

Landmines and the postcolonial security discourse in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The effects of residual landmines from the Zimbabwean liberation war are persisting. Landmines are violently maiming and killing humans and non-humans, causing certain areas inaccessible for agriculture and habitation, instilling fear, and even inducing forced migration. The corpus of landmines literature available in Zimbabwe and beyond suggests a gap that residual landmines' effects are mainly treated as a humanitarian crisis and less scholarly. Henceforth, this study took a scholarly turn, conceptualising landmines using the postcolonial discourse. In conceptualising landmines, three sets of results are presented. One, the residual landmines are understood in the context of war, particularly the one that happened in the colony. This understanding makes the use of the postcolonial discourse relevant as it helps to map a timeframe, a process, a space, and an attitude by a postcolony towards modernity. Two, landmines are interrogated in line with their belligerent effect. They attack indiscriminately, contaminate the environment, and provide surveillance, repression and violent fate to all who cross the set boundaries. Lastly, landmines are explained in the Fear, Encounter, Environment and Security governance (FEES) framework. FEES explain the effects of landmines to, and responses by, specific modernity. This article shows that landmines can be conceptualised outside mainstream theories using the postcolonial discourse in International Relations.

Keywords: landmines, postcolonial, Zimbabwe, security, violence