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Abstract:

This article reviews the Italian reception of the French historian Fernand Braudel (1902-1985) and his scholarly work. Beginning with the effusive encomia published in Italian newspapers on his death, it examines the reality behind these hyperbolic claims by asking three questions: 1) What were Braudel's contributions to the study of history in general and Italian history in particular? 2) How did Braudel's relationship with Italian scholars and Italian history create such a reputation that an academic historian had become a legend in his own time? 3) What remains of Braudel's work and method over the past twenty-five years in Italy and beyond? A summary of Braudel's theses and evaluations by leading historians suggest that while Braudel's book *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* may have as many errors as insights, it remains alive as a source of inspiration for the history of early modern Italy, prior to the establishment of the nation state. By subordinating political history to all aspects of life through the investigative methodology of the social sciences and by changing the way we think about time, space, and subject matter in history, Braudel's vision provides a point of departure both to look back at the historiographical tradition before the volume was first published in 1949 and again at its second edition in 1966, as well as to scan forward to the historiography it has spawned.

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Braudel's *Mediterranean* and Italy

John A. Marino

Born on August 24, 1902 in Luméville-en-Ornois, a small Lorraine village of about 200 inhabitants in the Meuse near the French-German frontier redrawn after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, Fernand Braudel died at the age of 83 on Wednesday evening, November 27, 1985, in Paris. His death was announced on Thursday the 28th and Italian newspapers began reporting it the next day, Friday November 29th.¹ We can see the obituary headlines in thirteen Italian dailies:

--*Avanti*, "É morto Fernand Braudel 'padre' della storia globale."

--*Corriere della Sera*, "É morto a Parigi, a 83 anni, il maestro delle 'Annales' che ha dato sapore e vita al passato"; Giuseppe Galasso, "Fernand Braudel, il piacere della storia"; Georges Duby, "Ci ha aperto la strada."

--*Il Giornale di Napoli*, "É morto Braudel, storico totale; Si é spento a Parigi ad 83 anni il piú prestigioso esponente della scuola degli 'Annales'; Applicando il metodo della lunga durata, aveva disegnato il grande affresco della civiltà del Mediterraneo, ponendo al centro della storia la vita quotidiana degli uomini."

--*Il Giornale*, "Braudel, la Storia nata 'dal basso'; Morto a 83 anni il fondatore della 'Nouvelle histoire'; Rosario Villari, "É morto Braudel, la storia oltre i confini politici."

--*Il manifesto*, "Un Erodoto del nostro tempo; É morto Fernand Braudel, lo storico della 'lunga durata.'"

--*Il Mattino*, "Il grande vecchio e il grande mare; É morto a 83 anni Fernand Braudel, uno dei piú insigni storici del secolo, maestro di una ricerca 'totale' che nel Mediterraneo aveva il suo fulcro."

--*Il Messaggero*, "La vita è un fiammifero; La morte di Fernand Braudel; Il grande storico francese, direttore delle Annales, ha rivoluzionato con la teoria 'della lunga durata' la storiografia. Ecco l'ultima intervista."

--*Paese Sera*, "E l'uomo divenne padrone della terra e anche del cielo; É morto a Parigi a 83 anni lo storico Fernand Braudel."

--*La Repubblica*, "Morte di un immortale; É scomparso a ottantatré anni Fernand Braudel, forse 'Il piú grande storico contemporaneo.'"

--*Resto del Carlino*, "Un eretico in trionfo; Fernand Braudel, Quella rivoluzione nella Storia."

--*La Stampa*, "Braudel: Storia globale, umana avventura, Conquistò il Mediterraneo."

--*Il Tempo*, "É morto a Parigi Braudel, l'animatore della Storia."

--*L'Unità*, "L'altra notte a Parigi Muore a 83 anni Braudel, lo storico del Mondo."

Five more obits appeared in the next two days, on November 30 and December 1:

¹ On sabbatical in Naples in Winter/Spring 1986, I participated in a one-day seminar on Braudel at the University of Salerno on May 26, 1986, which provided this collection of press clippings, "La morte di Fernand Braudel, nella stampa periodica italiana," with conference papers published in Bianca Arcangeli and Giovanni Muto, eds., *Fernand Braudel: il mestiere di uno storico* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1988). For Braudel's biography, see Pierre Daix, *Braudel* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995).

--*Il Giornale*, once again: “Un ricordo di Braudel, Navigatore solitario.”

--*Il Popolo*, “Ricordo di Fernand Braudel, Una visione globale dei fatti storici.”

--*L'Osservatore Romano*, “La scomparsa di Fernand Braudel.”

--*Avvenire*, “La Morte di un' genio, Braudel, l'anello della Storia.”

--*Il Sole 24 Ore*, “Braudel, Storico di Tutti; Lo studioso francese appena scomparso ha cambiato con le sue ricerche il metodo di leggere il passato.”

And five periodicals carried the obituary in subsequent weeks:

--*Il Sabato* (Dec. 7, 1985), “In morte dello storico piú famoso. Un' amica rievoca. Grazie Braudel. Ricordo di grandi e piccole storie.”

--*Rinascita* (Dec. 14, 1985), “La scomparsa di Fernand Braudel, protagonista della cultura contemporanea che ha profondamente rinnovato la propria disciplina, lasciando in eredità una grande opera e molte domande senza risposta. Quando la storia perde il suo centro.”

--*Famiglia Cristiana* (Dec. 18, 1985), “Fernand Braudel, un maestro della storia; Indagando i fatti del passato spiegava il tempo presente.”

--*Rassegna Sindicale* (Dec. 20, 1985), “La rivoluzione di Braudel, i diversi tempi del mondo; Il grande storico francese, recentemente scomparso, ha ‘complicato’ le tradizionali categorie interpretative marxiste forzandole a una lettura ‘sincronica’ della realtà. In questo modo ha scoperto un' altra storia.”

--*Europeo* (Dec. 28, 1985), Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, “Un grande storico ricorda il suo celebre maestro, Braudel”; “Ci ha dato i migliori Annali della nostra vita. Cambiò la faccia della storia. Eppure la sua rivista, ‘Annales,’ oltre che con invidia fu spesso guardata con sospetto. Cosa aveva detto di tanto rivoluzionario? Soprattutto che gli avvenimenti contano poco...”

One can clearly see that all the headlines are of a piece.

If I have lingered overlong on such ephemeral eulogies, it's because I want to emphasize the wide and deep diffusion of Braudel's work in the public sphere across Italy's fissured political boundaries, down from the ivory tower to the average Italian newspaper reader of every political persuasion. I've also invoked the memorialization of Braudel's death to trace the Italian itinerary and importance of Braudel's many contributions that have “opened the way,” “revolutionized,” and “changed” the study of history into “another history” full of “flavor,” “life,” and “pleasure,” as a way to pose a series of three questions.

