

# Indigenous Knowledge Systems and *Yurlendj-nganjin*



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Edited by

David Jones and Darryl Low Choy

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Cover Image: *Three Dreaming Trails* that incorporate culture, language and ceremony and how they are connected to *Country*.  
Author: Mandy Nicholson

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We wish to respectfully acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from around Australia, past, present and future, who are and continue to be the Traditional Owners and custodians of these lands, waters and skies for many centuries, and in particular members of the *Kurna*, *Wadawurrung*, *Wurundjeri*, *Gunditjmara*, *Yuin*, *Wiradjuri*, *Wakka Wakka*, *Bidjara*, *Kuku Yalanji*, *Yawuru*, *Noongar/Nyungar*, *Quandamooka* and *Boon Wurrung* Peoples who were passionate in seeking the fruition of this publication to provide a voice to their values.

### ***Yurlendj-nganjin***

**(‘everyone’s knowledge’ / ‘our intelligence’)**

*Wumen-dji-ka bagungga-nganjin lalal ba gugung-bulok ba kirrip nugal-dhan ba kirrip-nganjinu Torres Strait-al Bawal-u, ba kyinandoo biik durn-durn-bulok, Wurundjeri biik-dui. Maal-dhumba! Aboriginal ba Torres Strait Bawalal yurlendj-u ba korin korin gullagothoon durn-durn ba mungka-al yirramboi-u [in Woi wurrung language]*

*Womin – dji –ka bagungga-ngaijin ngapa ba guks buluk ba kirrip nugal-dhan ba kirrip n- nganjinu Torres Strait – al Bawal - , ba wurdialyal – bulok Boon wurrung biik – dui maal – dhumba! Aboriginal ba Torres Strait Bawal –al yulendj –u ba gorrin gorrin gullaguthun durn – durn ba munga –al yirramboi –u [in Boon wurrung language]*

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## **Author Protocols**

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## **Academic and Research Protocols**

Each chapter in this publication has been subject to blind peer review examiners, and revised, in accordance with Australian university academic refereeing protocols.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that the following publication may contain images and names of deceased persons.

This project was subject to ethics approvals by the Deakin University Human Research Ethics Committee (DUHREC) (#2012-335) entitled *Re-Casting terra nullius blindness: Empowering Indigenous Protocols and Knowledge in Australian University Built Environment Education*, and a Deakin University Faculty of Science, Engineering & Built Environment Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG) STEC-2-2013-JONES entitled *Indigenous Narratives and Processes*.

This research, entitled ‘*Everyone’s Knowledge in Country: Yurlendj-nganjin*’, has been subject to an approved Cultural Heritage Permit WAC-P0031 issued by the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation in accordance with s.36(1) of the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* dated 28 August 2019, and is now subject to the current Cultural Heritage Permit WTOAC-P0046 issued by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) in accordance with s.36(1) of the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* dated 6 October 2020 – 6 October 2025.

## FOREWORD

### LISTEN TO *BUGARRIGARRA*

#### SENATOR PAT DODSON

*Yawurugun Janu buru Rubibi.* I am from Broome. *Ngayu nilawal Djagun.* My name is *Djagun*. *Ngayu Banaga wamba.* I am a *Banaga* man.

I acknowledge with respect the traditional owners of *Country*'s, especially those authors in this book, their elders and their emerging leaders and I thank the editors for inviting me to write this Foreword.

I am a proud member of the *Yawuru* people of Broome, Western Australia. In the *Yawuru* language, from around Broome, there are three key concepts from the *Bugarrigarra* that shape our ways of knowing and understanding. These concepts inform my work and life, as they have formed my being. They are: *Mabu ngarrungunil*, a strong community where people matter and are valued; *Mabu buru*, a strong place, a good *Country*, where use of resources is balanced and sacredness is embedded in the landscape; *Mabu liyan*, a healthy spirit, a good state of being for individuals, families and community. Its essence arises from our encounter with the land and people.

These concepts are not newly minted. They come from the time before time began. We call this the *Bugarrigarra* —from when the earth was soft and yet to be moulded and given its form by the creative spirits. The *Bugarrigarra* encompasses the time well before Western philosophy, religion and laws existed or travelled to our lands in ships.

In 2006, after 12 years of litigation, the Australian Federal Court recognised the native title rights of the *Yawuru*, and therein acknowledged the existence of our laws and customs under *Bugarrigarra* in Australian law.

