

5. Managing mission life, 1869–1886

Claire McLisky (with Lynette Russell and Leigh Boucher)¹

In settler colonies such as Victoria, missions and reserves were the sites where colonial legislation and missionary/humanitarian ambitions encountered Aboriginal people and their own goals, where theories about race, conversion and 'civilisation' were translated into everyday practice. Colonial power, in the words of David Scott, 'came to depend ... upon *the systematic redefinition and transformation of the terrain on which the life of the colonized was lived*',² and as the primary physical location in which these transformations were carried out, missions and reserves were laboratories both of Christian evangelical theories and of colonial rule. Granted astonishingly broad powers over Aboriginal people's lives, mission and reserve managers applied and tested a variety of approaches to achieve the related goals of Aboriginal pacification, protection, conversion and civilisation.³ Their ability to do this was aided by the fact that missions and reserves were usually isolated from both rural settler populations and the metropolitan centres that often sought to dictate colonial and missionary policy. Yet despite this isolation, the flow of information and influence between 'centre' and 'periphery' was anything but unilateral; missions, reserves and Aboriginal people themselves fed 'knowledge' back into colonial, and metropolitan, understandings of race and 'Aboriginality', which in turn came to influence subsequent policy and legislation.

1 I would like to thank Alan Lester for his incisive comments on the review copy of this piece, and also the other, anonymous reviewer for his/her helpful feedback. In addition, Ben Silverstein and Felicity Jenz provided advice that helped to sharpen its argument. Most importantly, many thanks to my co-authors Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell, whose input whilst I was on maternity leave made its publication possible.

2 David Scott, 'Colonial governmentality', *Social Text* 43, Autumn 1995: 205 (original emphasis).

3 During the period under consideration, missionary and official ideas about what the end point of Christian mission to Aboriginal people might mean were often contradictory. Discourses around 'smoothing the pillow of a dying race' through material assistance and deathbed conversions often co-existed with the ideal of creating a Christian Aboriginal population which, it was imagined, would eventually assimilate into settler society. With the advent of the *Aborigines Protection Act 1886* (Vic), however, a clear distinction was made between those who should be 'protected' (people of unmixed Aboriginal heritage), and those who should be immediately 'assimilated' (people of mixed Aboriginal heritage). The Act envisaged missions and reserves exclusively as places for the former 'category'. It should be noted, however, that not all missionaries and reserve managers agreed with this policy. John Bulmer, for example, was repeatedly cautioned by the Board for giving supplies to 'half-castes' (Clare Land, 'Law and the construction of 'race': critical race theory and the Aborigines Protection Act, 1886, Victoria, Australia', in Penelope Edmonds and Samuel Furphy (eds), *Rethinking Colonial Histories: New and Alternative Approaches*, RMIT Publishing, Melbourne, 2006: 155, fn 107). Similarly, Daniel and Janet Matthews at Maloga Mission in New South Wales took in 'half-castes' who were no longer welcome at Victorian missions. See Claire McLisky, 'Settlers on a Mission: Faith, Power and Subjectivity in the Lives of Daniel and Janet Matthews', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 2009: 22.

This chapter focuses on one aspect of this dynamic – the ways in which missionaries and reserve managers interacted with colonial legislation in their attempts to redefine and transform Aboriginal lives on the six mission stations and government reserves in the Colony of Victoria during the period 1869–1886 (Ebenezer, Ramahyuck, Lake Condah, Lake Tyers, Coranderrk and Framlingham – see map in introduction). It considers the relationship between legislation, as imagined and set out by colonial policymakers, and the realities of everyday life on missions and reserves, paying particular attention to the ways in which the quotidian both reinforced and disrupted legislative goals. Missionary and reserve manager practice entailed the management not just of Indigenous time, space and resources, but also of emotions, behaviour and bodies – what Ann Stoler has called ‘colonial habits of heart and mind’.⁴ These intimate sites of governance and control were considered crucial to the larger goals of conversion to Christianity, ‘civilisation’ and assimilation, working hand-in-hand with the more structural methods of governance. They were also important loci of resistance and cultural transformation.

Victorian missionaries and reserve managers during this period served many different masters – their own faith and convictions, their Churches or, in the case of missionaries, missionary societies, and the Aboriginal people they built (or failed to build) relationships with. But they were all ultimately operating under the authority of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines (hereafter the BPA), a body with a specific colonial legislative mandate. Thus while missionaries and managers could challenge the methods and the outcomes of colonial legislation, they remained unable (and arguably unwilling) to disrupt its fundamental basis. This is particularly evident in the fact that even the most dissenting of the managers invoked colonial legislation when it suited them. In this sense, the many and variegated textures of mission life were not necessarily a case of the ‘everyday’ disrupting colonial culture and power so much as colonial culture and power operating on a different register, with different affects and effects. This chapter represents an attempt to survey the vast variety of individual approaches to mission management, placing them collectively in their common legislative context and asking what this overview can tell us about the *specific* nature of interactions between everyday and legislative technologies of governance in colonial Victoria during this period.

The first part of this chapter surveys the historiography on Victorian missions. While some authors have emphasised the structural nature of mission governance, others have argued for the importance of paternalism and interpersonal relationships, in explaining the ways in which missions were governed. Pointing to the limits of both these approaches, this section argues

4 Ann Laura Stoler, *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2006: 2.

for the need to consider both the affective dynamics of mission governance, and the legislative context which at once enabled, and troubled, them. The second section locates the missions and reserves in time and space, briefly elaborating the contexts for their foundations, and the circumstances under which they operated. Analysis then moves to the everyday ways in which missionaries and reserve managers attempted to ‘manage’ life on the missions, concentrating on four key areas: space and time; economic and spiritual life; sexuality, family and children; and disciplinary practices. Not all of these areas of ‘everyday life’ were directly addressed in the 1869 legislation under which the missions and reserves operated. However, the approaches of missionaries and reserve managers were all to some degree enabled and supported by this legislation, although the degree to which different managers relied upon the legislative framework, and the degree to which their subsequent chroniclers have emphasised this context, varied greatly from individual to individual.

Historiographical context

Because missionaries’, colonial legislators’ and Aboriginal peoples’ understandings of the status and purpose of missions in Victoria often diverged sharply, the colonial archive of this period (which contains remnants, albeit unevenly distributed, of all parties’ voices) can be read in a number of ways. Taking account of this complexity, recent scholars of single mission sites have tended to conclude that missions and reserves operated as both locales of incarceration and cultural loss, and as refuges and sites of cultural renewal for Aboriginal people. Yet a central problem for the historian of Victorian missions and reserves has been where to place the emphasis – on control and coercion, or negotiation and opportunity.

