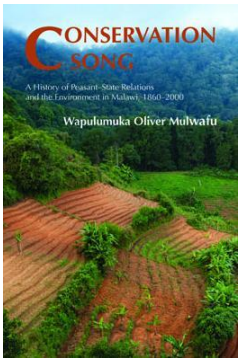
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Conservation Song: A History of Peasant-State Relations and the Environment in Malawi, 1860–2000

Mulwafu, Wapulumuka Oliver



Conservation Song. Cover.

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Mulwafu, Wapulumuka Oliver. *Conservation Song: A History of Peasant-State Relations and the Environment in Malawi, 1860–2000.* Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2010.

Conservation Song explores ways in which colonial relations shaped meanings and conflicts over environmental control and management in Malawi. By focusing on soil conservation, which required an integrated approach to the use and management of such natural resources as land, water, and forestry, it examines the origins and effects of policies and their legacies in the post-colonial era. That interrelationship has fundamental contemporary significance and is not simply a phenomenon created in the colonial period. For instance, like other countries in the region, post-colonial Malawi has been bedevilled by increasing rates of environmental degradation due, in part, to the expansion of human and animal populations, cash crop production, drought, and consequent deforestation. These issues are as critical today as they were six or seven decades ago. In fact, they are part of a conservation song that has a long and complex history. The song of conservation was initially composed and performed in the colonial period, modified during the immediate postcolonial period and further refashioned in the post-dictatorship period to suit the evolving political climate; but the basic lyrics remain essentially the same.

This book attempts to explain the evolution of the conservationist idea whilst demonstrating changes and continuities in peasant-state relations under different political systems.

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