The *Yawuru* now hold some 530,000 ha of land in and around Broome. Much of *Yawuru* land is held under exclusive native title. Other parts are non-exclusive title. However, native title rights are vulnerable to the

principle of extinguishment, which has the effect of returning native title rights to our lands and waters to *terra nullius* or Crown land. When the Federal Court handed down its determination in 2006, the Western Australian state government appealed the decision. But two years later the full bench of the Federal Court upheld the original decision. During and following the appeal, formal negotiations were undertaken between the *Yawuru* people, the state government of Western Australia and the Shire of Broome. In February 2010, these good faith negotiations led to a native title agreement signed by all the parties and registered with the Native Title Tribunal in August 2010.

The ILUA—the Indigenous Land Use Agreement—settled some key matters of land tenure and governance for the state and for the *Yawuru* people. The Agreement provides a basis for building economic opportunity in our shared, cosmopolitan world subject, of course, to market factors and opportunities. The Agreement-making process and the Agreement itself help both communities to face up to the unfinished business of our place, of our country and of our status within the confines of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). They do not settle, however, fundamental matters of colonisation and dispossession. It is not a panacea, applicable in every case, but shows that local and regional agreement-making is achievable and can be mutually beneficial.

It has refreshed our spirit, our *liyan*. It has enabled us to move on from the many mistakes, poor policies, ignorance and outright racism that have bedevilled us in the past. We now come to the table in our own right: respected as legitimate stakeholders, whose rights can no longer be bypassed, ignored or simply extinguished without compensation. It is one model of agreement-making I can commend, while recognising such a model cannot be adopted in all parts of our diverse Australian nation. Its limitations are that it does not deal with the claims of sovereignty, a sovereignty that many Aboriginal people argue has never been ceded or surrendered. The basis for settlement remains contested since the discredited legal fiction of *terra nullius* was exposed in the Australian High Court's Mabo decision.

All these ideas are embodied in the *Walyjala-jala buru jayida jarringgun buru Nyamba Yawuru ngan-ga mirli mirli* (*Planning for the future: Yawuru Cultural Management Plan*) produced by the *Yawuru* people through their *Yawuru* Registered Native Title Body Corporate in 2011. This is a Plan that has gained high recognition by the Australian Institute of Landscape

Architects, being awarded the 2012 Australian National Medal for Landscape Architecture. This Plan expresses the *Yawuru* past, present and future; it offers discussions about Culture, Country, Community and *liyan* (wellbeing) that transcend other reports of this kind, that record and map values. It is an informed community-authored precedent. This Cultural Management Plan will and should respectfully drive conservation plans, land management decisions and design activities in marine and terrestrial areas Australia-wide, such is its generous and visionary approach.

The Plan is more than a conversation, more than a listening and recording, more than walking and seeing the lands and waters; it is all of these things, but most importantly, it is none of these, but the lands, waters and its people.

This book, similarly, sings.

It possesses the voices of many Aboriginal leaders and future leaders from around Australia involved in *Country*, who are trying to ensure quality outcomes and changes for their *Country's* from built environment institutions, practitioners and students.

It is inviting the same discussions about Culture, Country, Community and *liyan* (wellbeing) that I witnessed and participated in on my *Country*.

Each author talks about the spirit of their *Country*, the need to respect and listen to this spirit, and the need to respect and listen to the peoples of each *Country*. It offers an invitation to share knowledge towards the future care of each these *Country's*.

I strongly endorse this book and its voices through a cultural lens onto all built environments for practitioners.

But, I also offer it to anyone who wants to better understand our Indigenous responsibilities to *Country*, and our wish to go forward in a mutual respectful partnership for the betterment of each *Country* and the Australian nation as a whole.

Senator Pat Dodson  
Senator for Western Australia  
October 2019

## PREFACE

### WATCHING THE MATURATION OF *YURLENDJ-NGANJIN*

MARK ROSE

I am pleased to write this Preface that draws inspiration from the *Yurlendj-nganjin* Gathering held in late 2017. The *Yurlendj-nganjin* Gathering was a significant event in Australia's built environment disciplines and reflected a final stage in the important project *Re-casting Terra Nullius Blindness: Empowering Indigenous Protocols and Knowledges in Australian University Built Environment Education* (Jones *et al.*, 2017). I had the pleasure of overseeing the project academically, and I was chair of the peer Reference Group, 2013-2018.