Another problem for those historians who have focused primarily on one mission or reserve is that they are inevitably influenced by the specificities and exceptionalities of ‘their’ mission’s archives.⁵ Archival traces are most obviously discernible in claims that a particular mission was ‘the most successful’, the ‘most neglected’,⁶ the ‘largest’ or the ‘most controversial’,⁷ or that certain

5 This is partly because much of this very important work has been undertaken as doctoral research, which lends itself to focused, localised studies. One exception to this is Felicity Jenz’s *Influential Strangers: German Moravian Missionaries in the British Colony of Victoria, Australia, 1848–1901*, Brill, Leiden, 2010, which considers three Moravian missions – Lake Boga, Ebenezer and Ramahyuck. The first of these, Lake Boga, was closed before the period under consideration here.

6 Jan Critchett claims this of Framlingham in *Our Land Till We Die*, Deakin University Press, Warrnambool, 1992, and ‘A History of Framlingham and Lake Condah Aboriginal Stations, 1860–1918’, unpublished Masters thesis, University of Melbourne, 1980.

7 Diane Barwick claims this of Coranderrk in *Rebellion at Coranderrk*, Laura E Barwick and Richard E Barwick (eds), Aboriginal History Inc, Canberra, 1998.

missionaries or managers were the ‘most authoritarian’,⁸ the ‘most humane’⁹ or the ‘most influential’.¹⁰ These traces are not surprising – mission and reserve archives were, after all, the product of a cast of eccentric, difficult and faith or ideologically motivated individuals competing for power, influence and affection. However, they do have implications for the ways in which the colonial context as a whole is understood, leading to the misapprehension that ostensibly idiosyncratic practices and encounters were shaped only by the personalities and intersubjective relations of the managers, missionaries and their Aboriginal subjects. By considering Victorian missions and stations individually rather than as a group, these authors lose the possibility of detecting and identifying the patterns of their common settler-colonial and legislative context.

These two problems are somewhat compounded by the fact that, while the number of single-mission studies (or single-mission society) continues to expand, only two comprehensive studies of Victorian missions and reserves have to date been published: Michael Christie’s *Aborigines in Colonial Victoria* (1979) and Richard Broome’s *Aboriginal Victorians* (2005). Both impressive works of scholarship in their own ways, these two volumes are also marked by the concerns of their time. Whereas Christie characterised Aboriginal reserves as ‘total institutions’ that governed all aspects of Aboriginal peoples’ daily lives,¹¹ Broome emphasised the agency of Aboriginal people within these institutions, and found the fundamental basis for the Aboriginal-missionary dynamic in the concept of paternalism, which he defined as ‘a subtle two-way form of power, that had governed relations between people in the British world for centuries’.¹² Within the paternalistic system, Broome argued, missionaries and reserve managers saw themselves in patriarchal relationships to ‘childlike’ Aboriginal people, while Aboriginal people in turn utilised the concepts of protection and paternalism to argue for their rights in what Broome called the ‘patron-client relationship’.¹³

8 Critchett makes this claim for Stähle at Lake Condah in *Our Land Till We Die* and ‘A History of Framlingham and Lake Condah’.

9 Diane Barwick makes this claim for John Green at Coranderrk in *Rebellion at Coranderrk*. See, for example, her claim that Green ‘was the only one of a succession of managers who took charge of [Coranderrk] ... who ever entrusted full responsibility for discipline to the residents’ (pp. 67–69). Similarly, while Richard Broome does not overtly compare Green to other managers, his use of the adjectives ‘benign’, ‘caring’ and ‘affable’ positions Green as an exception in ‘“There were vegetables every year Mr Green was here”: right behaviour and the struggle for autonomy at Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve’, *History Australia* 3(2), 2006: 43.1–43.16.

10 This claim has been made by several historians about Friedrich Hagenauer, who was undoubtedly one of the most important and influential missionaries of the era. See Felicity Jensz, ‘Controlling marriages: Friedrich Hagenauer and the betrothal of Indigenous Western Australian women in colonial Victoria’, *Aboriginal History* 34, 2010; Jensz, *Influential Strangers*; Bain Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989.

11 Michael Christie, *Aborigines in Colonial Victoria, 1835–1886*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1979.

12 Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History Since 1800*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2005: 128.

13 For another, more nuanced example of Broome’s approach to this topic, see ‘There were vegetables’. Broome has since shifted his notion of paternalism towards a more critical formulation. In a 2009 article on

In using paternalism as his central analytical framework, Broome, like the authors of many of the individual mission studies he drew upon, placed a strong emphasis on the importance of personal relationships, and the abilities of the individual missionaries and reserve managers to invoke either loyalty and cooperation, or mistrust and contempt in the Aboriginal people they were employed to ‘manage’. He also highlighted Aboriginal agency within these relationships, an important corrective to Christie’s focus on structural oppression. At times, however, Broome’s emphasis on the ‘personal’ nature of mission life, and his efforts to distance his work from earlier scholars such as Christie, led him to some questionable conclusions, for instance his assertion that the Victorian Aboriginal reserves and missions

were not ‘concentration camps’ as some have termed them, but places of refashioned community and identity: places that became ‘home’, complete with oppressions and opportunities like any home.¹⁴

In order to understand how Broome came to such a conclusion, we need to go back to David Roberts’ 1979 work *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, from which Broome’s concept of paternalism was drawn. In this work, Roberts analysed the writings and practices of early nineteenth-century English paternalists who, he argued, believed that society should be at once ‘organic, pluralistic, authoritarian and hierarchical’. Emphasising social duty and function, paternalists believed that each member of society had obligations to the whole, but could also expect to receive something in return.¹⁵ In his work, Broome applied Roberts’ findings to the colonial Australian context, arguing that the notion of paternalism could help to explain the often ambivalent relationships between Aboriginal and settler Australians. These relationships, he argued, were ‘nuanced and complex and defy simple labels of oppression and exploitation, since both parties express some agency’.¹⁶

Drawing on Roberts’ work allowed Broome to point out the continuities between nineteenth-century British domestic and colonial Australian paternalisms, and to draw important parallels between attitudes towards children and the poor in England and Aboriginal people in Australia. However, in applying Roberts’ thesis (which was itself criticised for providing only a one-sided account of paternalism), Broome may well have over-emphasised the extent to which paternalism could operate in an organic, reciprocal manner in a settler colony like Victoria. In this context it is somewhat curious that Broome did not consult

Aboriginal freak show performers and their managers, he describes paternalism as ‘an exploitative power relationship, even within the family on which it is modeled’. ‘Not strictly business: freaks and the Australian showground world’, *Australian Historical Studies* 40(3), 2009: 331.

