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"Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe"

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McGregor, JoAnn. "Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe." *Environment and History* 1, no. 3, Zimbabwe special issue (Oct., 1995): 257–279. doi:10.3197/096734095779522573. The transformation of rural societies and their strategies of resource use in the colonial period was the outcome of contestation, negotiation and alliance on a number of different levels. Conservation ideas and policies have played an active part in this process, shaping as well as reflecting the nature of colonial rule. Though the appeal of conservation lies in invoking mutual benefits, the history of its implementation in Zimbabwe is one of authoritarianism and discrimination. For settlers, conservation entailed financial and other incentives: for Africans, it entailed coercion and punitive restrictions on resource use. Conservationist alarm provided not only a justification for state intervention, but also a legitimization for using force. Focusing first on official discourse and the conflict which accompanied the passage of early conservation legislation, this article then looks at the different interpretations of the effects of implementation in Shurugwi communal area. Shurugwi was particularly significant because it was the testing ground for early state interventions and was upheld as a model of successful state 'development'—a representation which allowed for the (forcible) reproduction of the same policies in different ecological contexts around the country. All rights reserved. © 1995 The White Horse Press

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