1) How was Braudel's reputation established in Italy in the quarter century following the 1949 publication of *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* and its translation by Einaudi in 1953 as *Civiltà e impero del mediterraneo nell'età di Filippo II* and then reinforced after the release of the 1966 revised French edition, again translated by Einaudi in 1976?²

2) How did Braudel become an icon to be described in Italy at the time of his death in 1985 as having “conquered the Mediterranean” and to be called “A Herodotus of our time,” “padre of global history,” “padrone of the earth and also of heaven,” “the most famous historian of the time,” “founder of a new history,” and even “an immortal”?

² Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (1st ed., Paris: Armand Colin, 1949; 2d ed., 2 vols., Paris: Armand Colin, 1966); in Italian translation, *Civiltà e impero del mediterraneo nell'età di Filippo II* (Turin: Einaudi, 1953; 2d. ed. Turin: Einaudi, 1976).

3) How has Braudel's legacy fared in Italy over the past quarter century since his death?³ How was he a "solitary navigator" or "a heretic in triumph"? What remains of Braudel's contributions, both his method and his theses?

Building upon what we can glean from the obituary headlines, let's begin with the first question on the development of Braudel's reputation with the publication, translation, and revision of *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*.⁴

Part I of *La Méditerranée* on the *longue durée*, "The Role of the Environment," which in the 1966 second edition remains much the same as the original 1949 edition with corrected details and some additional new sections, begins with the tripartite landscape model of the great French geographer, Paul Vidal de la Blache (1845-1918) and the French school of *géographie humaine*—for the land: mountains, plateau, and plains (chap. 1); and for the "heart of the Mediterranean" itself: seas, coasts, and islands (chap. 2).⁵ Braudel then moves beyond conventional geographical, geological, and bio-geographical definitions of the Mediterranean basin to define the boundaries of the region as a historical unit made by human action so that what's on the other side of the Sahara, Europe, and the Atlantic—West and Central Africa, the Baltic and North Sea, and the Americas—are all part of a "Greater Mediterranean" (chap. 3). Braudel takes this thrice-divided spatial unit further into time to explain how climate and seasonal rhythms create a physical unit (chap. 4) and how communications across and around it create a human unit (chap. 5). The combination of time and space—the starting point for the French discipline of *géographie humaine* in reconstructing the original landscape—becomes the same kind of point of departure for reconstructing history. Not only is *géographie humaine* the foundation upon which Braudel constructs his book on the physical and material world of land and sea, climate and environment, and *genre de vie* in Part One, much as his mentor and model, Lucien Febvre's 1911 *thèse*, *Philippe II et la Franche-Comte*;⁶ but also French "cultural geography" is the springboard for thinking about how humans interact with their environment over time in the long, medium, and short term (*longue durée*, *conjoncture*, and *événements*).

The concluding section of Part I on "Geohistory and Determinism," which had developed the arguments of Febvre's 1922 *La Terre et l'évolution humaine*,⁷ was completely jettisoned in the 1966 revision; for the old debate on geographic determinism had long been over, as geographers say, "disapproved, not disproved." Yet, Braudel's geographic "possibilism," nevertheless, still opened up continuing criticism of determinism and the absence of individual freedom. For many Italian historians influenced by Benedetto Croce's idealist approach to history, Croce's taunting criticism of any kind of geographic determinism in his 1925 *Storia del regno di Napoli* still rang true: "If the natural condition of lands determined their political

³ For a review of Braudel's reception in English, see John A. Marino, "The Exile and His Kingdom: The Reception of Braudel's *Mediterranean*," *Journal of Modern History* 75:3 (2004): 622-52.

⁴ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2 vols. (London and New York, 1972-73), 1: 352.

⁵ John A. Marino, "On the Shores of Bohemia: Recovering Geography," in *Early Modern History and the Social Sciences: Testing the Limits of Braudel's Mediterranean*, ed. John A. Marino. (Kirksville, Missouri: Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, Truman State University Press: 2002), 3-32. See also, Vincent Berdoulay, *La Formation de l'école française de géographie* (2d ed; Paris: Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 1995).

⁶ Febvre's thesis, "Philippe II et la Franche-Comte, la crise de 1567, ses origines et ses conséquences" (1911) was published as *Philippe II et la Franche-Comte, étude d'histoire politique, religieuse et sociale* (orig., 1912; Paris: Flammarion, 1970).

⁷ (Paris: Albin Michel, 1922); Eng. trans. by E. G. Mountford and J. H. Paxton, *A Geographical Introduction into History* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1925).

history, this might as well be written by agronomists as by political experts, a usurpation which we cannot easily allow.”⁸

Part II, “Collective Destinies and General Trends,” examines social structures (economy, transportation, administration, society, and warfare) in collision between “what changes and what endures” (1: 353). It grew in the 1966 edition by adding new problematics, by changing *La Méditerranée*’s perspective from the pre-World War II controversies in geography to the postwar ascendancy of economics. Braudel was greatly influenced by his conversion to the new “positivism” and scientific optimism of postwar reconstruction and by Rockefeller Foundation ideas and support administered by the great American historian of Venice, Frederic Lane (1900-1984), who, based in Paris, met Braudel for the first time in 1951-53.⁹

Finally, Part III continued the older diplomatic history model of events, the heart of Braudel’s *thèse* originally conceived in the 1920s, but now amplified here and throughout the whole 1966 revised edition by synthesizing a generation of outstanding new socio-economic research and adding new archival references. In the preface to the second edition, Braudel identifies twelve venues of new additional research and begins his list by naming six of them as Italian *archivi di stato* (Venice, Parma, Modena, Florence, Genoa, and Naples). In addition, Braudel names some 32 historians¹⁰ whose work had been influenced by *La Méditerranée*, with seven (more than 20%) of them Italians: Federico Chabod, Carlo M. Cipolla, Gaetano Cozzi, Elena Fasano, Ruggiero Romano, Alberto Tenenti, and Ugo Tucci. All of this historiography is well known, as the spread and prestige of French history in Italy was built upon Braudel’s *La Méditerranée*, which in 1953 became the first book of the *Annales* school to be translated into Italian. Curiously, the great Italian historian of early modern Italian Reformation and Renaissance culture, Delio Cantimori (1904-1966), had first recommended *La Méditerranée* to Giulio Einaudi with little enthusiasm, “It’s the *Gone With the Wind* of historiography”; to which Einaudi responded excitedly, “Allora, lo pubblico subito.”¹¹

We are now at my second point – how did Braudel conquer Italy? How did a self-described patriotic Lorrainer, who did not visit Italy itself until his July 1932 return from his Algiers *lycée* teaching career when he was turning thirty years old, come to such prominence in Italy twenty years later? This story is also well known, especially from Maurice Aymard’s many writings, such as his paper at the 1977 Inaugural Conference of the Fernand Braudel Center at Binghamton.¹² Aymard, whose own scholarly research has focused on Sicily, was part of the third generation of *Annaliste* historians who made early modern Italy their subject (Jean Geogelin [Venice], Michel Carmona [Tuscany], Jacques Revel [the Papal States], and Gérard

⁸ Benedetto Croce, *Storia del regno di Napoli* (Bari: Laterza, 1925; 1972), 40: “Ma poi da queste osservazioni si vuol trarre la conseguenza che il Regno non potesse avere storia se non miserabile; ed è illazione arbitraria, perché in terre povere si è svolta vigorosa storia politica quando i loro abitatori hanno dispiegato animo grande, e terre fertilissime sono state asservite e sfruttate da stranieri. Se la condizione naturale delle terre determinasse la storia politica, questa dovrebbe essere scritta dagli agronomi, e non dai politici: il che par duro a concedere.” English translation, Croce, *History of the Kingdom of Naples*, ed. H Stuart Hughes, trans. Frances Frenaye (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 40.

