

Abstract

Nuclear Im/Mobilities: Stories of Maralinga

Maralinga was – and continues to be – a site of various im/mobilities, many of which are closely intertwined with its history of British nuclear testing (1956-1963). Sampling from historical fiction, testimony, art, and poetry, I explore these dynamics and sketch the vast network of im/mobilities tied to this specific site, ranging from bodily and transport aspects (seasonal migration, passing and trespassing, disaster tourism), to biochemical and material ones (radiation, contamination, debris), to temporal ones (premonition and memory), to symbolical ones (scientific progress, moral and ethics). This paper combines military history with the nuclear and environmental humanities, as well as Indigenous and mobility studies. The selected texts carve out the significance of borders and border-crossings, life and death, continuity and rupture. Stuckness, resilience and transcendence turn out to be recurring themes. The human and more-than-human world are shown to be closely interwoven. While some sources focus exclusively on the history of testing, others are more interested in tracing the tests' legacy and continued relevance. The multi-perspective approach of this paper highlights the applicability of mobility studies in nuclear contexts and the complexity of the resultant networks.

Short Bio Note:

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