

Senior Fellowship for Dr. Joseph Mujere: Claim-holders, tributors, and co-operatives: The political economy of artisanal and small-scale chromite mining along Zimbabwe's Great Dyke, 1985-2018

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This study adopts a historical perspective to explore the productive potential of different uncertainties engendered by tribute mining arrangements, resource materialities, the vagaries of international base metal prices, and government policies on the artisanal and small-scale chromite mining industry in Zimbabwe since 1985. The tribute chromite mining system in Zimbabwe was established in 1985 to help large scale chromite mining companies mitigate the uncertainties generated by the slump in global base metal prices by allowing them to sub-let their claims to cooperatives and individuals in a tribute arrangement. Under this arrangement, tributors (individuals and cooperatives) would mine chromite on claims owned by grantors (claim-holders who are usually large scale mining companies) and pay an agreed royalty fee, and sell their chromite to the grantor at prices determined by the latter. These requirements created an asymmetrical and exploitative relationship between grantors and tributors. Apart from this, the study also examines how the materiality of chromite generate particular uncertainties and also engender new socioeconomic relations. This idea is premised on the understanding that as bulky base mineral sold in tonnes, chromite has different materialities to minerals such as gold. The study draws on two conceptual frameworks, resource materialities and uncertainty. It focusses on the period between 1985 and 2018 in order to gain a long term perspective of the experiences of artisanal and smallscale chromite miners in Zimbabwe.

Projektbeteiligte

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