At the outset the Reference Group were exceedingly pleased with the direct and regular involvement, and the opportunity to review and comment upon the project's direction, undertakings and draft deliverables, and to watch the research project unfold (Rose 2017). The research was, to echo Professor Marcia Devlin's comments,

*... very ambitious, complex and challenging. It is not simple to discover and articulate the relevant issues and then to design, test, refine and articulate suggested approaches to addressing these issues. The project team have taken on a significantly difficult undertaking in this project. It is my assessment that, given the level of difficulty, the team have done an excellent job against the aims of the project* (Devlin in Jones *et al.*, 2017, 51).

Further, the level of attention to Indigenous protocols and respect undertaken in this project sets a remarkable and important benchmark as to how academics should deal with Indigenous peoples, communities and Corporations and with their cultural issues and values. One insightful conclusion raised in the *Re-casting Terra Nullius Blindness* (Jones *et al.*, 2017) findings was about international students and their educative



experience in Australia. Given that over one-quarter of Australian tertiary architecture, landscape architecture and planning students are international, I totally concur with Professor Devlin's note that

*... no-one, to my knowledge, has ever articulated the importance of Indigenous knowledge from across the globe to Australian higher education learning and teaching. The team should be congratulated on surfacing and articulating this matter (Devlin in Jones et al., 2017, 52).*

As I have argued in the past, Australia is paying a heavy price for excluding Indigenous learnings and knowledge from its education system. Since 1872, when free, secular, compulsory education was introduced in Australia, Indigenous learnings have been ignored. Nowadays, the average person knows very little about Indigenous culture and it's a battle to get any space for it in the curriculum. This is what I call 'the silent apartheid'. (White) Australia has been robbed of a much richer, deeper and more meaningful system of education, based on holistic, spiritual and cultural tenets, that allows people to connect to Mother Earth (Rose & Jones 2012; Rose 2016). We need an exchange of knowledge, not through transactions but through relationships, where the learner becomes the teacher and the teacher becomes the learner, in a very dynamic exchange.

For the *Yurlendj-nganjin* Gathering I was honoured to open the day's proceedings and discussions, and to set the tone for the day. The tone successfully embraced and challenged this historical legacy, and squarely asked for the inclusion of Indigenous learnings and knowledge in Australia's built environment education courses.

This book represents a major coalescence of Indigenous voices from this Gathering, ably complemented with several additional Indigenous voices together with insights from several well-respected non-Indigenous built environment practitioners. Accordingly, the text is unique in its authorship composition, prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander voices first.

Consistently all these voices articulate a wish for respect, mutual sharing, prior consent and engagement, and for the redress of this absence of Indigenous knowledge in mainstream built environment education. The wish for a partnership to collectively guide the future care of Australia's lands, waters, seas, skies, cities, rural settlements, hamlets and all the facets that make up *Country*. *Country* is so important here in this discussion. Understanding *Country*, and understanding each Aboriginal community's relationships to their own *Country* is key here.

This publication offers a major vehicle for existing and future built environment practitioners, students, and academics to learn from Indigenous voices, to understand their concerns and their longevity of responsibility long since the Dreaming.

I am honoured to put it forward, and hopefully it will change your understanding and values to the betterment of the collective Australian *Country*.

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**I:**

**WELCOME TO COUNTRY**

## CHAPTER ONE

### *WOMINJEKA:* 'WELCOME TO COUNTRY'

#### N'ARWEET CAROLYN BRIGGS AND AUNTY DI KERR

The Chair commenced, 'I would like to introduce Aunty Di and Aunty Carolyn'.

N'Arweet Carolyn observed, 'No, 'N'Arweet'. No more 'Aunties'.

Aunty Di responded, 'No more 'Aunties'. 'N'Arweet.' 'Bumboo'.

The Chair re-phrased: That's part of the conversation.

N'Arweet Carolyn commenced: Yes, that's part of the conversation because I think everyone gets too familiar with that name because it's a very Western colonial structure. So I'm anti-Aunty at the moment as much as I doing all this colonial thing about connecting ...

Ha ha, these iPads – a great tool!!

And it is about ... I am N'Arweet Carolyn Briggs (Briggs 2011a); it's about the holder of knowledge, and it's about your inherited rights.