⁹ Giuliana Gemelli, *Fernand Braudel e l’Europa universale* (Venice: Marsilio Editore, 1990), 301-23.

¹⁰ Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, 1: 15. One is a husband/wife team where the wife gets top billing (Hugeutte and Pierre Chanu), which is unlike Braudel’s own uncredited research-assistant/spouse, Paule Pradel Braudel, his *lycée* student whom he married in 1933.

¹¹ Corrado Vivanti, “Le Goff: ‘Per noi era la Storia,’” *l’Unità*, November 29, 1985.

¹² Maurice Aymard, “Impact of the *Annales* School in Mediterranean Countries,” *Review* 1:3/4 (Winter/Spring 1978): 53-67. See also, Maurice Aymard, “Les *Annales* et l’Italie,” *Mélanges de L’École Française de Rome* 93:1 (1981): 401-17.

Delille [Naples]) and who cultivated Italian friendships in archives, international conferences, and as hosts in Paris or the *École Française de Rome*.

Among the Italians mentioned in Braudel's second edition preface, Chabod (1901-1960) should be singled out in the immediate postwar decade as the dean of Italian historians of the early modern period.¹³ Braudel and Chabod had befriended one another in the Spanish archives in Simancas in the 1930s, and Braudel remembered Chabod in a necrology at the head of the *Annales* issue in 1961 as "a friend of the last thirty years of my life, in truth of all my life."¹⁴ Chabod's 1934 and 1938 books on politics and religion at the time of Charles V in Milan had become classics,¹⁵ and he was not only professor of *storia moderna* in Rome but in 1947 became the first director of the Croce Institute in Naples, *L'Istituto Italiano di Studi Storici*. Chabod had recommended that one *Istituto borsista*, the young Ruggiero Romano (1923-2002), who had met Braudel in the Venetian archives, go to Paris. Romano soon co-authored a book with Braudel on Livorno shipping in 1951,¹⁶ became a professor at the *École pratique des hautes études*, and eventually with Corrado Vivanti (b. 1928), who had first read Braudel in a 1954 course on historical methods by Cantimori, was a co-editor of the influential and controversial Einaudi *Storia d'Italia* published during 1972-77 in six volumes and still continues in its *Storia d'Italia Annales* appendices today. In the Einaudi *Storia d'Italia*, Braudel's 160-page essay, "Italia fuori d'Italia. Due secoli e tre Italie," introduces us to the idea of the "long sixteenth century," 1450-1650.¹⁷

Cantimori also recommended another of his students to Braudel; and so, Alberto Tenenti (1924-2002) soon also established himself in Paris as a professor at the *École*. One could follow this genealogy among Italian historians, especially economic historians, receptive to Braudel through three generations, down to the present. A first generation of Italian economic historian friends of Braudel included the foundering fathers of the field of economic history in Italy, Gino Luzzatto (1878-1964) in Venice and Armando Saporì (1892-1976) in Milan. Contemporaries of Braudel's own age cohort, born in the first decade of the twentieth century, were situated around Italy: Franco Borlandi (1908-1974) in Genoa, Chabod in Rome and Naples, and Cantimori in Pisa. We should also include in this older group three other Italian historians born before World War I who came to maturity during the uneasy peace of the interwar period and under Fascism in Italy: Roberto S. Lopez (1910-1986), an émigré from Genoa to Yale; Carmelo Trasselli (1910-1982) in Palermo; and Federigo Melis (1914-1973) in Florence. Lopez, Trasselli, and Melis can be found among the ten Italian contributors (the largest contingent outside France) to the 1973, two-volume Braudel Festschrift, most of whom were among Braudel's younger generation of students and collaborators born in the decade at the end of World War I, 1917-1926, who came

¹³ Charles F. Delzell, "Italian Historical Scholarship: A Decade of Recovery and Development, 1945-1955," *Journal of Modern History* 28:4 (December 1956): 374-88.

¹⁴ Daix, Braudel, 77.

¹⁵ Federico Chabod, *Lo stato di Milano nell'impero di Carlo V* (Roma: Istituto romano di arti grafiche di Tumminelli, 1934) and Idem, *Per la storia religiosa dello stato di Milano durante il dominio di Carlo V* (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli Editore, 1938) both now in Idem, *Il ducato di Milano e l'impero di Carlo V*, 3 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1971-85).

¹⁶ Fernand Braudel and Ruggiero Romano, *Navires et marchandises a l'entrée du port de Livourne (1547-1611)* (Paris: A. Colin, 1951).

¹⁷ Fernand Braudel, "Italia fuori d'Italia. Due secoli e tre Italie," in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. 2: *Dalla caduta dell'Impero romano al secolo XVIII* (Turin: Einaudi, 1974), 1935-2248; trans. Siân Reynolds, *Out of Italy, 1450-1650* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1991).

to maturity during World War II or postwar reconstruction.¹⁸ They included the already mentioned Romano and Tenenti in Paris, Ugo Tucci (b. 1917) in Trieste and later Venice, Carlo Cipolla (1922-2000) in Pavia and Berkeley, Luigi De Rosa (1922-2004) in Naples, Domenico Sella (b. 1926) an émigré from Lombardy to the University of Wisconsin, and Alberto Caracciolo (1926-2002) in Macerata, Perugia, and then Rome (founder in 1966 of the *Annales* Italian-style, *Quaderni Storici delle Marche*, now *Quaderni Storici*). Aldo de Maddalena (b. 1921), another economic historian at the Bocconi University in Milan, should also be included in their number. My generation of postwar baby-boomer historians counts them among our teachers in the 1960s and '70s.

The Mediterranean world of Braudel in Italy, then, was one of personal friendships and institutional networking born from classroom, archival, conference, and publication relationships. The entrepreneurial brainchild of Melis, the *Settimani di Studi* in Prato of the *Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "Francesco Datini,"* founded in 1969 with Braudel as chairman and moderator, became and continues to be the annual jubilee of the world-wide Braudelian clan in early modern economic history. With his triple-crown in France as editor of the *Annales* (1946-69), president of the *École* (1956-72), and founding director of the *Maison des sciences de l'homme* (1962-85), along with election to the *Collège de France* in 1949, Braudel stood at the center of French history and social sciences nationally and internationally until his retirement in 1972. In addition to Braudel's intellect and imagination,¹⁹ force of personality, teaching experience honed in Algeria and Brazil, and administrative skills, his postwar prestige and moral authority was reinforced by having been held as a German prisoner-of-war for five years (1940-45). This French conquest of history and the social sciences, spearheaded and presided over by Braudel, was not only a sociological and institutional victory, but an intellectual one grounded in the debates over structuralism and post-structuralism.

