

into the writings of the European economists in order to find their contributions to the construction of a European identity is certainly original. For all these reasons, we think that this volume is important reading for students and scholars of the history of economic thought.

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Ivan Colangelo Salomão, ed., *Os homens do cofre: o que pensavam os ministros da Fazenda do Brasil Republicano (1889–1985)* (São Paulo: Editora Unesp, 2021), pp. 517, R\$94. ISBN: 9786557110454.

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Finance ministries, their staff and their policies, are often objects of investigations in academic fields such as economic history, history of institutions, and sociology of the state. However, they are not usually explored in depth by history of economic thought scholars, who tend to focus more on the history of conceptual constructs, ideologies, schools of thought—on ideas, in short. In this respect, *Os homens do cofre: o que pensavam os ministros da Fazenda do Brasil Republicano* (The men of the coffer: what finance ministers of the Brazilian Republic thought), edited by Ivan C. Salomão, is an original achievement, as it presents a collection of essays, written by scholars with expertise in the history of economics, on a selection of Brazilian finance ministers. Each minister receives one chapter featuring biographical information, a survey of their intellectual contributions, and a description of their tenure as heads of the finance ministry.

The volume covers almost one century of republican rule in Brazil, from 1889 to 1985. Brazilian historiography usually recognizes four phases in this period, which are also the headings under which the chapters are divided. The book starts with the “Old Republic” (1889–1930), which includes texts on Rui Barbosa, Rodrigues Alves, Joaquim Murtinho, João Pandiá Calógeras, and Antônio Carlos Andrada. Then, the “Vargas Era” (1930–1945) comprises essays on Getúlio Vargas, José Maria Whitaker, Oswaldo Aranha, and Artur de Souza Costa. After that, we have a section for the “Democratic Period” (1945–1964), with chapters on Horácio Lafer, Eugênio Gudin, Lucas Lopes, and Walther Moreira Salles. The last part is dedicated to the “Military Regime” (1964–1985), featuring texts on Octávio Gouveia de Bulhões, Antonio Delfim Netto, Mario Henrique Simonsen, and Ernane Galvêas.

In addition to exploring this practical side of the history of economics, the book consolidates information that is usually sparse, due to the various layers of heterogeneity involving the finance ministers being thematized. While some ministers (as Mario Henrique Simonsen and Eugênio Gudin, for example) were prominent in theoretical debates and thus had their ideas scrutinized by historians of economics, others (such as Antônio Carlos Andrada and Horácio Lafer, for example) attracted attention for their careers as politicians or businessmen and hence are almost absent in the history of economics literature. Some ministers are long dead (for example, Rodrigues Alves and Rui Barbosa), but at least one is still alive when I write these lines (Antonio Delfim

Netto), and another was alive when the book was produced (Ernane Galvêas, deceased in January 2022). Some chapters refer to the academic works published by the former ministers, whereas others are based on archival or oral sources. Therefore, with the book in hand, the reader can appraise, in one volume, the results of research efforts involving different perspectives and methodologies, which is a noteworthy achievement.

This heterogeneous character of the volume, however, leads also to shortcomings. One of them is related to the criteria guiding the choice of finance ministers. According to the editor (p. 12), the list is a selection of the “most representative” ministers of this historical period, but the reader is left with no satisfactory explanation of what exactly “representative” means in this context. In the “Old Republic” a remarkable absence is that of Amaro Cavalcanti, a politician championing protectionism and forefather of the industrialist ideology in Brazil. The part on the “Democratic Period” excludes San Tiago Dantas, a prominent finance and foreign affairs minister in the Goulart administration. Another problem is related to the fact that the chapters have internal consistency but are not actually integrated into a cohesive whole. This impression is strengthened if one reads all the chapters in sequence (and not just some of them), because the authors often repeat themselves when dealing with ministers pertaining to close historical junctures. For example, all texts about the “Old Republic” describe the financial crisis of the 1890s and the Brazilian 1898 funding loan. Lastly, the contributions differ deeply in the emphasis they give to economic ideas (which is the object of the book) vis-à-vis aspects related to economic policy or politics. Up to a certain extent, this is understandable, as ministers had different backgrounds and contexts. However, the chapter on Getúlio Vargas, for example, fails to carefully examine his tenure as finance minister of the Washington Luís administration and reiterates instead his relevance as a forefather of the ideology of developmentalism (which is by no means an original claim).

These weaknesses notwithstanding, the volume is a praiseworthy collective effort and a valuable contribution to the Brazilian literature on the history of economics, which benefits a lot from a book exploring not only theories and concepts but also the complex and intriguing interplay between economics and politics.

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Benjamin M. Friedman, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York: Vintage, 2022), pp. 560, \$20 (paperback). ISBN: 9780593311097.

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From the title a reader might anticipate a work that returned to Richard Tawney’s 1926 book of the same name, or perhaps a reflection on the history of the “Weber thesis” that relates Protestant religion to the rise of capitalism. Tawney sought to account for the transformation of a medieval moral order in which “not only political but social theory is saturated with doctrines drawn from the sphere of ethics and religion, and economic phenomena are expressed in terms of personal conduct, as natural and inevitably as the nineteenth century expressed them in terms of mechanism” (Tawney [1926] 1938, p. 24). While Tawney here reverses Émile Durkheim’s terms—as a transformation from