14 Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*: 128–129. It should be noted that it is the latter part of this point that I consider questionable.

15 David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, Croom Helm, London, 1979.

16 Broome, ‘Not strictly business’: 331.

the body of work on paternalism in colonial settings, that is, discussions of the relationship between paternalism and violence in North American and South African plantation societies.¹⁷ Perhaps the most significant work in this oeuvre is Eugene Genovese's 1974 work *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, which identified paternalism as central to planters' attempts to achieve 'total cultural hegemony' over their slaves.¹⁸ Slavery in North America, Genovese argued, relied 'less on coercion than on paternalism – that is, on alternating acts of kindness and cruelty, on flattery and rebuke, on bribes and deprivations'.¹⁹ Here, violence and paternalism were not separate or conflicting elements of planter behaviour, but rather two sides of the same coin. In this context, the slaves' only hope for resistance lay in responding to paternalism on their own terms, in turning their masters' need for gratitude and loyalty to their own ends. The ability of slaves to assert their own agency was not an integral virtue of the paternalistic system, but rather one possible response to it, something that had to be asserted and enacted again and again.

While the operation of paternalism in the Victorian mission context was unquestionably different from that of North American slave plantations, Genovese's findings regarding paternalism do open up some important lines of questioning, not least that of how different colonial contexts could put different pressures, and limits, on ideas and practices of paternalism. Unlike the domestic British paternalism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which relied on the idea of an affectively bonded and compassionate home, 'sharply differentiated from the public world of work, politics, production and capital',²⁰ paternalism in colonial contexts such as Victorian Aboriginal missions or North American slave plantations blurred boundaries between the private and the public, the personal and the commercial. It was also complicated by ideas about racial, cultural and religious difference, and the specific laws which embedded these ideas in the colonial legislature.

In the Victorian context after 1869, the system of reserves and missions was underwritten by legislation that bluntly organised power relations in ways that represented a significant expansion of paternal authority in this particular

17 See, for example, Eugene Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1972; R Ross, *Cape of Torments: Slavery and Resistance in South Africa*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1983; John Edwin Mason, 'Paternalism under siege: slavery in theory and practice during the era of reform c. 1825 through emancipation', in Nigel Worden and Clifton Crais (eds), *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its Legacy in the Nineteenth-century Cape Colony*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1995; Pamela Scully, *Liberating the Family: Gender and British Slave Emancipation in the Rural Western Cape, South Africa, 1823–1853*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, 1997. Whereas the first three authors consider the paternalism of slaveholders, Scully makes the important point that the emancipation of slavery was also conducted within the framework of paternalism. My thanks to Alan Lester for alerting me to these debates and sources.

18 Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*.

19 David Brion Davis, 'Slavery and the post-World War II historians', *Dædalus* 103(2), Spring 1974: 10.

20 Lester and Dussart, 'Masculinity, "race", and family in the colonies: protecting Aborigines in the early nineteenth century', *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 16(1), 2009: 64.

‘domestic’ space.²¹ Giving the governor power to regulate Aboriginal place of residence, employment, personal earnings, ‘net produce’, the expenditure of governmental grants and ‘the care custody and education of children’,²² the *Aborigines Protection Act 1869* (Vic) created a framework that enabled quite different practices of governance than those encapsulated in the reciprocal notion of paternalism proposed by Roberts and Broome.²³ Thus, despite becoming homes for the Aboriginal people who lived on them, mission stations and reserves were not envisaged, or managed ‘like any home’ by the missionaries and managers who controlled them; they were sites of heightened incarceration, surveillance and manipulation, which was only sometimes softened by the ‘ameliorative’ balm of familial affection.

This is not to say that legislation predetermined the conditions, or the outcomes, of life on Victorian missions and reserves, or the ways in which Aboriginal people viewed these sites.²⁴ Interpersonal connections, and the affective dynamics they both arose out of and created, were demonstrably important influences on the ways in which colonial legislation on the six missions and reserves played out. But given the unprecedented nature of the powers given to mission and reserve managers during this period, the specificities of the Victorian legislative context are important to keep in mind. It is with this awareness that we move to the next section, a brief consideration of the individual missions and reserves.

21 Lester and Dussart, ‘Masculinity, “race”, and family’: 64.

22 The 1869 Act gave the Governor of Victoria the power to ‘make regulations and orders’:

‘For prescribing the place where any aboriginal or any tribe of aborigines shall reside.

‘For prescribing the terms on which contracts for and on behalf of aborigines may be made with Europeans, and upon which certificates may be granted to aborigines who may be able and willing to earn a living by their own exertions.

‘For apportioning amongst aborigines the earnings of aborigines under any contract, or where aborigines are located on a reserve, the net produce of the labor of such aborigines.

‘For the distribution and expenditure of moneys granted by Parliament for the benefit of aborigines.

‘For the care custody and education of the children of aborigines.

‘For prescribing the mode of transacting the business of and the duties generally of the board or any local committee hereinafter mentioned and of the officers appointed hereunder.’

An Act to provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria, 11 November 1869, Victorian Parliament.

23 Roberts’ book was in fact criticised in one review for the fact that it studied paternalism only ‘through the paternalists themselves’ (John Harrison, ‘Paternalism in early Victorian England’, *American Historical Review* 85(2), April 1980: 394–395). While this criticism does not apply to Broome’s work, which gives considerable space to Aboriginal perspectives, his model of paternalism, based as it is on Roberts’, would appear to be more weighted towards how the paternalists believed paternalism functioned than how it was experienced by its ‘beneficiaries’.

24 Jane Lydon and Alan Burns, ‘Memories of the past, visions of the future: changing views of Ebenezer Mission, Victoria, Australia’, *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 14, 2010: 39–55.