Turning to Braudel's ideas and methods brings us to my third point: the legacy of Braudel today in Italy, which we may view both from France and from Italy, should be seen both as a historiographical archive and an institutional presence. As John Elliott has observed, "in a sense, the history of Braudel's great book is the history of twentieth-century historiography itself."²⁰ Braudel's historiographical Mediterranean of 1949 and 1966 not only looks back to its sources of inspiration from his prewar education and experiences, but also forward to the postwar research it inspired and the library this new research spawned.

La Méditerranée's long gestation from the proposed 1920s *thèse d'état* originally styled, "Philip II and Spanish political policy in the Mediterranean from 1559 to 1574" (i.e., from the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis to the Turkish reconquest of Tunis) to its first publication in 1949 and revision in 1966 made it a summa of French historical thought from the late nineteenth century through the first two-thirds of the twentieth.²¹ References to Braudel's intellectual formation include Henri Hauser and Braudel's other professors at the Sorbonne 1920-1923;

¹⁸ *Mélanges en l'honneur de Fernand Braudel*, 2 vols. (Toulouse: Privat, 1973). See J. H. Hexter, "Fernand Braudel and the *Monde Braudellien*," *Journal of Modern History* 44:4 (December 1972), 494-96 with Fig. 9 providing a map of the distribution of the festschrift's 93 contributors.

¹⁹ François Fourquet, "Un nouvel espace-temps," in *Lire Braudel*, Maurice Aymard, et al, eds. (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1988), 92 concludes his essay on Braudel the man and his ideas, "Braudel, un grand savant, un penseur? Non, un grand artiste, un visionnaire."

²⁰ J. H. Elliott, "Mediterranean Mysteries," *New York Review of Books*, May 3, 1973: 25-28, 25.

²¹ Daix, Braudel, 73-85. It was only the summer after his father died in January 1927 and receipt of a fortuitous letter from Lucien Febvre that Braudel turned his thesis into the Mediterranean and Philip II rather than Philip II and the Mediterranean. That summer he visited the Archivo General de Simancas for the first of many archival visits.

Lucien Febvre's already mentioned 1911 *thèse*, *Philippe II and the Franche-Comté*; Henri Berr's *Revue de synthèse* and *Semaines de synthèse* as the forerunner and inspiration of Febvre and Marc Bloch's creation of the original *Annales* in 1929; the geographers Vidal de la Blache, Charles Parrain, Maximilien Sorre, André Siegfried, and the German Alfred Philippson; the French economist François Simiand and German economic historians Werner Sombart and Joseph Kulischer; the Congress of Historical Science at Algiers in 1930, where Braudel gave his first paper and was an assistant secretary; Henri Pirenne's lectures on the Mediterranean in Algiers in 1931 and his books; Earl J. Hamilton and Federico Chabod at Simancas from the 1930s; Braudel's insights from the archives of Ragusa in Dubrovnik; Braudel's colleague Claude Lévi-Strauss in Brazil 1935-1937; Febvre's adoption of Braudel as a favored son after their chance encounter on the return voyage from Brazil; Witold Kula in the German camp for recalcitrant prisoners-of-war at Lübeck, where Braudel wrote most of his first draft from memory and mailed it chapter by chapter to Febvre; Braudel's rejection of positivism and the historical narrative alla Leopold von Ranke or Karl Brandt as an objective method; polemics with Jean-Paul Sartre and Lévi-Strauss; Frederic Lane on Venice, Ömer Lüfti Barkan on the Ottomans, and the other economic historians of Braudel's generation and all their students; Immanuel Wallerstein and the sociologists; a host of French scholars from contemporaries Ernest Labrousse to Braudel's successor editors at the *Annales*—Jacques Le Goff, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, and Marc Ferro.

But even more interesting than that exhaustive list may have been the critical reaction and revision among subsequent generations of French historians to Braudel. The problem of the disjunction between structure and event, the conflict between human freedom and individual action, the proof claims of language and quantification, the subordination of politics and of biography, the challenge of post-structuralism and deconstruction—all became open questions for French theory and its continual revisionism.²² A short list of essential French critical theory in conversation, contradiction, or contravention of Braudel would include: Michel Foucault's and Pierre Bourdieu's post-structuralism; Pierre Nora's return to the event and later the place of memory; Le Roy Ladurie's *microhistoire* on the village of Montaillou (1975), a term already used by Braudel in opposition to Croce in Braudel's most famous theoretical article on the *longue durée* in 1958 (published in Italian in 1973) and inserted in the last page of his conclusion to the 1966 *La Méditerranée* revision;²³ Paul Ricœur on narrative; Michel de Certeau on everyday life; Jacques Revel on history and social science; and Bernard Lepetit on "forms of experience" as "another social history." Braudel did not present himself as a philosopher but as a social historian; yet, his contributions provoked philosophical inquiry and debate on the nature of the social, the place of space and time in history, and the idea of history itself.

To turn to the view outside France, Braudel's Italian reception can be dated to 1972-1979 as part of a worldwide diffusion of structuralism best exemplified by Braudel's publication in the English-speaking market.²⁴ And after the death of Francisco Franco (November 20, 1975), the deep-freeze between Italian and Spanish exchange thawed, and Braudel's central topic of the

²² Jacques Revel and Lynn Hunt, eds., *Histories. French Constructions of the Past*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: New Press, 1995).

²³ Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences: The Longue Durée," in *On History*, trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 27-28; Idem, "History and Sociology," (orig. 1958-60) in *On History*, 67, 74-75; and Idem, *The Mediterranean*, 2: 1243. For Braudel's negative view of microhistory, see Carlo Ginzburg, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It," *Critical Inquiry* 20:1 (Autumn 1993): 10-35.

²⁴ Marino, "The Exile and His Kingdom," 622-38.

early modern Mediterranean world and the Spanish monarchy received new life, best exemplified by the first Italo-Hispanic modern history conference in the postwar era held at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma in fall 1977. But French claims to post-Enlightenment intellectual primacy in the Latin world made Braudel's conquest of Italy, which was one and the same with the *Annales'* conquest, an ambivalent one. Carlo Ginzburg's 1976 *Il Formaggio e i vermi* and the *microstoria* project announced in *Quaderni Storici* in 1979 by Ginzburg, Carlo Poni, and Edouardo Grendi may be the most famous Italian assault on the *Annales* method as a history without people and without human agency.²⁵ But simultaneously, and little known in English, was the 1977 publication by Guida in Naples of Marina Cedronio's *Storiografia francese di ieri e di oggi*,²⁶ which republished Furio Diaz's 1972 essay, "La stanchezza di Clio," attacking the tautological dead hand of quantification and serial history as it applied to the Enlightenment as the sad "de-ideologization" of history. Cedronio's book also included a provocative introduction by Mario del Treppo, "La libertà della memoria," first published in 1976 and presented to a meeting of the monthly medieval seminar at the *École Française de Rome* in 1977/1978, which compares the French and Italian historiographical tradition and lambasts the *Annales'* "pacifying and acritical historiographical ecumenism in which everything runs together" in an excessive ideologization.²⁷ Cedronio herself, who had moved to Paris as a graduate student, examined the *Annales* tradition of Bloch, Febvre, and Braudel from its philosophical implications, especially the competing Crocean and Marxist perspectives in Italy. As part of this Franco-Italian dialogue, the *École Française de Rome* held a lively three-day conference in Rome on January 23-25, 1979 attended by 200 people on "Les *Annales* et l'historiographie italienne," which explored the cross-fertilization in historical methodology between Italy and France.²⁸

