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"Water as a Weapon: The History of Water Supply Development in Nkayi District, Zimbabwe"

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Cleaver, Frances. "Water as a Weapon: The History of Water Supply Development in Nkayi District, Zimbabwe." *Environment and History* 1, no. 3, Zimbabwe special issue (Oct., 1995): 313–33. doi:10.3197/096734095779522564 . This paper argues that much historical and political analysis of Zimbabwe neglects a crucial resource: water. Using data from Nkayi district, evidence is presented to show how access to water rather than land has been the critical factor in its settlement and development. Water supplies were provided by the state during the first half of the century to support economic and fiscal policies and to render forced resettlement possible. During the years of struggle preceding and including the Liberation War, control over water was used as a weapon, and this remained a significant issue in the post-Independence period. Examples are offered of people's resistance to such control through non-cooperation in water development activities and the evolution of a culture of minimal water use strongly associated with concepts of solidarity and survival. Finally the implications of this historic legacy for current development initiatives are discussed. All rights reserved. © 1995 The White Horse Press

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