The reserve and mission system takes shape

Of the six Aboriginal stations operating in colonial Victoria between 1869 and 1886, three (Ebenezer, Ramahyuck and Lake Tyers) were Church-funded missions, and three (Coranderrk, Framlingham and Lake Condah) government-operated reserves.²⁵ While the mission stations were managed by missionaries whose wages were paid by the Churches or mission societies, government-appointed managers ran the reserves; the sole exception was Lake Condah which, as a partnership between the Board and the Anglican mission, operated under a mix of government and Church funding and control.²⁶ With two sources of income, the Church-run missions in Victoria have been represented as more stable and prosperous than the government stations, although contestations over the comparative efficiency and order of Church- and Board-run stations were often the subject of public debate. Indeed, contemporary accounts of stability and effectiveness were as much a claim on legitimacy as a reflection of actual conditions on the reserves, and accounts by those involved in these contestations need to be read accordingly. It is certainly true that the turnover of managers on Church-run missions was much less frequent, yet despite the apparent relative autonomy and job security of the missionaries, all mission and station managers ultimately came under the Board's control.

Population numbers on the missions and reserves waxed and waned over time, and as shown in Table 1, at different times almost all could have made the claim to have the 'largest' population of Aboriginal residents in the colony, though generally Coranderrk and Lake Tyers had the most residents. The population of Ebenezer was reasonably stable whereas Framlingham and Lake Tyers tended to show the most significant movement (indeed much of this movement may well have been between these two stations). It is important to note, however, that although the missions and reserves housed between 400 and 550 people, many other Aboriginal families were living away from these stations and, while probably under the gaze of colonial administrators, their daily lives were certainly less restricted.²⁷

In 1869, at the time of the *Act for the Protection and Management of the Aborigines*, the Victorian missions and reserves were all established and receiving varying levels of government support. Development at Coranderrk was considered by the Board to be progressing well, with James MacBain, president of the BPA, calling it 'the most prosperous Aboriginal station in Victoria, or perhaps

25 Framlingham had begun as an Anglican mission, but had reverted to direct Board control in 1866.

26 Critchett, 'A history of Framlingham and Lake Condah': 81. Critchett says the managers at Lake Condah were employed by the Church of England, but van Toorn says Stähle's salary was paid by the BPA (p. 17), and Broome classifies Lake Condah as a government reserve and not a mission.

27 See Richard Broome, 'Aboriginal workers on south-eastern frontiers', *Australian Historical Studies* 26(103), October 1994: 202–220.

in Australia', and writing that its results had 'exceeded the most sanguine expectations of those amongst the members of the Board who have had the largest experience of the Aboriginal character'.²⁸ This glowing report contrasted notably with his assessments of the Moravian and Anglican missions at Ebenezer (Lake Hindmarsh), Ramahyuck (Lake Wellington), Lake Tyers and Lake Condah, where he observed deaths were rife and intoxication and the securing of liquor were a constant concern.²⁹

Coranderrk was unique among the Aboriginal reserves and missions operating in Victoria between 1869 and 1886 in that no Church or mission society was involved in its foundation. The result of years of campaigning by Wurundjeri, Taungurong and Bunwarrung peoples and their white supporters, the station was finally established at the junction of Badger Creek and the Yarra River in March 1863, on traditional lands of the Wurundjeri. John Green, a long-time friend of local Aboriginal people, and exponent of their interests, was chosen by the residents as its manager.³⁰ Aboriginal people had clearly identified that emerging ideas about colonial governance could also provide them with space to make claims upon the colonial state as Aboriginal subjects. Green remained the manager at Coranderrk until 1874, when, after a falling out with Board Secretary Robert Brough Smyth, he gave an informal resignation.³¹ He was succeeded by Heinrich Stähle, a Moravian missionary who had been sent to Ebenezer in 1872 but had left in 1874 after the death of his wife. Stähle is an important (if controversial) figure in the history of the Victorian missions, as he worked across several missions. First based at Ebenezer, then Coranderrk and later Lake Condah, Stähle had significant experience and influence. Throughout his time as manager of Coranderrk, Stähle supported the Kulin peoples' wishes to have Green reinstated. Partly because of this, he was in turn replaced in 1875 by Christian Ogilvie, a local settler chosen by the Board members who remained openly hostile to Green.³²

Of the six missions and reserves under discussion in this chapter, Ebenezer Mission, located on Lake Hindmarsh in the Wimmera region, was the first to

28 *Sixth Report of the Central Board appointed to watch over the interests of the Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria*, John Ferres, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1869: 4 (henceforth, Sixth CBPA Annual Report (1869)).

29 Sixth CBPA Annual Report (1869): 6–8.

30 Jane Lydon, 'Charles Walter's images of Coranderrk', *Aboriginal History* 26, 2002: 79. Green had first come into contact with the local Aboriginal people in around 1860, when he would ride over from the goldfields, where he was a Presbyterian lay preacher, to hold services for the young Woiwurrung couples camped at Yering. In 1861, Green's wife Mary began a school for the Woiwurrung children at Yering, and in August of the same year Green was appointed temporarily as General Inspector for the newly formed Central Board Appointed to Watch Over the Interests of the Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria (the CBA). Heavily involved in the negotiations that finally led to land being gazetted for the reserve, Green was then appointed as Superintendent of Coranderrk at its foundation. Diane Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 55.

31 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 102.

32 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 113.

be founded. Established on the traditional lands of the Wotjobaluk in 1859 by two Moravian missionaries, Friedrich Wilhelm Spieseke and Friedrich August Hagenauer, the mission was intended, at least in part, to make up for the failure of the first Moravian mission in Victoria, which had been located at Lake Boga.³³ In the Moravian model, missions were 'ideally self-sufficient, hierarchically ordered communities of the converted, living lives of discipline and dedication, obedient to the missionary mentors and the rules and regulations they imposed', and Spieseke and Hagenauer attempted to run the mission along these lines.³⁴ However, the relationship between Hagenauer and Spieseke was strained,³⁵ and when in 1862 the Presbyterian Church joined forces with the Moravian Church to establish a new mission, Ramahyuck, in Gippsland, Hagenauer was chosen as its superintendent.³⁶

Located on the Avon River at Lake Wellington outside Sale, Ramahyuck was built on the traditional lands of the Brayakuloong people of the Gunai Kurnai nation. At Ramahyuck, Hagenauer's ascent continued. The Moravians from the outset had an ambivalent relationship with the colonial state, however, they came to rely on it for support in their missionary endeavours. This tendency is epitomised in the person of Hagenauer, who throughout his colonial career built alliances not only across denominations, but also across the sacred-secular divide. By the 1870s, according to historian Felicity Jenz, Ramahyuck 'outshone Ebenezer as the role model for all other mission stations within the Colony of Victoria', with 'many converts and markers of European civilization'.³⁷ Having been given the 'full status of a minister' of the Presbyterian Church in 1869, Hagenauer was further honoured in 1871 by being made superintendent of Lake Tyers. Finally, in 1889 he completed his rise to the apex of colonial politics by being promoted to the position of acting secretary and general inspector of the Victorian BPA in 1889. These developments in Hagenauer's political career, combined with his continuing allegiance to the Moravian Church, had implications for the way Hagenauer ran Ramahyuck, and exerted his influence at Lake Tyers. However, Hagenauer was not alone amongst colonial missionaries in perceiving the necessity of cooperating with colonial authorities. All the missionaries discussed here relied at least to some extent on external regulations to enforce the legal code on Aboriginal peoples living on their missions.³⁸

The fourth Aboriginal station in operation in colonial Victoria during this period was Lake Tyers. Founded by the Anglican Church in 1861, the mission

33 Felicity Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 113.

34 Timothy Keegan (ed.), *Moravians in the Eastern Cape, 1828–1928: Four Accounts of Moravian Mission Work on the Eastern Cape Frontier*, Paarl Print, Paarl, 2004, cited in Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 155.