In this same period in 1974, Giuliana Gemelli, a young historian from Bologna who received unprecedented access to Braudel's archives and Braudel himself, which formed the foundation for her important 1990 book, *Fernand Braudel e l'Europa univérale*, extends her analysis far beyond *La Méditerranée* to Braudel's 1979, three-volume, *Civilization matérielle, économie et capitalisme* and his whole career.²⁹ Gemelli's anti-biography biography examines the legacy of the ideas and institutions that made up the identity, historiography, and cultural diplomacy of Braudel. Gemelli emphasizes that Braudel's pan-national history emphasizes the idea of history as a problem-oriented discipline grounded in the kinds of questions asked by the social sciences. Braudel's total history, then, is not "global" history in the sense of encompassing

²⁵ Carlo Ginzburg and Carlo Poni, "Il nome e il come: scambio ineguale e mercato storiografico," *Quaderni storici* 40 (1979): 181-190 in English as "The Name and the Game: Unequal Exchange and the Historiographic Marketplace," in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe*, trans. Eren Branch (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 1-10.

²⁶ (Naples: Guida editori, 1977), with Diaz's essay from *Nuova rivista storica* 88:3 (1972): 682-745. See also Aymard, "Impact of the *Annales* School in Mediterranean Countries," 59-60.

²⁷ Del Treppo's essay first appeared in *Clio* 12:3 (1976): 189-233 and has been reprinted in Mario Del Treppo, *La libertà della memoria. Scritti di storiografia* (Rome: Viella, 2006), 27-69. See also, Fulvio Tessitore, "Filosofia e storiografia," in Norberto Bobbio et al., *La Cultura filosofica italiana dal 1945 al 1980 nelle sue relazioni con altri campi del sapere: atti del Convegno di Anacapri, giugno 1981* (Naples: Guida, 1982), 103-07.

²⁸ *Mélanges de L'École Française de Rome* 93:1 (1981): 347-463 includes six papers from the conference by Jacques Le Goff, Marina Cedronio, Maurice Aymard, Eva Civolani, Francesca Cantù, and Sergio Romano.

²⁹ Giuliana Gemelli, *Fernand Braudel e l'Europa universale* (Venice: Marsilio Editore, 1990); See also, Idem, *Tra due crisi. La formazione del metodo delle scienze storico-sociali nella Francia repubblicana* (Bologna, 1978); and Giuliana Gemelli and Maria Malatesta, eds., *Forme di sociabilità nella storiografia francese contemporanea* (Milan, 1982).

the whole world, as in his claims for the global reach of the Mediterranean or his work on material life around the early modern world from Europe to Asia and the Americas; rather, total history is a method that employs all the social sciences to interrogate the totality of life. Braudel reiterated his integrated multi-disciplinary theory of the social sciences early and often, as in his 1951 article on geography and the social sciences: “Thus each social science possesses its own specific path, its own perspectives, and its own methods. Every separation, every barrier between the social sciences is a regression. There does not exist a history sufficient unto itself, nor a geography, nor a political economy. There does exist a group of researches joined together which need not be separated apart.”³⁰

Gemelli’s book is introduced by Aymard, the keeper-of-the-flame and Braudel’s successor at the Maison (1985-2005), and Aymard’s French view remains our best source on this question of the Italian reception of Braudel.³¹ Aymard finds five different, yet overlapping arguments for Italian historians’ resistance to the French connection in Italy:³²

-- the *Annales* program offers “less new than is claimed”; it is a reworking of Voltaire’s, Comte’s, German *Kulturgeschichte*’s method of history’s openness to the social sciences, and is well-known and already practiced in its own way in Italy;

-- the *Annales* program “is described but not actually realized”; in Cantimori’s and Diaz’s critiques, it is tautological;

-- the *Annales* program produces “limited results” on only one part of reality; and that part, mass phenomena from quantitative sources, may be less important than the study of elites, or, one might add, the study of individual volition from the perspective of *microstoria*;

-- the social sciences’ study of structures (synchrony) is incompatible with history’s study of change (diachrony); and

-- every new generation always revises and overturns its tradition, as has the *Annales* with every change of its editors.

Aymard concludes that “the main reasons of this relative failure of the *Annales* in Italy, of this opposition, and of this fundamental misunderstanding,” are institutional and cultural. First, because in Italy *Facoltà di Lettere* (which had traditionally excluded the social sciences) held a monopoly on the discipline of history, less prestigious faculties of *Economia e Commercio* and *Magistero* as well as the relatively small number of *cattedre di storia economica* (Sapori, Borlandi, Melis, and de Maddalena) were more receptive to Braudel and the *Annales*. Second, in Italy the reaction against nineteenth-century positivist history found that space taken by native Italian philosophies of history. Croce had already provided a strong idealist antidote and principled defense against Fascism, which left no room for the alternative message of the early *Annales* of Bloch and Febvre. Similarly, in postwar Italy, Gramsci’s Marxist historiography found Braudel’s second generation of *Annaliste* history too tame. All in all, the approach to history and the reaction against positivism in the Romance language tradition of Western Europe in Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal should be understood in the context and consequences of the

³⁰ Fernand Braudel, “La géographie face aux sciences humaines,” *Annales: E.S.C.* 6:4 (1951): 492. See John A. Marino, “Introduction,” in *Early Modern History and the Social Sciences*, ix-xix.

³¹ Aymard spent ten years in Italy and Spain (member of the *École Française de Rome* [1964-66] and of the Casa de Velasquez in Madrid [1966-1968], Lecturer at the University of Naples [1968-72], and Director of the Section on Modern and Contemporary History at the *École Française de Rome* [1972-76]) before returning to Paris in 1976 as a member of the EHESS and Joint-Administrator (1976) and Administrator (1993) of the Maison des Sciences de l’Homme.

³² Aymard, “Impact of the *Annales* School in Mediterranean Countries,” 60-61.

World Wars, economic depression, and Fascism at issue during Braudel's formative years in the first half of the twentieth century.

