

RICHMOND BARBOUR. *The Loss of the Trades Increase: An Early Modern Maritime Catastrophe*. Haney Foundation Series. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021. Pp. 352. \$39.95 (cloth).  
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Maritime historians love a good shipwreck. The knowledge that a given voyage will end inexorably in disaster gives a good dramatic end to the narrative arch. This is perhaps especially true for vessels built as statements of prestige and wealth lost on their maiden voyage. *Titanic* and *Batavia* spring to mind. The loss of the *Trades Increase*, the largest merchantmen built in Jacobean England, fits neatly in this category. But as Richmond Barbour shows in his well-written book, *The Loss of the Trades Increase: An Early Modern Maritime Catastrophe*, there is much more to the first and only voyage of the *Trades Increase* than its ignominious end at Bantam in October or November 1614. The *Trades Increase* was launched at Deptford in December 1609 in the presence of James I. She could not then be floated out of dock because she was too wide, an ominous. As part of the sixth voyage of the East India Company, *Trades Increase* sailed to the Red Sea, where the lack of a safe conduct from Sultan Achmed I caused a lengthy delay while the voyage's commander, Sir Henry Middleton, was held captive. The lack of the safe-conduct pass is a telling illustration of the organizational weaknesses of the East India Company at this stage. The pass had been issued to the company, but it had simply forgotten to give the pass to Sir Henry. Finally able to escape, the sixth voyage set sail to Surat, but, stymied by the Portuguese, returned to the Red Sea to seek vengeance and then to Bantam on Java, where the *Trades Increase* was ultimately lost during a failed attempt to careen her.

Barbour is no stranger to the history of the East India Company, having previously written *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607–10* (2009). The writings of East India Company servants as a form of performance is also a recurrent theme in *The Loss of the Trades Increase*. By writing about their experiences, the leaders of the voyage could process what had happened to them (and was still happening), defend their own conduct, and present themselves as loyal servants of the company and the crown. At the same time, company directors in London expected their servants to keep meticulous journals and ledgers during their voyages so that they could justify to shareholders what exactly had happened with the investment. But the use of single-voyage investments meant that different fleets of the East India Company operating in Asia at the same time actively competed with one another. Another recurrent theme is the nature of early modern and indeed modern capitalism. Barbour uses the case of the *Trades Increase* to argue that even in the seventeenth century, capitalism meant environmental harm and degradation. And while profits would accrue to the well-to-do shareholders, the risks of the venture were borne by the common mariners, who would see little personal benefit from a successful venture. It was therefore nearly impossible to stop them trying to conduct trade for their own account.

By bringing these elements to the fore, Barbour does more than just chart the progress of the sixth voyage. By zooming in on the “epistolary duties” (86) of company servants and the competitions between the various voyages, Barbour shines a sharp light on the internal workings of the East India Company in this period. The problems encountered when different voyages of the company encountered one another in Asia illustrate why the decision was taken to create the running joint stock in 1613. Barbour's close examination of the sixth voyage and its main protagonists shows comprehensively how important they were in ensuring the success, or indeed failure, of the company's voyages. Rather than present a picture of the East India Company as an impersonal business corporation, as Ron Harris has argued (*Going the Distance: Eurasian Trade and the Rise of the Business Corporation, 1400–1700* [2020], 1), the case of the sixth voyage shows that personality and the societal rank of the East India Company's servants were tremendously important. When the *Trades Increase* and

her consorts returned to the Red Sea in 1612 to avenge themselves of their poor treatment there the previous year, they encountered John Saris's eighth voyage of the East India Company. Saris and Sir Henry Middleton were nominally equals, both admirals of an East India Company voyage. Yet Middleton was a knight and Saris was not, allowing Middleton to argue that he was the senior officer on the spot. Corporate hierarchies were not clearly defined, allowing other social hierarchies to intrude on the company. The competing voyages are reminiscent of the so-called precompanies of the Dutch Republic, which were amalgamated in the (Dutch) United East India Company in 1602. This opens the door to comparisons between the Dutch voyages between 1595 and 1602 and the East India Company's early voyages until the creation of the running joint stock in 1613.

The book is well-written throughout, and though the reader knows how the story will end at Bantam, the journey toward the loss of the *Trades Increase* is captivating. For the account of the final stage of the ship's existence, stuck on land at Bantam, I do wonder whether using the records of the Dutch East India Company's Bantam factory could have shed more light on the loss of the vessel. Barbour does refer to the differences in the Dutch and English approaches to Asian trade in this period. Bringing these comparisons more to the fore seems a fruitful approach for future research. In all, *The Loss of the Trades Increase* is a valuable contribution to the study of the early period of the East India Company, while also being an enjoyable page-turner. The book should be of interest to historians working on early modern European trade with Asia or on Jacobean England. It should also be of interest to maritime economic, and business historians.

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G. W. BERNARD. *Who Ruled Tudor England: Paradoxes of Power*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Pp. 240. \$115.00 (cloth).  
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Lately, the study of Tudor government and politics seems to have been coming back into fashion—and indeed, it has never been unpopular among students. G. W. Bernard's excellent *Who Ruled Tudor England: Paradoxes of Power* is the distillation of a lifetime of reading and reflection on the nature of power in Tudor England. It would serve very well as an introduction to Tudor politics and government for an undergraduate audience; at the same time, it provides challenging material and new perspectives for advanced scholars. The eye-catching title refers to the complex and sometimes paradoxical nature of Tudor political power. Monarchs could find strength in weakness, or weakness in strength: the most dangerous crisis of Henry VIII's reign, the rebellion known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, was triggered in part by the king's self-aggrandizement and his overbearing treatment of Parliament; and the decisive reason for its defeat was the power and loyalty of the nobility, who are often (simplistically) thought to have been a check on, or even an intrinsic threat to, the authority of the Crown.

Bernard opens with sketches of the life and career of Sir Geoffrey Elton, whose ideas still loom large in Tudor history, and a selection of his critics, which make fascinating reading for anybody interested in seeing behind the curtain. Bernard proceeds to analyze, with great clarity, sophistication, and common sense, the major themes in Tudor political history, including the respective powers and functions of the monarchy, the nobility, and Parliament; government finance; military organization; the enforcement of policy; rebellion; poverty and