

METEORITE FALLS AND COSMIC IMPACTS IN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL MYTHOLOGY. D. W. Hamacher¹. ¹Warawara – the Department of Indigenous Studies, Macquarie University. E-mail: dhamacher@scmp.mq.edu.au

Introduction: The witness and cultural impact of meteorite falls and cosmic impacts has been studied extensively in some world cultures, including cultures of Europe, China, and the Middle East [1]. However, ethnographic records and oral traditions of meteorite falls in Aboriginal culture remain relatively unknown to the scientific community. Various Aboriginal stories from across Australia describe meteorite falls with seemingly accurate detail, frequently citing a specific location, including Wilcannia, NSW; Meteor Island, WA; Hermannsburg, NT; McGrath Flat, SA; and Bodena, NSW among others. Most of these falls and impact sites are unknown to Western science. In addition, some confirmed impact structures are described in Aboriginal lore as having cosmic origins, including the Gosse's Bluff [2] and Wolfe Creek craters [3]. This paper attempts to analyse and synthesize the plethora of fragmented historic, archaeological, and ethnographic data that describe meteorite falls and cosmic impacts in the mythologies and oral traditions spanning the 300+ distinct Aboriginal groups of Australia. Where applicable, coordinates of the reputed falls and impacts are cited in order for future inspections of these sights for evidence of meteoritic material or impact cratering.

References:

- [1] Burke, J. G. 1986. *Meteorites in History*, University of California Press (Berkeley, CA), [2] Williams, W. H. 2004, "The Stories, The Songs: Clip 2: Falling from the sky", A film documentary found at, <http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/warren-h-williams/clip2/> [3] Goldsmith, J. 2000, *Landscape Magazine*, 15(3): 28-34