



**Source A** Extract from 'Pre-Contact Wurundjeri', *Aboriginal History of the Yarra*

Australia's state and territory borders have existed for a relatively short period. For thousands of years before European settlement, the country now known as Australia consisted of 500 – 700 Aboriginal nations, each with their own systems of government, cultural practices, religions and languages. Part of the area now known as the City of Melbourne and all of the City of Yarra (as well as land extending north into central Victoria) are the traditional lands of the Kulin nation. The City of Yarra area was looked after by the Wurundjeri-willam family group. They belong to the Wurundjeri-balluk clan, which is part of the larger Wurundjeri tribe. The Wurundjeri-willam mainly spoke Woi wurrung language, but also spoke other languages of their nation. Each clan was governed by a *Ngurungaeta* [pronounced na-run-getta] or head-man.

[aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au/2-pre-contact-wurundjeri](http://aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au/2-pre-contact-wurundjeri)

**Source B** Extract from 'Introduction', *Aboriginal History of the Yarra*

The Wurundjeri-willam people of the Kulin Nation are the Traditional Owners of the land that is now known as the City of Yarra. Their relationship with the land extends back tens of thousands of years to when their creator spirit 'Bunjil' formed their people, the land and all living things.

The Wurundjeri's connection to land is underpinned by cultural and spiritual values vastly different to those of the Europeans. The Wurundjeri did not 'own' the land in the European sense of the word, but belonged to, or were 'owned by' the land. They did not live in permanent settlements but, rather, camped for periods within defined clan boundaries where food was plentiful, and moved on when the land needed to rejuvenate. The land provided all the Wurundjeri needed – food, water, medicine, shelter – and they treated it with the respect due to such a provider.

[aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au/1-introduction](http://aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au/1-introduction)

**Source C** Extract from Aboriginal historian Bruce Pascoe's chapter in *First Australians: an illustrated history*, 2010, p.131

When John Batman sailed from Tasmania to acquire land he showed some sensitivity to Aboriginal custom and constructed his treaty negotiations for land acquisition in a way that resembled the Kulin *tanderrum*, a formal agreement that allowed visitors temporary access to Kulin lands and food resources. The crucial essence of this agreement was that the host must not suffer from the presence of the guest.

Batman, however, gloated on his return to Tasmania that his 'treaty' elevated him to the biggest landowner in the world. Batman prepared the document in advance of meeting the Kulin and sought to defraud the people by confusing his title document with *tanderrum*.

Rachel Perkins & Marcia Langton (editors) *First Australians: an illustrated history*,  
Miegunyah Press, Carlton, 2010