35 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 146.

36 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 150.

37 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 154.

38 For example, Felicity Jenz cites the case of the Ebenezer missionary Kramer, who in 1877 requested that a copy of the 1869 Act be made available to the local Dimboola police station. See *Influential Strangers*: 195.

was located in eastern Gippsland on a picturesque site separated by 2 kilometres of water from Lakes Entrance, and was built on the traditional lands of the Krowathunkooloong clan of the Gunai Kurnai nation. Despite starting out with lower numbers than the Moravian missions, by 1886 Lake Tyers had grown to be the largest. John Bulmer, the mission manager from its establishment until his death in 1913, came from a Methodist background and has been characterised by historian Peter Carolane as ‘a hard worker with a quiet temperament and a strong humanitarian and Evangelical dedication’. Carolane claims that Bulmer’s almost uniquely uncontroversial status amongst the missionaries of colonial Victoria was due to his ‘ability to work around social, political and ecclesiastical changes’, which was also ‘the reason he was able to last so long as a missionary’.³⁹

Framlingham Aboriginal Station, located on the traditional lands of the Girai wurrung, was first gazetted as a reserve in 1861; however, by 1865 virtually no infrastructure had been developed to support an Aboriginal station. Consequently the BPA agreed to the Church of England Mission establishing a station and allowed a grant of stores and supplies to facilitate this. This too failed and within a year the administration of Framlingham was again in the hands of the BPA after apparent poor attendance from Aboriginal people. Only a year later the BPA decided the station was to be closed and the residents were to relocate to Lake Tyers. The Framlingham residents resisted the closure and only a few were relocated to Lake Tyers, some of whom soon returned to Framlingham. The Framlingham mission officially reopened in 1869 with William Goodall in place as manager. Determined to give the residents more autonomy and freedom Goodall allowed them to play in the local football league and to take absences from the mission to travel. Framlingham, more than any other of the Victorian missions or reserves, had always existed under the threat of closure by the BPA, and its survival owed more to the persistence of its Aboriginal residents than it did to any official desire to keep it running.⁴⁰

Of the missions and reserves under discussion here, Lake Condah – located on the traditional lands of the Gunditjmara – was the last to be founded. Although frequently described as a government reserve, Lake Condah Mission was staffed by the Church of England Mission Committee, and the salaries of its station managers paid by them.⁴¹ This power-sharing arrangement between the Mission

39 Peter Carolane, ‘Parallel fantasies: tourism and Aboriginal mission at Lake Tyers in the late nineteenth century’, in Amanda Barry, Joanna Cruickshank, Andrew Brown-May and Patricia Grimshaw (eds), *Evangelists of Empire?: Missionaries in Colonial History*, eScholarship Research Centre in collaboration with the School of Historical Studies, Melbourne, 2008: 162.

40 Mary Tomsic, ‘Disparate voices: Framlingham as a site of resistance’, in Julie Evans and Tracey Banivanua-Mar (eds), *Writing Colonial Histories: Comparative Perspectives*, RMIT Publishing, Melbourne, 2002: 39–55.

41 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 92; Critchett, ‘A history of Framlingham and Lake Condah’: 60. There is some confusion in the literature as to Lake Condah’s precise status as a mission or a government reserve. Jan Critchett characterises it a ‘Mission station’ which was favoured over the ‘Board station’ Framlingham (p. 81). Richard Broome calls it a government reserve and does not mention that managers’ wages were paid

Committee and the Board was not always conducive to a stable management regime. The mission was established jointly by the Mission Committee and the BPA in 1867, and in its first few years was managed by a succession of Church of England missionaries – Job Francis (1867–1868), Joseph Shaw (1868–1873) and Amos Brazier (1873–1875), before the ex-Moravian minister Heinrich Stähle (formerly of Coranderrk) took over.⁴² Stähle, whose approach to mission management has been described by several historians as ‘authoritarian’,⁴³ managed the station until its closure in 1913.

Space and time on the mission

On all of these missions and stations, the lives of Aboriginal people were controlled and constructed in particular by the regulation of space and time. Bain Attwood has shown in his study of Ramahyuck how carefully laid-out spatial plans ensured buildings and dwellings were linear in configuration and highly structured. Time was moderated by systems of bells and the day was carved into segments for work, prayer, schooling, sleep and so on.⁴⁴ These practices, however, varied amongst mission reserves and managers. John Green, for example, chose to live among the Aboriginal people on Coranderrk suggesting an attempt to flatten out the relationship between manager and residents – however, the Board insisted he move into the dormitory buildings.⁴⁵

by the Church (Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*: 126). See also Jan Critchett, *Untold Stories: Memories and Lives of Victorian Kooris*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1998, and Robert Lowe, *The Mish*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 2002. Penny van Toorn even claims that wages on Condah were paid by the BPA (van Toorn, ‘Hegemony or hidden transcripts? Aboriginal writings from Lake Condah, 1876–1907’, *Journal of Australian Studies* 86, 2006: 17; van Toorn, *Writing Never Appears Naked: Early Aboriginal Cultures of Writing in Australia*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2006: 155), yet the accounts of the Victorian BPA do not contain any record of his salary being paid, although they do record the Board’s support of a matron on the station from 1883 onwards (see the *Seventh Report of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria*, John Ferres, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1871, Appendix VI: 25, etc [henceforth, BPA Annual Report]). Contemporary newspaper reports also corroborate the fact that the Anglican Church considered Lake Condah to be one of ‘their’ missions (‘Church of England Mission to the Aborigines’, *The Argus*, 24 July 1869: 6). This said, BPA funding for Lake Condah was certainly more extensive than that provided by the Church. In 1869, for example, the Church of England Mission Committee spent 151 pounds 13s 4d on the mission, whereas the BPA spent £529 5s 8d during the same period (Seventh BPA Annual Report (1871), 25). In 1870, the Mission Committee spent £210 11s 10d on Lake Condah; the BPA spend £382 0s 7d (‘Mission to the Aborigines’, *The Argus*, 30 May 1871: 7; Eighth BPA Annual Report (1872): 26). It should be noted, however, that the amounts spent by the BPA on Lake Condah were generally less than those spent on Coranderrk and Framlingham, the two exclusively government-funded reserves during this period.