Resistance of the *Annales*, thus, has the double meaning of a subjective and objective genitive. First, established paradigms and powers and entrenched institutions and scholars were not receptive to the new approach first proposed in the *Annales* in 1929 by its founders Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. And Braudel himself never forgot the two insults of 1947 upon completion of his thesis, when “without drum and trumpet and with a thousand nice-sounding words in my ear,” he wrote, he was rejected for an appointment at the Sorbonne and he received condescending criticism at his thesis defense, “One of the judges suavely said to me, ‘You are a geographer; let me be the historian.’”³³ Braudel saw himself as a heretic and exile on the outside looking in for his whole career. Second, the *Annales* self-consciously adopted an identity of resistance and revisionism through its characteristic method of “Débats et combats” and “Notes critiques.”³⁴ For the *Annales* under Braudel's sole editorship from 1957-1969, he declared from the beginning that “the *Annales* would continue to stand for ‘history pushed to its outer limits, into the very heart of all the sciences that study man; and up to the contemporary instant, filled with the dangerous flames of the event.’”³⁵ History had become queen of the human sciences.

In an analysis of Braudel's second-generation *Annaliste*, structuralist profile, Samuel Kinser examined “how *La Méditerranée* related to the *Annales* movement” and, even more to the point, how “Braudel's structuralism can best be pursued in relation to the more general possibility of developing structural methods in history.”³⁶ By the end of Braudel's reign, the goal of historians in the 1970s and '80s was to find a way to bridge the divide between structure and change. In Peter Burke's study of the historiographical tradition of the *Annales* between 1929 and 1989 and numerous studies of the cultural history and historical anthropology of early modern Italy, he showed how that could be done.³⁷ Burke has contrasted Braudel's macrosocial portrait in *The Mediterranean* with anthropology's microsocal insights in order to emphasize that all structural systems are constructs whose artificial boundaries and false binary oppositions simplify the human-scale interactions, encounters, and exchanges that might better be understood as processes of acculturation, syncretism, creolization, and resistance.³⁸ The complexities of Mediterranean life as well as those of rural life put the lie to an immobile early modern society and culture, which punctures the constructed, symbolic frontiers of structuralist analysis.

With regard to Braudel's contributions to early modern history (*storia moderna*) in Italy, then, we can conclude that there are five main points that remain true:

1) Braudel introduced the idea of the *longue durée*, the long-term, “permanent, slow-moving, and recurrent” structures that “change little or not at all with the passing of time” as “features of Mediterranean life.”³⁹

³³ Fernand Braudel, “Forward,” in Traian Stoianovich, *The French Historical Method: The Annales Paradigm* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), 14-15.

³⁴ Immanuel Wallerstein, “*Annales* as Resistance,” *Review* 1:3/4 (Winter/Spring 1978): 5-7.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 6 quotes Braudel in “Les Annales continuent . . .,” *Annales E.S.C.*, 12:1 (January-March 1957): 1.

³⁶ Samuel Kinser, “*Annaliste* Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism of Fernand Braudel,” *American Historical Review* 86:1 (February 1981): 63-105, 65.

³⁷ Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School, 1929-89* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1989) and *Idem*, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

³⁸ Peter Burke, “Civilizations and Frontiers: Anthropology of the Early Modern Mediterranean,” in Marino, *Early Modern History and the Social Sciences*, 123-41.

³⁹ Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, 1: 352.

2) Braudel used this slow-moving temporal dimension “to write a new kind of history, *total history*, written in three different registers, on three different levels, perhaps best described as three different conceptions of time,” in order “to reconstitute [history] in its rich entirety.”⁴⁰ This three-dimensional temporal axis of *longue durée*, *conjoncture*, and *événements* constitutes the “other history” described by *Rassegna Sindicale* as complicating “the traditional Marxist interpretive categories forcing a ‘synchronic’ reading of reality.”

3) Braudel championed a comparative social science history that employed the theories and methods of what the French call the “human sciences” – geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, and collective psychology – to construct his total picture of the past.⁴¹

4) Braudel’s second temporal dimension, *conjoncture*, “takes us to a history closer to the individual: the history of groups, collective destinies, and general trends,” that is, “a *social history*,” grounded in material culture and the nitty-gritty of daily life.⁴²

5) Braudel’s temporal multidimensionality solved the problem for Italian historians of writing a history of Italy before Italy – what Rosario Villari meant by calling it “history beyond political boundaries” – that is, a common history before the Risorgimento nation-state, a history without political borders that is no longer centered on politics, diplomacy, war, and the “great men” in the political arena. Politics, nevertheless, might still be the center of Braudel’s third temporal dimension, *événements*, “the pieces of flotsam I have combed from the historical ocean and chosen to call ‘events’ are those essentially *ephemeral* yet moving occurrences, the ‘headlines’ of the past.”⁴³

Braudel also applied this complexity of historical time operating on three speed tracks of slow, medium, and fast and the analytic tools of total history utilizing all the social sciences to examine history beyond the world of the Mediterranean to the world itself in his two world histories. His first foray in this genre was in his short-lived, 1963 world history textbook, *Le Monde actuel, histoire et civilisations*, which was reissued in 1987 with the new title, *Grammaire de Civilisations*, without its pedagogical apparatus and with a new preface from a short, 1983 Braudel newspaper article in *Corriere della Sera* on the debate about history teaching.⁴⁴ Braudel’s original textbook was part of an educational reform that applied his “new history” to the whole world in its present state in the 1960s according to his theory of education. He wanted to short-circuit the curricular debate between the “Ancients and Moderns” over traditional narrative history versus the new, scientific history by drawing a distinction between the learning appropriate for children and adults, that is, between primary and advanced secondary school education, specifically what should be taught in the very top form (*terminale*) of the last year of secondary school.

Braudel recommended simple narrative or traditional history (updated by modern media presentations) in grammar school history for children. Younger students would learn plain narrative and “a feeling for chronology” for the sake of clarity in order to open up “spectacle,

⁴⁰ Ibid., 2: 1238.

⁴¹ Fernand Braudel, “History and the Social Sciences: The *Longue Durée*,” in *On History*, 25-54; orig. *Annales E.S.C.* 4 (October-December 1958): 725-53.

⁴² Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, 1: 353.

⁴³ Ibid., 2: 1243.

⁴⁴ Suzanne Baille, Fernand Braudel, and Robert Philippe, *Le Monde actuel, histoire et civilisations* (Paris: Librairie Eugène Belin, 1963) had Braudel’s world history as the central part of a lycée textbook. It was reissued as *Grammaire de Civilisations* (Paris: Les Editions Arthaud, 1987) and in English as *A History of Civilizations*, trans. Richard Mayne (New York and London: Penguin Books, 1993).