I'd like to introduce Aunty Di Kerr from the *Woi wurrung Wurundjeri* clan group (McQuinlan 2012).

We're here to welcome you to this wonderful space which has now all been reconstructed.

Firstly, I'd like to pay my respects to the land that we now stand, and also pay my respects to our ancestors and to Elders both past and present and our Elders who are in the room today from another part of our *Country* or the *Woi wurrung*, so I will open.

*Wominjeka mirambeek beek. Boon Wurrung Nairm derp Bordupren uther willam.*

That means ‘Welcome to our beautiful home, the lands of the two great bays – *Maram* (Western Port Bay) and *Nerm* (Port Phillip Bay)’. As we are the descendants of the First People being the *Boon Wurrung* and the *Woi wurrung*, the people of the greater *Kulin Nation*, we are pleased to welcome you here today.

I believe that it is important for all Australians to understand the history and the heritage of the Indigenous peoples of Melbourne or what we now know as Melbourne.<sup>1</sup> *Birrarung Marr*.

This is the traditional *Country* of the *Boon Wurrung* and the *Woi wurrung*. We were one of the five language groups that made up the larger *Nation* known as the *Kulin*.

At the time of the first European settlement (post-1835), this area was occupied by the *Yalukit Willam* clan of the *Boon Wurrung* with connections with our *Woi wurrung* (Clark with Briggs 2011). It is now over 180 years since Europeans first entered our *Country* and sailed up our sacred river the *Birrarung* and through our great bay known as *Nerm* (Presland 2010).

And what we have learnt from our ancestors’ achievements still resonates with us. This includes the core values of learning, showing respect, celebrating life, and honouring sacred ground.

The importance of learning. We have always valued the commitment of learning and that has been a part of every generation, since time began.

That’s one of the reasons why we are strong today.

Showing respect. We respect our traditional laws and customs, but we also accept the different ways of the Europeans. This is the same way we share respect for each other’s diversity, cultures, religions and spiritual beliefs today.

We celebrate it. We must remember that the celebration of life, the arrival of new children, the coming of our six seasons, and the visiting of the clans were very much an important part of our traditional life (Briggs 2008).

---

<sup>1</sup> *Birrarung Marr* is the Wurundjeri nomenclature for the colonial-named Yarra River, and has also been applied to the recent parkland designed and constructed on the northern riverfront in central Melbourne.

Today we support this celebration of modern contemporary Indigenous arts and culture. And this has been our ancestors' legacy.

Respecting sacred ground. We should all acknowledge the sacred ground on which we stand. And today we are hosts for people of many different nations and *Country's*, and we still call upon them to continue to respect this sacred ground, and to understand our history and the heritage of our *Country*.

When we talk about our *Country* we talk about self (Briggs 2011b). The struggles to preserve our cultures and traditions began with our ancestors in the 1830s, and one of the most important lessons we should take from this struggle was the way they forged an alliance that led to many of the achievements that sometimes we take for granted today. While we may have descended from different clans and language groups, our grand-parents and our great-grand-parents worked together to achieve the outcome that we can all celebrate today.

The most important thing we can learn from the past today is my hope that we can all take pride in our shared history and celebrate the strength of this great nation of ours.

Accordingly, in our traditions, our lands will always be protected by our creator *Bunjil* who travels as an eagle (Wedge-tailed Eagle; *Aquila audax*), and *Waa* (*Corvus coronoides*) who protects our waterways and who travels as a Crow.

*Bunjil* taught us to always welcome guests. But he required us to ask all visitors to make a number of promises. One, not to harm the land and its waters, and (Two) not to harm the children of *Bunjil*. And this commitment is made through an exchange of a small bough dipped in the waters of the land.

So, once again, *Wominjeka mirambeek beek. Boon Wurrung Nairm derp Bordupren uther willam.*

I am always interested in the way people start to write the language of our *Country*. As much as we have very shared language groups, it is about your learning about these writings of a Western system of talking about language.

It's a journey.

So we welcome you to this conference and workshops, and I'll be talking to you later about that connection to our waterways.

*Wominjeka!* I would like you to say *Wominjeka*. '*Wominjeka*'. Say it louder than that! '*Wominjeka*' (Murphy 2010).