42 For a discussion of disputes between the BPA and the Anglican Church Mission Committee over the management style of Joseph Shaw, see Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 93.

43 Robert Kenny, ‘Stähle, Johann Heinrich (1840–1915)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, The Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/stahle-johann-heinrich-13204/text23905>, accessed 14 December 2012; Critchett, *Our Land Till We Die*: 25.

44 Bain Attwood, ‘Space and time at Ramahyuck, Victoria, 1863–85’, in Peter Read (ed.), *Settlement: A History of Australian Indigenous Housing*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2000: 52.

45 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 118.

In this sense, the regulation of the residents' daily activities as well as the spatial layout of the reserves was part of both the colonising process and its idiosyncratic local expressions. Contestations over space amplified tensions both between Aboriginal people and their managers, and between settlers themselves. Giordano Nanni has observed that the control of Aboriginal people was paramount to the government and missionaries alike. He notes, however, that ironically 'this vision of order and regularity that was viewed with satisfaction' was understood as the success of colonial management 'rather than the productivity of Indigenous labour itself'.⁴⁶

Space and time were not the only aspects of Aboriginal lives that were carefully regulated. By restricting access to resources, missionaries and reserve managers exerted control over the lives of Aboriginal people. Even before the 1869 Act, the distribution of food, clothing and other resources was closely rationed.⁴⁷ As noted before, many Aboriginal people did not live on the reserves and missions, and the practice of distributing rations to Aboriginal people through the system of local guardians that had emerged during the reserve system's infancy continued throughout the 1860s and 1870s. However, at least some of the mission and reserve managers saw an opportunity here to consolidate their position as the primary mediators of government benevolence. In 1868, John Green suggested to the Board that rations no longer be issued through local correspondents but be available only through the six stations it administered. This would force or at least encourage Aboriginal people to relocate to the stations where they could be controlled. He wrote: 'They would all very soon make to one or another of the stations, when they found that they could not get supplies elsewhere.'⁴⁸ With the 1869 Act, Green's vision became a reality, and as missionaries and reserve managers gained control over government resources, including food depots, it became increasingly difficult for Aboriginal people to survive away from missions and reserves.⁴⁹ This incident is an interesting example of how even 'humanitarian' reserve managers like Green, often characterised as the 'only friend' of the Kulin people, used and even pre-empted the legislative rulings necessary to pursue their own goals.

The 1869 Act gave the BPA control over where Aboriginal people should reside, and by extension their freedom of movement. Yet the extent to which missionaries and reserve managers applied these powers varied from station to station. Indeed, according to Diane Barwick: 'The power to prescribe an individual's residence by Order-in-Council was not used until 1872, and

46 Giordano Nanni, 'Time, empire and resistance in colonial Victoria', *Time and Society* 20(1), 2011: 14.

47 See, for example, Seventh BPA Annual Report (1871), Appendix 1: 5 (Lake Condah); Seventh BPA Annual Report (1871), Appendix 2: 9 (Coranderrk); Ninth BPA Annual Report (1873): 5 (Lake Hindmarsh).

48 Marguerita Stephens, 'White Without Soap: Philanthropy, Caste and Exclusion in *Colonial Victoria 1835–1888: A Political Economy of Race*', unpublished Phd thesis, University of Melbourne, 2003: 194.

49 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 2.

then primarily to force Europeans to release children and young girls, but occasionally to control men who resisted station discipline.⁵⁰ Of the 25 orders made from 1875 to 1883, for example, nine were used to restrain adults from leaving their stations, and most of the rest were used to force Europeans to give up Aboriginal children and women 'living in unsavoury circumstances'.⁵¹ At Lake Condah Stähle strictly controlled movement on and off the station, a policy which brought him into conflict with Goodall, the manager of nearby Framlingham. Stähle sought back up from the Board to force inmates to remain on the mission. Goodall, however, was not opposed to the residents coming and going as they pleased. Jan Critchett writes that the policy of segregation was not as rigidly enforced as contemporary reports implied, especially in the case of Goodall at Framlingham, who 'believed there was no point in keeping Aboriginal people against their will'.⁵²

Economic and spiritual life

After the 1869 Act, the Board's (and subsequently the reserve and mission managers') responsibility for distributing governmental expenditure on Aboriginal people, including food rations, was legislatively codified. The ways in which rations were handed out varied amongst the missions and stations, but the quantity and quality of food received seems to have been an almost constant source of contention for Aboriginal people. On some missions, such as Ramahyuck and later Lake Tyers, communal resources were monitored through the positioning of storehouses close to the mission house, so that missionaries could keep a close watch on food supplies.⁵³

So too, the Act stipulated that the wages of individual Aboriginal people should be shared amongst the larger group. This was controversial, not only amongst Aboriginal people but also amongst many of the missionaries and reserve managers. Hagenauer, for example, 'took particular objection to this Section of the Act, as he, like many other nineteenth-century missionaries, believed in the "dignity of labour"' – that is, the principle that an individual should receive individual remuneration for his or her work.⁵⁴ However, despite Hagenauer's objections, the Act ensured that the control of Aboriginal bodies was effected by the regulation of their labour. In essence they were not 'free', as Coranderrk superintendent Hugh Halliday demonstrated in 1876 when he expelled one young resident as a disciplinary measure and 'licensed [him] out ... with a view

50 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 89.

51 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 90, fn 12.

52 Critchett, 'A history of Framlingham and Lake Condah': 69–74.

53 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 12.