sense, landscapes, and panoramas” so that mastery of places, time, vocabulary, and key concepts would flow naturally from the subject matter.⁴⁵ His textbook, on the other hand, aimed at *lycée* students in their final class (*terminale*). It translated Braudel’s tri-partite division of time (*structure – longue durée, conjuncture – moyenne durée, événement – courte durée*) “for the sake of simplicity . . . into at least three planes”: 1) the “traditional history, habitual history” of the chronicler’s or newspaper reporter’s events; 2) episodes of longer duration (ten, twenty, or fifty years) that can “be called periods, phases, episodes, or cycles”; and, 3) “phenomena . . . over a century or more” in duration that transcend events in order to see “civilizations . . . as distinct from the accidents and vicissitudes that mark their development” in “their longevity, their permanent features, their structures.”⁴⁶ Such long-term history as applied to world history sees the present through the past.⁴⁷ It avoids Spenglerian teleology and Toynbee’s rationalization mechanism of crisis-response. Rather, Braudel’s stages of time provide an organic explanation, with the present growing out of underlying structures such as geography, social hierarchy, collective psychology, and economic need. This developmental model is marked by the coexistence of unity and diversity, by the limits of one’s material and man-made environment, by the acceptance or rejection of elements from other civilizations or a civilization’s own past, and by a continuity such that the more things change the more they remain the same, albeit “assum[ing] a shape which is never wholly new but never quite the same.”⁴⁸ Thus, Braudel’s study of civilization involved all the social sciences to reveal the underlying structures and the motors of change in a panorama that began outside Europe with Islam and the Muslim world, traveled south to Africa, then east to China, India, Southeast Asia, and Japan before confronting Europe, the Americas (first Latin America before the United States and the English-speaking universe), and finally Russia, the U.S.S.R., and its post-Stalinist state by 1962. A failed and rejected textbook (because teachers deemed it too difficult), that addressed the present world from the past and that was written at the height of the Cold War so clearly “out of date” today, still reads fresh and vibrant, perceptive and prescient a half century later because of its sharply delineated examples and their articulation with structural and causal arguments that have an enduring validity.

How the traditions of the early modern period played out around the world was the problem posed in Braudel’s second world history, his second monumental project on material life and capitalism, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, conceived in 1950 and published in three volumes in 1979.⁴⁹ Here a holy trinity of material life, economic life, and capitalism points to Braudel’s distinction between “market economies” and “true capitalism.” Material life, concerned as it is with production for immediate consumption, is described as different from economic life, which is a self-conscious rationalization of material life in markets for exchange; whereas capitalism is a form of predatory, unequal exchange through special networks, in which competition is replaced by monopoly in an anti-market. In a review article, Immanuel Wallerstein explained “Braudel on Capitalism” as “Everything Upside Down” in order to lay out

⁴⁵ Braudel, *A History of Civilizations*, xxxi-xxxiv.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

⁴⁷ Braudel had already raised this question, “can the history of civilization...help us to understand the present time and thus, necessarily the future,” in an encyclopedia chapter in 1959, “The History of civilizations: The Past Explains the Present,” in *On History*, 177-218; orig. Chapter 5 of the *Encyclopédie française*, vol. 20, *Le Monde en devenir (Histoire, evolution, prospective)* (Paris: Larousse, 1959).

⁴⁸ Braudel, *A History of Civilizations*, 31.

⁴⁹ Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 3 vols. (New York: Harper & Row, 1982-1984).

the radical nature of Braudel's conceptions and its implications for rethinking received historiography, capitalism as a liberating ideology, and policy agendas for the contemporary world.⁵⁰ With capitalists the monopolists, capitalism becomes unusual, speculative, opaque, big profits, unregulated, ruled with power and cunning, eliminates both control and competition, and is guarantor as well as authorized by the state.

The world historian William H. McNeill, a champion of Braudel during his American triumph in the 1970s,⁵¹ revisited Braudel and his work (especially *The Mediterranean* and *Civilization and Capitalism*) in a 2001 review article.⁵² McNeill finds Braudel's tripartite division of capitalism with its emphasis on the predatory, exploitative phase as "true capitalism" to be "intellectually unsatisfactory: a defect quite as serious as his failure to articulate connections between the three levels of time" in *The Mediterranean*.⁵³ McNeill, nevertheless, believes that Braudel's contributions and followers "assure him of a leading place among historians of the twentieth century," especially for two historiographical breakthroughs: 1) "the overriding importance of circumstances and processes of which contemporaries were quite unconscious," that is, the underlying structures of daily life; and 2) "the worldwide vision of the past that he embraced," even though his European training and French outlook somewhat skewed his globalism. "Yet [since] he was never dogmatic and he always recognized that his organizing ideas were tentative," McNeill argues that "Braudel's truly exceptional literary skill" together with his "vast learning and sustained research with lively exposition of everything that interested him" makes him "an authentic heir of Herodotus and [one who] deserves his reputation as the most influential historian of his time."⁵⁴ Herodotus, the "father" of geography and history – this is where we came in!

Returning to the Mediterranean, with the publication of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea* in 2000, one could add the latest explosion of Braudel-inspired Mediterranean studies.⁵⁵ Horden and Purcell's 523-page text tests the state of knowledge of all of Braudel's theses, its 112-double-columned-page annotated bibliography, and its 95-page cumulative bibliography have prompted a new round of talks, books, and conferences.⁵⁶ The practice of correcting Braudel's hypotheses and speculations go back to the response to the first edition. Braudel himself often incorporated and adopted criticism as friendly amendments, as part of an ongoing "scientific" project. At the same time, other critics' harsh rejection of the

⁵⁰ Immanuel Wallerstein, "Braudel on Capitalism, or Everything Upside Down," *Journal of Modern History* 64:2 (June 1991): 354-61.

⁵¹ As editor of the *Journal of Modern History* 44:4 (December 1972), William H. McNeill, "History with a French Accent," 447 introduced the special issue which included, Fernand Braudel, "Personal Testimony," 447-48; H. R. Trevor-Roper, "Fernand Braudel, the *Annales*, and the Mediterranean," 468-79; and J. H. Hexter, "Fernand Braudel and the *Monde Braudellien*," 480-539.

⁵² William H. McNeill, "Fernand Braudel, Historian," *Journal of Modern History* 73:1 (March 2001): 133-46.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 145-46.

⁵⁵ Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea. A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford and Malden [MA]: Blackwell, 2000).

⁵⁶ W. V. Harris, ed., *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). The most recent of the conferences was "The *Longue Durée* and World-Systems Analysis," Colloquium to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the publication of Fernand Braudel's path-breaking article, "Histoire et sciences sociales: La longue durée," *Annales E.S.C.* 13:4 (1958) at the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economies, Historical Systems, and Civilizations, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY, October 24-28, 2008.

whole *Annales* method or philosophy, “an object of vehement discussion” that made “indifference [to it] impossible,” has been carefully chronicled.⁵⁷

Such are the hybrid fruits of the French civilizing mission. On *La Méditerranée* itself, for example, Madame Paule Braudel writes, “a historian of the Meuse was amused to find all the allusions to the village of Luméville,” as if *La Méditerranée* transposed local history details of Braudel’s hometown and provincial roots onto a larger canvas.⁵⁸ And one could argue that much, if not all, of Braudel’s writing on Italy is really displaced writing about the patriotic master’s France. Giambattista Marino’s letter from Paris to his friend Lorenzo Scoto back in Turin in 1615, cited in a long quotation by Braudel in the Einaudi *Storia d’Italia* “Italia fuori d’Italia” essay, gives some sense of such a theme – Italy through French eyes – by presenting its mirror image, France through Italian eyes:

I must tell you I am in Paris . . . What shall I say about this country? I will tell you that it is a world. A world I say, not so much on account of its size, its people, and its variety, as because it is remarkable for its extravagance. Extravagances provide the beauty of the world, for, being composed of contrasts, it is the combination of these contrasts that maintains it. So France too is full of contradictions and disproportions, and these nevertheless combine to form a concordant discord, which perpetuates it. Bizarre costumes, terrible rages, constant changes, perpetual civil wars, disorders without rules, extremes without half-measures, tumults, quarrels, disagreements and confusions, all these things in short ought to destroy it, yet by some miracle, they keep it upright. Truly this is a world, and indeed an impossible world, even more extravagant than the world itself.⁵⁹

Braudel sees the city (here Paris) as a transformative world unto itself, whose extravagance is its dominant characteristic. Not only does one find there all things, material and immaterial in the world; but, paradoxically, the seemingly confusing and contradictory nature of such competing oppositions is precisely the glue that keeps this vibrant urban world together.

