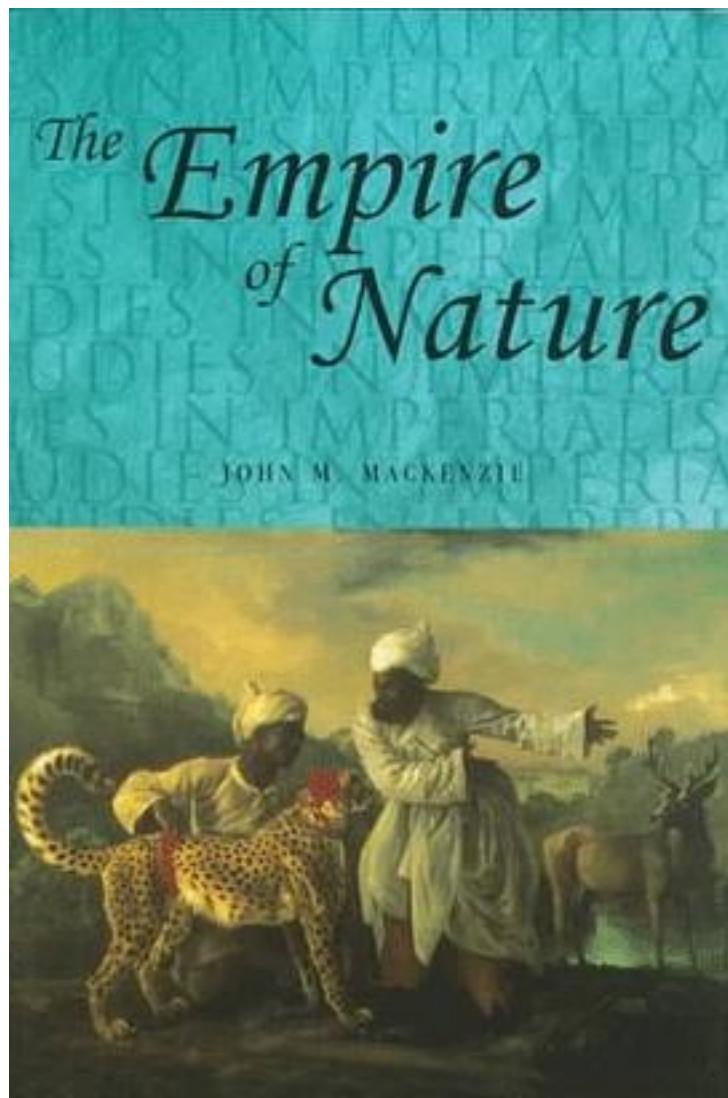


# The Empire of Nature



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著者:John M. MacKenzie

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This study assesses the significance of the hunting cult as a major element of the imperial experience in Africa and Asia. Through a study of the game laws and the beginnings of conservation in the 19th and early-20th centuries, the author demonstrates the racial inequalities which existed between Europeans and indigenous hunters. Africans were denied access to game, and the development of game reserves and national parks accelerated this process. Indigenous hunters in Africa and India were turned into "poachers" and only Europeans were permitted to hunt. In India, the hunting of animals became the chief recreation of military officers and civilian officials, a source of display and symbolic dominance of the environment. Imperial hunting fed the natural history craze of the day, and many hunters collected trophies and specimens for private and public collections as well as contributing to hunting literature. Adopting a radical approach to issues of conservation, this book links the hunting cult in Africa and India to the development of conservation, and consolidates widely-scattered material on the importance of hunting to the economics and nutrition of African societies.

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