54 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 193.

to forming associations for him with the white population'.⁵⁵ The 'freedom' to contract with settlers, whilst seemingly prohibited by the Act, could also function as a disciplinary measure itself.⁵⁶

Labour and its economic benefits became an even more important element of the disciplinary regime of the BPA after 1871; the 1871 *Regulations and Orders made under the Act* gave the BPA (and through them the mission and reserve managers) the authority to regulate which Aboriginal people were permitted to undertake private employment. Without a valid work certificate, Indigenous workers could be fined or imprisoned.⁵⁷ Lake Condah, where in the 1880s Indigenous residents were refused work certificates and were therefore unable to work for private authorities off the reserve, is a good example of the power mission managers wielded in these circumstances. Freedom and restraint on labour were, for Aboriginal people, domains already codified by the BPA and the decision about which domain they operated in was made by managers and missionaries.⁵⁸

Missionaries and reserve managers also attempted to transform Aboriginal people through the regulation and control of their spiritual lives. By restricting traditional spiritual practices and instead encouraging the shared experience of Christianity, they hoped to instigate a wholesale change in Aboriginal peoples' spiritual, emotional and behavioural worlds. This was much more focused on the Church-run missions, though it varied across the colony and through time. On the government-controlled reserves the focus was less on conversion and more on education and acculturation. Nonetheless, it is evident that the limits placed on mission residents' traditional spiritual practices, and their long-term exposure to Christian ideas, was a key way that missionaries and reserve managers attempted to (and indeed did) transform the lives of Aboriginal people.

Diane Barwick writes that, after John Green's departure, the Kulin families of Coranderrk (all of whom had lost one or more family member) missed not only Green's medical care, but also 'the familiar Presbyterian rituals with which he had comforted the sick and mourners'.⁵⁹ Even grief and succour could function as a mechanism to draw Aboriginal people into the influence of missionaries – here, perhaps most clearly, unfolded the battle for the habits of 'heart and mind' that Stoler describes.⁶⁰

55 BPA Minutes, 25 April 1876, 3 May 1876, quoted in Stephens, 'White Without Soap': 208.

56 On the production of liberal subjects in this regard, see Boucher, in this collection.

57 *Aborigines Protection Act 1869*: 112–113, cited in Andrew Gunstone, 'Indigenous peoples and stolen wages in Victoria, 1869–1957', in Natasha Fijn, Ian Keen, Christopher Lloyd and Michael Pickering (eds), *Indigenous Participation in Australian Economies II*, ANU E Press, Canberra, 2011.

58 Jan Critchett, *Untold Stories: Memories and Lives of Victorian Kooris*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1998: 151–152.

59 Barwick, *Rebellion at Coranderrk*: 116.

60 Stoler, *Haunted by Empire*: 2.

For Moravian missionaries Hagenauer and Spieseke, internal spiritual transformation was more important than external transformation, although emphasis was certainly also placed on the latter.⁶¹ In 1865, 750 religious services were held on Ramahyuck – approximately two per day and 300 more than had been held on Ebenezer in 1870.⁶² While there were many who resisted the unrelenting schedule of church services and prayer meetings, for some Aboriginal residents the community experienced in religious services provided a common experience that bound missionaries and Aboriginal people together.⁶³

At Lake Condah, the mission manager Reverend Stähle heavily emphasised religious instruction, with prayers conducted every morning and evening and divine service on Sunday. Sunday school was provided for the children. Similarly, Bulmer at Lake Tyers placed much importance on regular church gatherings, the application of the Christian message to both Aboriginal men and women,⁶⁴ the distribution of church responsibility amongst the congregation (including its Aboriginal members), and encouraged a nineteenth-century Christian European model of marriage. At Framlingham, although William Goodall was himself a Christian, he did not emphasise religious practice during his years as manager there, and only Sunday service and one weekday prayer meeting were offered.⁶⁵ However, for a brief period while Reverend Thwaites was the manager (between July 1882 and August 1885), religion played a more important role.⁶⁶

Sexuality, family and children

Regulating the sexual and intimate life of the residents was another preoccupation of the managers of colonial Victorian Aboriginal missions and reserves. Segregation of unmarried men and women was common. At Ramahyuck, the architecture of the Aboriginal cottages relegated sexual relations to the bedroom, and the separation of children in the boarding house was justified on the assumption that ‘a married couple could not live with their children in

61 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 179.

62 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 173.

63 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 16.

64 Carolane, ‘Reading colonial mission photographs: viewing John Bulmer’s photographs of nineteenth century mission life at Lake Tyers Aboriginal Mission Station through an Evangelical lens’, in Penelope Edmonds and Samuel Furphy (eds), *Rethinking Colonial Histories: New and Alternative Approaches*, RMIT Publishing, Melbourne, 2006: 116.

65 Critchett, *Our Land Till We Die*: 27.

66 Critchett, *Our Land Till We Die*: 27.

“a right and comfortable way”⁶⁷. In stark contrast to traditional sexual and marriage practices, missionaries often sought to create a ‘sense of guilt’ about sexual morality, especially in Aboriginal women.⁶⁸

On Coranderrk, the sexuality of teenage girls was a subject of particular concern, as is demonstrated by testimony given by the schoolteacher, Mr Deans, to the 1877 Royal Commission:

The girls are very strictly watched by the matron Mrs. Halliday ... When she is away I think the place is locked up. They are secure, as there is no way of their getting out, except the few who are at work doing their various domestic work. Mr. Halliday has one key and I have the other.⁶⁹

Another means of controlling the intimate and sexual life of the residents was to ensure that Aboriginal people were dressed in western clothes. On Ramahyuck, as on the other Victorian missions and reserves, clothes were ‘held to be integral to the civilizing process’, and residents’ appearances were closely monitored.⁷⁰ In addition, bathing, spitting, urination and defecation were all objects of control, with the provision of toilets identified as a ‘civilising agent’ by the BPA in the 1870s.⁷¹

It was not only the sexual behaviour of the Aboriginal women that concerned station managers. As Liz Reed noted, in the early 1860s at Coranderrk, a local ‘white girl’ Selina Johnson and an Aboriginal man known only as ‘Davy’, had conducted a secret love affair for over eighteen months resulting in the birth of their child. Tragically, the child died just two weeks after his birth in August 1861. Selina and Davy expressed the desire to be permitted to marry, which was rejected by her family and subsequently became the subject of concern for the Board.⁷² There is ample evidence that other residents, too, resisted these attempts to control their intimate lives and clandestine sexual relations were not uncommon. As Richard Broome has argued, the reserve system ‘which aimed to order and control’ every aspect of Aboriginal lives was only ever partially

67 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 21.

68 On missionaries and guilt, see Jessie Mitchell, ‘Corrupt desires and the wages of sin: Indigenous people, missionaries and male sexuality, 1830–1850’, in Ingereth Macfarlane and Mark Hannah (eds), *Transgressions: Critical Australian Indigenous Histories*, Aboriginal History Inc. and ANU E Press, Canberra, 2005: 238.

