

FERNAND BRAUDEL

The Mediterranean

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

VOLUME I

Translated from the French
by Siân Reynolds

To this day they have not discovered
at the Indies any mediterranean sea
as in *Europe, Asia and Affrike.*

Joseph Acosta, *The Naturall and Morall
Historie of the East and West Indies*
(translated by E. G.), London, 1604, p. 151



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*A Lucien Febvre, toujours présent en témoignage de
reconnaissance et de filiale affection*

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Facsimile of the *carpeta* of a letter from Philip II's ambassador in Lisbon 461

Preface to the English Edition

This English version of *The Mediterranean* corresponds to the second French edition of 1966. When, in 1964, several English-language publishers suggested to me the possibility of a translation, the original French edition had been out of print for twelve or thirteen years and I would not have wanted to re-issue the book without thoroughly revising it, in order to incorporate in the new edition the results of recent studies and of the extensive research carried out by my pupils and myself since 1949. But I do not think I should ever have found the courage to undertake this major revision had I not been faced with the prospect of a translation. I did not wish to offer the English-speaking public a book which had already had a somewhat tempestuous career. With the mass of books flooding from the presses today, works on history age more quickly than they used to.

The Mediterranean speaks with many voices; it is a sum of individual histories. If these histories assume in the course of research different values, different meanings, their sum must perforce change too. English-speaking historians will see that I have taken note of their work, and that I have given more space than I did in 1949 to the voyages to the Mediterranean of the ships of the northern countries, their merchants and their merchandise, through the narrow gateway of Gibraltar. I have also devoted more attention to what is a major historiographical problem, a zone of formidable uncertainty: the Ottoman empire. After the conquest of the Balkans and especially after that of the southern coast of the Mediterranean, from Syria to Algiers and almost to Gibraltar, that empire covered a good half of the Mediterranean region; it was an Anti-Christendom, balancing the weight of the west. We historians of the west are in exactly the same position as the contemporaries of Philip II, of Gian Andrea Doria or Don John of Austria: we can glimpse the Turkish world from the outside only. The reports sent by ambassadors and intelligence agents to Christian princes tell us something of the workings of that great body, but hardly ever anything of its motives. The secret, or some of the secrets, lie hidden in the vast archives in Istanbul. Access to them is difficult and it is only now that we are seeing some of the results of investigation of these sources, in works which are naturally all breaking new ground. I have done my best to take account of these recent studies - with the greater energy since in many cases (and I am very sensible of the honour) the area of the problem as defined in my book and the hypotheses (they were no more) which I advanced in the first edition had served as the original frame of reference for the research. As I write these lines, I have on my desk the admirable study by M. A. Cook, *Population pressure in*