You've got to realise you've come. You've been asked to come, so what's your purpose of coming? What's your intention? I want you to think about all that, because it's about what you bring and how you share.

I'll now pass you over to Auntie Di. You got another name?

Auntie Di responded: 'Bumboo'. 'Yeah, Bumboo'.

Good morning everyone.

You haven't left me much to say.

N'Aweet Carolyn responded: We balance each other. You know I'm always the story teller.

Auntie Di acknowledged: Yes.

Auntie Di commenced: I honour my ancestors, my Elders, and pay homage to this sacred ground we are on. I wish to acknowledge all Elders in the room. I acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, all of you, and pay my respects to your ancestors, Elders and families.

We are very proud and honoured to be here on our traditional *Country* to welcome you here.

Our family lived along the *Birraring*, the river of mists, which is now known as the Yarra River, before my family was moved to Coranderrk Station (Massola 1975; Nanni & James 2014); which is a mission near Healesville where my grand-mother was born.

The MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground) is our traditional ceremonial area. The ground between the (Royal Melbourne) Children's Hospital and (Melbourne) Zoo is the meeting place of the *Kulin Nation* of which we are two of the mobs and Uncle here is one of them as well. The *Kulin Nation* did their business there once a year.

We also have a small meeting area at Federation Square where we hold *Tanderrum* (Anon 2017; Lindsay 2017), which is the coming together of the

*Kulin Nations*. This is our 5<sup>th</sup> this year. We did win the City of Melbourne Award for *Tanderrum*. It's very important to us because the first year of *Tanderrum* was when the *Kulin Nations* first danced together again in over 100 years, and that's very important (Melbourne Festival 2015).

When you walk around the City of Melbourne you don't see much about First Nation's peoples unless there is a plaque acknowledging Traditional Owners.

By acknowledging First Nations on the office buildings they are acknowledging us. We have a building that if you look down St Kilda Road from the Shrine you will see William Barak's (1824-1903) face; he's my grand-father, great-grand-uncle to non-Indigenous people (Ryan *et al.*, 2003; Wiencke 1984). It's the only building in Melbourne that protects *Country* (Jones and Beza 2016); I think there should be more.

I hope that you have a good conference here and talk about things like that.

I've been to other *Countries* and they are always displaying First Nations Peoples.

We live in harmony with this *Country*; the buildings should be in harmony and not stuck on top of the ground. All these buildings here are on marshy lands; they're going to sink one day. I tried to tell different people, they will sink, and you will be able to say that I told you that.

It's all about all of us walking together. It's about us living in harmony. About us sharing our stories. About culture so that we can live in harmony. If we live in harmony our children live in peace, and can walk this land without fear of any harm. Especially our children, and our up and coming future leaders. I think that's very important. Regardless of what we do in life, we need to remember the children.

So I offer my hand in friendship so that we can all walk together. Also so that *Bunjil* will keep you safe on *Country*.

*Wominjeka mirambeek beek. Wurundjeri Nairm derp Bordupren uther willam.*

Welcome to the home of our *Wurundjeri Country*, and I hope you have a good day.

Thank you.

*Wurundjeri Balluk yeaman goondi bik.*



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## **II:**

### **PASSING CLOUDS AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

## CHAPTER TWO

# LOOKING FOR *YURLENDJ-NGANJIN*: EVERYBODY'S KNOWLEDGE IN THE AUSTRALIAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT SECTOR

DAVID JONES AND DARRYL LOW CHOY

### **Acknowledgement of *Country***

We acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the Australian continent, islands and adjacent seas, who remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their lands and waters and who continue to practise their values, languages, beliefs and customs.

### **The Legacy of the Red Splotch**

*It's my father's land, my grandfather's land, my grandmother's land. And, I'm related to it, which also gives me my identity* (Reverend Dave Passi, cited in Sharp 1996, 164).

For the majority of Australians, this is a continent encircled by waters isolated from the rest of the world, whose reputedly unoccupied expanses were 'settled' by the British colonisers and became the red splotch down-under on maps of the world.