To be fair, that France was all the world was not at all what Braudel meant; but rather, he would have maintained that all the Mediterranean was one and that it leads out to all the world. Above all, Braudel has made us see that the Mediterranean of the second half of the sixteenth century was subject to the different temporal rhythms of geography, society, and economy, which made the political/religious divide between Habsburg Spain and Ottoman Turkey or Christianity and Islam less important than a political-centered history would make them appear. Material unities created that world, and the consequent common culture “tell of the birth of a new personage – Europe, finally unified by the conquest of the oceans. From that point on, that

⁵⁷ Michael Harsgor, “Braudel’s Sea Revisited,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 1:2 (1986): 135-57. See also, *Journal of Modern History* 44:4 (1972): 447-539 with articles by Braudel, Trevor-Roper, and Hexter; Traian Stoianovich, *The French Historical Method: The Annales Paradigm* (Ithaca, 1976); Robert Forster, “Achievements of the *Annales* School,” *Journal of Economic History* 38:1 (1978): 58-76; and Hans Kellner, “Disorderly Conduct: Braudel’s Mediterranean Satire,” *History and Theory* 18:2 (May 1979): 197-222. For an Italian account, see Ruggiero Romano’s review of the Italian translation *Civiltà e imperi* in *Rivista Storica Italiana* 67 (1955): 233-243.

⁵⁸ Paule Braudel, “Les origines intellectuelles de Fernand Braudel: Un témoignage,” *Annales ESC*, 47:1 (Jan-Feb 1992): 237-44 at 239.

⁵⁹ Braudel, *Out of Italy*, 163-166 with Marino’s complete letter to Lorenzo Scoto (Paris, 1615) in Giambattista Marino, *Lettere*, ed. Marziano Guglielminetti (Turin: Einaudi, 1966), 553-57.

personage was to occupy center stage.”⁶⁰ And if for Braudel the unity of Europe across its political, ethnic, linguistic, and religious divides is culture, it is a multidimensional culture in three registers: material culture as understood by the social scientists, history and tradition as reflected in religion and law, and “high” culture created and disseminated in the arts and sciences.⁶¹ As Horden and Purcell title their last chapter in order to remind us of the other in ourselves, “I also have a moustache: Anthropology and Mediterranean Unity.”⁶² Braudel’s *Mediterranean World* paints the picture of a world that undercuts our received wisdom and self-satisfied platitudes about historical time, space, and method—not unlike Montaigne’s biting satirical one-liner on the New World at the end of his essay, “On Cannibals”: “That’s not at all bad. But they wear no breeches!”⁶³

“When he died in 1985,” the opening sentence of McNeill’s 2001 bio-bibliographic sketch begins, “Fernand Braudel was undoubtedly the world’s most influential academic historian.”⁶⁴ McNeill’s matter-of-fact assertion confirms the high praise Kinser used to open his 1981 essay, “If the Nobel Prize were given to historians, it would almost certainly have been awarded to Fernand Braudel.” In 1995, twenty years after Braudel’s death, the *Times Literary Supplement* published a list of “The hundred most influential books since the war,” which included *The Mediterranean*.⁶⁵ The book and the man continued to be fêted and vetted on the fiftieth anniversary of its defense as a thesis in 1997 and of its publication in 1999. In English at a conference in Italy at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Study and Conference Center, an international group of scholars dissected Braudel’s *Mediterranean* and beyond from the perspective of the social sciences – geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, and politics.⁶⁶ In French, the Italian Alberto Tenenti published an appreciation of Braudel’s three kinds of “global” history that encompassed space, time, and the disciplines.⁶⁷ In Spanish, Carlos Hernando, a “fourth-generation” historian of the Mediterranean and Spanish Naples, praised Braudel’s ability to integrate reason and passion, in “a complete, expository construction which, not without contradictions, brings together the diversity of points of view, the exigency of expanding the subject of history beyond that of political history, the reconsideration of traditional

⁶⁰ Maurice Aymard, “Fernand Braudel, the Mediterranean, and Europe,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 2:1 (1987): 102-14 at 109.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 112, “According to Braudel, culture – as opposed to politics, economics, civilization, ideology, society, the State – is the sole level, the sole ‘mirror,’ in which a European unity can be perceived. The importance of culture, the ‘common language of Europe’; of ‘sculpture, painting, architecture,’ which speak ‘an international language, which requires no translation and, therefore, cannot be betrayed,’ and of ‘science . . . which, in turn, speaks a nearly international language,’ are now slowly supplanting that of literature, ‘worn out by having been too much appreciated.’ Moreover, Braudelian culture is itself to be perceived on three levels: the first, nearly subterranean (‘popular primitive culture’); the second, ‘visible, shining’ (Christianity); the third, the creation of a small core of extraordinary individuals.”

⁶² Horden and Purcell, 485.

⁶³ Montaigne, *Essays*, Bk. I, Chap. XXXI, “Des cannibales”: “Tout cela ne va pas trop mal: mais quoy, ils ne portent point de haut de chausses!”

⁶⁴ McNeill, “Fernand Braudel, Historian,” 133.

⁶⁵ *TLS*, the *Times Literary Supplement* (October 6, 1995), 39. See also, “The Hundred Most Influential Books Since the War,” *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 49:8 (May, 1996), 12-18.

⁶⁶ Marino, *Early Modern History and the Social Sciences*.

⁶⁷ Alberto Tenenti, “El Mediterráneo entre dos siglos: cincuenta años después de Braudel,” in *Actas del Congreso Internacional Las sociedades ibéricas y el mar a finales del siglo XVI* (Lisbon, 1998), 1998, vol. 2 *La Monarquía. Recursos, organización y estrategias*, 5-17, which despite its Spanish title is in French.

perspectives, and the intent to restructure the order of time and the historical map.”⁶⁸ The Braudelian world still beckons in all its insights and inconsistencies as a means for history to break the boundaries of space and time through an open and eclectic engagement with all the human sciences.

⁶⁸ Carlos José Hernando Sanchez, “Fernand Braudel, *El Mediterráneo*,” *Nueva Revista de política, cultura y arte* 60 (December 1998): 135-46 at 145.

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