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**FIRST PRINCIPLES
OF PUBLIC FINANCE**

FIRST PRINCIPLES
of
PUBLIC FINANCE
by
ANTONIO DE VITI DE MARCO



Translated from the Italian by
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OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITINGS OF
ANTONIO DE VITI DE MARCO¹

1. *Moneta e prezzi (Money and Prices, or the Quantity Theory in Relation to the Monetary Question)*. Città di Castello; S. Lapi, 1885. Pp. xi, 256.

A discussion of the limits within which the quantity theory is valid, and an examination of the problems of monetary dynamics in relation to the rates of discount and interest, the foreign exchanges, the international distribution of the precious metals, shifts in the social distribution of wealth, and crises.

2. *Il carattere storico dell'economia finanziaria (The Historical Character of Public Finance)*. Rome, Pasqualucci, 1888. Pp. xi, 163.

The three chapters are entitled as follows:

(1) 'Theory' and 'applications' of economic doctrines. — (2) Economic activity and 'financial activity' as objects of theoretical sciences. — (3) Financial calculations and the special character of 'natural laws' in matters of finance.

3. *Saggi di economia e di finanza (Essays in Economics and Finance)*, published by the *Giornale degli economisti*, Rome, 1898. Pp. viii, 188.

↳ (1) *Le teorie economiche di Antonio Serra*, which makes clear the real originality of the theories of the Apulian writer of the first part of the seventeenth century.

(2) *Contributo alla teoria del prestito pubblico (Contribution to the Theory of Public Loans)*, in which, starting from the Ricardian statement of the problem, a comparison is made between the extraordinary tax and the public loan. The argument anticipates and goes beyond most of the discussion which, without mentioning De Viti's exposition, arose in connection with the proposed post-war levies on capital.

(3) *Entrate patrimoniali e demanio (Patrimonial Revenues and the Public Domain)*, which analyses the economic and financial differences between the public domain and the State patrimony, and the causes of the progressive reduction of patrimonial revenues.

¹ Prepared by Luigi Einaudi.

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4. *La funzione della banca (The Function of Banks)*. Reprinted from *Rendiconti della R. Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali*, vol. VII, No. 1. Rome, 1898. Pp. 36.

Theory of the bank as an organization distinct from credit institutions.

5. *Scienza delle finanze (Science of Finance)*. Lectures, reported by V. Lionelli and summarized under the direction of A. de Viti de Marco. Rome, Manuzio, 1923. Pp. 285.

This is the first printed edition of the lectures given by De Viti at the University of Rome. It was prefaced by the following note 'To the reader', dated January 1, 1923:

'After some hesitation and solely in order to add to the effectiveness of instruction, I have been led to publish this broad summary of my lectures as they were carefully reported by Signor Leonelli.

'It is a "summary", because I have left out everything which, in the form of elaboration, examples, and references to general economics, makes a more or less extended part of oral lectures.

'This summary includes, however, those theories which are already to be found in the mimeographed report of the lectures I gave at the University of Pavia (1886-87) and which have been elaborated and completed from that time up to the present.

'It is only the theory of shifting that has undergone a radical change; and this change dates from between 1910 and 1912.

'Nevertheless, I do not mean to say that the present publication represents my final scientific formulation.

'In making these references to my earlier pedagogical labours, I wish to thank those of my colleagues who have paid me the signal honour of taking account, in their valuable writings, of my mimeographed lectures, whether or not they mentioned their existence.'

6. *I primi principii dell'economia finanziaria (First Principles of Public Finance)*. Rome, Sampaolesi, 1928. Pp. 400.

Third printed edition of the university course, on which the German translation of 1932 was based. It was prefaced by the following Note, dated December 1, 1927, at Rome:

'The reader will find in this third edition neither references to other authors nor the usual expository account of their doctrines, along with the victorious confutation of these doctrines in the usual academic manner. This is a method that I have abandoned com-

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pletely because the authors, dead or living, whose theories would thus be expounded and interpreted and refuted are not present to defend themselves.

'The absence of citations does not mean, however, that I aspire to originality and that I owe nothing or little to those who have preceded me.

'To them I owe everything; but I could not to-day establish with precision just what I owe to whom, since this book is, above all, an *independent* elaboration — as it matured under the continuous stimulus of teaching — of the theories and opinions of the greatest economists. These theories and opinions are in fact to a large extent well known, and constitute the scientific heritage of all scholars.

'I have, moreover, avoided useless polemics with those with whom I disagree, since, in accordance with the general set of ideas which I laid down in 1886-87 — in my *Il carattere teorico dell'economia finanziaria* — I have proposed to undertake a *positive* exposition of the theories of Public Finance which, starting from the premises of that earlier publication, arrive at the logical conclusion by virtue of their own content.

'Whether this publication is, because of its organic conception of the subject or because of some particular characteristic of its own, a contribution, however small it may be, to the progress of the theory of Public Finance — and this is the author's hope — only competent critics can say.'

7. *Un trentennio di lotte politiche (Thirty Years of Political Struggle)*. Rome, *Collezione Meridionale*, 1930. Pp. xxii, 480.

This is a collection of twenty essays, articles, and speeches by De Viti, representing the history of the political thought and practical action of De Viti and the group of which he could, from 1894 to 1922, be considered the leader. A suggestive preface clarifies the position that De Viti took against privileged groups or those desirous of privilege before, during, and after the War. The essays end with 1922, when, with the advent of Fascism, the liberal group of De Viti was dissolved. An accurate 'historical note' by Umberto Zanotti-Bianco, editor of the series in which the volume appeared, tells of the vicissitudes of the anti-protectionist movement in Italy, and an appendix by Ernesto Rossi recounts the vicissitudes of the tariff question after the War and the more recent intensification of protectionism.

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8. *Finanza straordinaria*. Appendix to *I primi principii dell'economia finanziaria*. Rome, Sampaolesi, 1932. P. 66.

Contains Book V of the *Principii* (No. 6, above), and has been incorporated with the rest of the work.

9. *Grundlehren der Finanzwirtschaft*. Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1932. Pp. xxviii, 334.

This is the German translation of *I primi principii* and *Finanza straordinaria*. The volume bears the following dedication: 'I dedicate this volume to those students of the University of Rome who, succeeding each other during my forty years of teaching, have been my most effective collaborators.' There is a preface by Oskar Morgenstern, a preface by the Author, in which he thanks Luigi Cardelli and Ernesto Rossi for their help in revising the volume, and an introduction, with bibliography, by Luigi Einaudi.

10. *Principii di economia finanziaria (Principles of Public Finance)*. Turin, Giulio Einaudi, 1934. Pp. xxxii, 425. The 'definitive' edition, with an introduction by Luigi Einaudi. The present translation is based upon this edition.

11. *Die Funktion der Bank*. Vienna, Julius Springer, 1935. A translation of No. 4, above.

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