Such a narrative was perpetuated across the 1800s and much of the 1900s, disregarding the original First Nations inhabitants and 'citizens' of this continent's lands and waters who had arrived through the Dreaming many many generations ago, 'since time immemorial'; or, as the anthropologists write, some 60,000 years ago via the *Nusantara* land bridges. The later, colonised, narrative also hides the truth of Dutch, French, Chinese, Portuguese and Makassar 'discoveries', mappings and trading attempts pre-British arrival, as well as the fact that Australia was inhabited at the time of

Captain James Cook's nautical wanderings along the eastern shores of Australia in 1770. During such time Cook and his contingent were met by not one clan of 'Aboriginals' but several clans, representative of the over 250 Nations who were residing on the continent at the time. The latter can be likened to a Medieval map of Europe with its plethora of principalities, duchies and kingdoms each with its own flag, language or dialect, food delicacies and cooking traditions, dress, graphic iconography, etc. Thus, while 'Aboriginal' is derived from the Latin *ab origine*, meaning 'original inhabitants', it has been generically and continues to be applied across Australia by authors and practitioners. It thus nomenclaturally disenfranchises each of the First Nation peoples, like the *Kurna*, *Gadigal*, *Quandamooka*, *Wurundjeri*, *Bar Baram*, *Yuin*, *Wiradjuri*, *Gunditjmara*, *Wadawurrung* or *Boon Wurrung* as individual peoples or Nations.

*Yurlendj-nganjin* is about opening one's eyes up to the knowledge of the original, and continuing, First Nations and peoples of Australia's lands and waters.

While the discussion focus is upon the built environment sector that Western educators and practitioners call 'architecture', 'landscape architecture' and 'urban planning', First Nations peoples are struggling for their voices to be heard. The substance of discussion is weighted to those disciplines. To Australia's Indigenous peoples, those disciplines are collectively all '*Country*'. They are Western disciplines, founded on an apprenticeship system before becoming institutionalised inside universities from the 1800s onwards, and thereupon elevated to 'professional' status by peer Elders and/or guilds seeking to protect and institutionally socialise their 'trade' or knowledge and skill base. In contrast to this progressive lineal educative process, often directed by one or two peers or Elders, well-founded Indigenous educative processes were, and continue to be, circuitous, community-based, with strategic Elder leadership and recognition being elevation-based. They can be autoethnographic in their character, based upon stories and yarns. They are orally expressed narratives in their own right based upon both stories (events, characters, incidents, settings) and telling (being expressional in structure, manifestation, dance, landscape, song, visual representation) (Ellis *et al.*, 2011; Potteiger & Purinton 1998; Wilson, 2008). In many ways we are talking about the essence of Aristotle's *Poetics* (c.335 BC): the poetry of dramatic theory embodied in differences in music rhythm, harmony, meter and melody; differences in goodness in the characters; and differences in how the narrative is presented - telling a story or acting it out.

But an essential aspect of *Yurlendj-nganjin* is the willingness to share knowledge: to share knowledge if asked, to share knowledge respectfully, and to respectfully engage with this knowledge and its educative processes.

This chapter introduces the basis of *Yurlendj-nganjin*. It takes the reader through a ‘historical’ journey, considers the myths of Australian Indigenous social relationships to the Australian built environment professions and their practices and ‘deliverables’, and sets in train a mutual discussion about *Yurlendj-nganjin* in the contemporary built environment sector. While the content is Australian in scope and voice, as editors we have sought to ensure: cross-Country fluency; respect for the authenticity of Indigenous language; and cross-Nation fluency to aid international readership. The content is authored both by Indigenous authors, often Elders, and by respected non-Indigenous practitioners as well.

Additionally, the book is about different voices from different ‘Country’s’. Each Aboriginal Nation or community’s tract of custodial lands and waters and seas is called a ‘Country’. You are about to be introduced to, in this book, the voices of many peoples – *Kurna*, *Noongar*, *Arrernte*, *Gunditjmarra*, *Gadigal*, *Yuin*, *Wiradjuri*, *Yawuru*, *Boon Wurrung*, *Wakka Wakka*, *Quandamooka* (as examples) – from around Australia, so we will cease to use the term ‘Aboriginal’ from here on. Thus, for example, *Kurna* authors talk about their *Country*, within a sovereign nation that never ceded or were asked to cede their *Country* to the British colonisers. Or, as expressed eloquently in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* (NCC 2017, 1):

*Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from ‘time immemorial’, and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.*

*This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown* [Note: the italics are as per the original text].

A quick visual translation guide to these *Country’s* is the *AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia*, co-authored and edited by Horton, in conjunction with the *Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia* (Horton 1994), available at