

AZADEH ACHBARI RULERS OF THE WINDS

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How academics came to dominate the science of the weather, 1830-1870

This is a study of how meteorology developed into a well-defined and widely acknowledged branch of science in the period between 1830 and 1870. Meteorology was shaped in a context of cooperation and conflict between men of science and naval officers in their search for professional opportunities. This study offers an answer to the question: How did university professors establish their authority and manage to dominate the science of the weather? In the historiography of meteorology, emphasis is usually placed on research carried out by men of science and scientific institutes in British and American contexts. This dissertation moves the focus away from elite scientists and scientific institutes and traces the history of the systematic study of the weather and the sea surface by combining the point of view of university professors with that of naval officers, who played a major, though until now understudied, role in the forging of national and international maritime observation networks. The emergence of these networks involved many countries across both sides of the Atlantic. The gradual institutionalization of meteorology and its integration with academia resulted from changing alliances among university professors, naval officers, and governments of maritime nations.