



Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II

Fernand Braudel

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The focus of Fernand Braudel's great work is the Mediterranean world in the second half of the sixteenth century, but Braudel ranges back in history to the world of Odysseus and forward to our time, moving out from the Mediterranean area to the New World and the other destinations of Mediterranean traders. Braudel's scope embraces the natural world and material life, economics, demography, politics, diplomacy.

Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II Details

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From Reader Review Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II for online ebook

Al says

This book is magisterial in scope and I think it is possibly the best 2 volume treatment of the Mediterranean area in the early modern age. This is in no way a dry narrative, as Braudel begins with a detailed geographic description of the Mediterranean basin and describes the impact of the differing climates and terrain on the people and growth of towns and cities. He describes how living conditions changed within a few thousand feet of elevation and the impact of terrain on communication. His analysis on climate and geography on economic development is a significant aspect of this book. His section on economics was perhaps the most interesting, as nothing seemed too trivial for his attention. He analyzed how distances and modes of travel impacted wages and prices in areas such as Valencia, and connected this to cereal prices and other types of income from land. He also analyzed the impact of silver imports from the New World with the same level of detail, such as how this influx of silver affected tradesmen as it impacted prices of all commodities. In examining political entities, Braudel explored the creation of political units and how this connected to poverty and banditry, as well as the social strata of the various political units in the region. He also examined the Jews as a community within a community, and how they affected the political, social and economic development of the regions.

The book was sometimes overwhelming, but always fascinating, and the amount of research is simply staggering. Braudel was a member of the Annales school, along with Bloch (Feudal Society) and Duby (Revelations of the Medieval World; The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined) and the Annales are known for this type of scholarship.

Hana says

While looking for something else I found this treasure on a dusty top shelf of my library, which is not vast at all, it's just that I'm kind of short and lazy.

There were two other treasures on my dusty (now clean) top shelf: A Short History of Byzantium and From Pagan Rome to Byzantium. Now the only question is which of the three books do I read/re-read first?

B. Ross Ashley says

A very difficult read, even in translation, but Braudel was capable of making the supply of bread to Venice in the early modern period interesting!
