36, p. 254.
- _44. Francesco Datini to Simone d'Andrea (3 March 1402): *ibidem*, p. 92.
- _45. Francesco Datini to Cristofano di Bartolo (30 March 1397): *ibidem*, p. 94.
- _46. Francesco Datini to Stoldo di Lorenzo (8 May 1401): *ibidem*, p. 96.
- _47. E. Rigotti, R. Palmieri, *Solomon's Wise Judgment: A Case Study of Argumentation in Context*, in M. Danesi, S. Geco (eds), *Case Studies in Discourse Analysis*, Lincom, München 2016, pp. 37-61.
- _48. Datini's will is published in L. Mazzei, *Lettere di un notaro*, cit. note 31; C. Guasti, *Proemio, ibidem*.
- _49. Francesco Datini to Cristofano di Bartolo Carrocci (2 April 1407): P. Nanni, *Ragionare tra mercanti*, cit. note 36, p. 264.
- _50. In Datini's will there appeared a number of specific donations to poor people, friends (some partners), family members (the wife Margherita and his daughter Ginevra), churches and convents. Datini recommended his five executors to correct any possible oversights.
- _51. G. Cherubini, *Ascesa e declino di Prato tra l'XI e il XV secolo*, in Id., *Città comunali di Toscana*, CLUEB, Bologna 2003, pp. 187-250.
- _52. F. Franceschi, I. Taddei, *Le città italiane nel Medioevo. XII-XIV secolo*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2012.
- _53. E. Fiumi, *Demografia, movimento urbanistico e classi sociali, in Prato dall'età comunale ai tempi moderni*, Olschki, Firenze 1968.
- _54. S. Raveggi, *Le condizioni di vita*, in G. Cheru-

- bini (ed.), *Prato. Storia di una città*, vol. I, *Ascesa e declino del centro medievale (dal Mille al 1494)*, Le Monnier, Firenze 1991, pp. 479-528.
- _55. E. Conti, *La formazione della struttura agraria moderna nel contado fiorentino*, vol. III.1, *Fonti e risultati sommari delle indagini per campione e delle rilevazioni statistiche (secoli XV-XIX)*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, Roma 1965, pp. 86. See also: D. Herlihy, Ch. Klapisch-Zuber, *Le Toscans et leurs familles. Une étude du catasto florentin de 1427*, FNSP, Paris 1978.
- _56. Charitable institutions, or “*luoghi pii*”, were classified together with ecclesiastical institutions, and the sum of their assets amounted to about one-third of the total, unlike the Florentine countryside which stood at around 22%. E. Fiumi, *Demografia, movimento urbanistico*, cit. note 53.
- _57. G. Pinto, I. Tognarini, *Povert  e assistenza*, in E. Fasano Guarini (ed.), *Prato. Storia di una citt *, vol. II, *Un microcosmo in movimento (1494-1815)*, Le Monnier, Firenze 1986, pp. 429-500.
- _58. E. Stumpo, *Le forme del governo cittadino*, in E. Fasano Guarini (ed.), *Prato. Storia di una citt *, cit. note 57, pp. 281-342; E. Fasano Guarini, *Sintesi conclusiva, ibidem*, pp. 828-880.
- _59. G. Piccinni, *La propriet  della terra, i percettori dei prodotti e della rendita*, in G. Pinto, C. Poni, U. Tucci (eds.), *Storia dell'agricoltura italiana*, vol. II, *Medioevo ed et  moderna*, Accademia dei Georgofili-Polistampa, Firenze 2002, pp. 145-168.
- _60. For the history of the Tuscan *mezzadria* in the Middle Ages, I refer to the main studies: G. Cherubini, *La mezzadria toscana delle origini*, in Id., *Scritti toscani. L'urbanesimo medievale e la mezzadria*, Salimbeni, Firenze 1991, pp. 189-207; G. Pinto, *Un quadro d'insieme*, in Id., *Campagne e paesaggi toscani del Medioevo*, Nardini, Firenze 2002, pp. 7-73; G. Pinto, P. Pirillo (ed.), *Il contratto di mezzadria nella Toscana Medievale*, vol. I, *Contado di Siena. Sec. XIII-1348*, Olschki, Firenze 1987; O. Muzzi, M.D. Nenci (eds.), *Il contratto di mezzadria nella Toscana Medievale*, vol. II, *Contado di Firenze. Secolo XIII*, Olschki, Firenze 1988; G. Piccinni (ed.), *Il contratto di mezzadria nella Toscana Medievale*, vol. III, *Contado di Siena, 1349-1518*, Olschki, Firenze 1992.
- _61. E. Conti, *La formazione della struttura agraria*, cit. note 55, pp. 102-105; G. Cherubini, *Proprietari, contadini e campagne senesi all'inizio del Trecento*, in Id., *Signori, contadini, borghesi. Ricerche sulla societ  italiana del basso Medioevo*, Sansoni, Firenze 1974, pp. 231-311.
- _62. A. Moriani, *Assistenza e beneficenza*, cit. note 24.
- _63. S. R. Epstein, *Alle origini della fattoria*, cit. note 10.
- _64. E. Stumpo, *Le forme del governo cittadino*, cit. note 58.
- _65. Weight measures: 1 bushel of flour = 11.7 kg; 1 bushel of “baked bread” = 10.7 kg.
- _66. 322 families out of 988 hearths in Prato and the suburbs were assisted; 221 out of 911 in the district (543 out of 1899 in total). 84.4 quintals of flour were distributed in Prato (26.2 kg on average per year per household); 36.5 in the district (16.5 kg on average per year per household): P. Nanni, *Impresa pubblica e propriet  fondiaria*, cit. note 30.
- _67. S. Tognetti, *Prezzi e salari nella Firenze tardo-medievale: un profilo*, “Archivio Storico Italiano”, CLIII, 1995, 564, II, pp. 263-333.
- _68. V. Vestri, *Per una storia istituzionale*, cit. note 32.
- _69. E. Fasano Guarini, *Sintesi conclusiva*, cit. note 58, p. 848.
- _70. A. De Marchi, *Genius Loci: Paolo Uccello e Filippo Lippi per Prato o il teatro degli affetti*, in A. De Marchi, C. Gnoni Mavarelli (eds.), *Da Donatello a Lippi. Officina pratese*, Electa, Milano 2013, pp. 17-29. See also: M. Romagnoli, *La decorazione pittorica di Palazzo Datini. Vicende e cronologia*, in J. Hayez, V. Toccafondi (eds.), *Palazzo Datini a Prato*, cit. note 31, pp. 111-123; Ead., *Gli ambienti esterni. Proposte per una lettura iconografica, ibidem*, pp. 125-139.
- _71. F. Carrara, *La Casa Pia dei Ceppi: vicende architettoniche tra i secoli XV e XIX*, in Hayez, Toccafondi (eds.), *Palazzo Datini*, cit. note 31, pp. 303-313; 305.
- _72. G. Cherubini, *La ricerca del decoro urbano*, in *La ricerca del benessere*, cit. note 13, pp. 361-380; G. Piccinni, *Introduzione al convegno, ibidem*, pp. 1-25.
- _73. M.G. Muzzarelli, *Il denaro e la salvezza. L'intervento dei Monti di Piet *, Il Mulino, Bologna 2001; P. Avallone (ed), *Prestare ai poveri*, cit. note 11.