69 Victoria, Royal Commission on the Aborigines (1877), ‘Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Present Condition of the Aborigines of this colony, and to Advise as to the Best Means of Caring for, and Dealing with Them, in the Future, Together with Minutes of Evidence and Appendices’, *Papers Presented to Both House of Parliament, Victoria, Session 1877–78, Vol III, Minutes of Evidence*: 91.

70 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 20.

71 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 21.

72 Liz Reed, ‘White girl gone bush with the blacks’, *Hecate* 28(1), 2002: 9–22.

realised.⁷³ Yet, the lengths to which Aboriginal people had to go in order to gain even a modicum of emotional and sexual autonomy suggest how far-reaching its effects and affects could be.

While the adult residents' sexual and intimate lives were the subject of scrutiny, for children the focus was on education and discipline. At Ramahyuck, Coranderrk and later Lake Tyers, the boarding houses that confined the children were kept fenced off from the rest of the mission, and visiting parents required the permission of the missionaries, who 'fought strenuously' over their control.⁷⁴ At Coranderrk, children were 'subjected to a program of continuous discipline and training' and were kept 'under close observation all day'.⁷⁵

The Moravian missionaries at Ramahyuck were proud of their education standards. In 1872, the pupils' examination results (100 per cent) were celebrated as the best in the colony, and this high standard continued throughout the 1870s.⁷⁶ While the Ramahyuck school's outstanding results were 'a source of pride within religious circles',⁷⁷ the BPA interpreted it, and similarly impressive results at Lake Tyers and Lake Condah, as a result of these schools 'being under the inspection of the Education Department', and expressed its 'wish to carry out this system wherever possible'.⁷⁸ Once more, the ostensibly disparate actions of the missionaries could be smoothly subsumed into a narrative of legislative and bureaucratic success.

In the Moravian-run boarding schools at Ramahyuck and Ebenezer, Aboriginal children were provided with 'an alternative reality' to the traditional lifestyles that shaped many of their parents' childhoods.⁷⁹ As Felicity Jenz has observed, 'the missionaries actively tried to provide what they saw as the necessities for raising children in a Christian way, much like the choir systems at Herrnhut, yet without regard for Indigenous customs.' While 'sensitive to the parents' wishes', they believed in the superiority of their institutions and actively encouraged parents to place their children in the boarding house.⁸⁰

In 1871, the first school was built at Lake Condah Mission and a teacher appointed. Framlingham, on the other hand, did not gain a teacher until 1878.⁸¹

73 Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*: 130.

74 See, for example, Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*, 18; Stephens, 'White Without Soap': 191.

75 Stephens, 'White Without Soap': 191. The quote is from *The Argus*, 9 September 1876: 9.

76 Amanda Barry, "'A matter of primary importance': Comparing the colonial education of Indigenous children", in Penelope Edmonds and Samuel Furphy (eds), *Rethinking Colonial Histories*, University of Melbourne History Department, Melbourne, 2006: 173.

77 Jenz, "'In future, only female teachers": staffing the Ramahyuck Mission school in the nineteenth century', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria* 11, 2012.

78 Twelfth BPA Annual Report (1876): 4.

79 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 177.

80 Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 178.

81 Critchett, *Our Land Till We Die*: 27.

Furthermore, in at least one case colonial legislation on education was used by mission managers not just to exert control over Aboriginal people, but also over the teachers who taught in their schools. In a recent article, Felicity Jenz has built on Amanda Barry's work to show that Hagenauer

wished the Ramahyuck school to be brought under the control of the Department of Education to ensure regular inspections and also to ensure that teachers would 'look out to do [their] duty'.⁸²

Children's lives were now strictly controlled and the special provisions in the 1869 Act gave the Board pervasive new powers over them. At Coranderrk, Richard Broome writes that the child removal policy was 'practised fairly benignly by Green'.⁸³ In contrast Marguerita Stephens' study of Coranderrk, 'White Without Soap', argues that:

While John Green publicly denied that force was used when collecting children for the asylum, Board records, including his own reports, indicate that pressures of various sorts, from bribery, to the withholding of rations, to direct police intervention, were regularly employed to persuade Aborigines to relinquish their children.⁸⁴

Stephens details many instances of Green coercing people to stay on the stations, especially young women and girls. By 1875, Green had, according to Stephens' reckoning, 'relocated some 80 Aboriginal children to the Board's stations, in addition to those who relocated with their families'.⁸⁵ It is important to note, however, that Stephens, like Broome, also acknowledges that some Aboriginal people actively sought education for their children and approached Green themselves.⁸⁶

Disciplinary practices

When the effectiveness and affectiveness of interventions in the spatial, temporal, economic, intimate and family lives of Aboriginal residents were undermined, missionaries and station managers used a variety of disciplinary tactics. Whilst the paternalism that Broome and others have described certainly created some possibilities for Aboriginal people to exert influence over their everyday lives,

82 Jenz, 'In future, only female teachers'. The quote is from Hagenauer, examined 23 May 1877, Royal Commission on the Aborigines, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers 1877*, Minutes of Evidence: 36, quoted in Amanda Barry, 'Broken Promises: Aboriginal Education in South-Eastern Australia, 1837–1937', unpublished PhD thesis, School of Historical Studies, University of Melbourne, 2008: 111.

83 Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*: 134.

84 Stephens, 'White Without Soap': 183–184.

85 Stephens, 'White Without Soap': 201.

86 Stephens, 'White Without Soap': 194.

the blunt instruments of coercion and discipline haunted the peripheries of this apparently humanitarian system. Whilst Broome has characterised the contestations between missionaries, reserve managers and Aboriginal peoples as negotiations,⁸⁷ incarceration and physical punishment could be wielded by missionary managers to sway these engagements. Legislative authority could be employed for profound disciplinary effect, and part of the power in this threat lay in its apparently inconsistent deployment.⁸⁸ At Ramahyuck, Hagenauer believed in the 'reformatory capacity of carceration'.⁸⁹ So too at Ebenezer and later Lake Condah Stähle was a strict disciplinarian. As early as 1876, at Lake Condah a resident charged him with assault; after the charge was dismissed Stähle then sought more authorised power to discipline his charges.⁹⁰ The history of violence at Lake Condah, however, predated Stähle; in 1871, several Aboriginal residents there had made complaints about his predecessor Mr Shaw, that he 'had shot their fowls, and that he had whipped one of them with his riding whip'.⁹¹ Acknowledging both these actions, Shaw responded that he had struck the man with his whip because he had refused to do the work set out for him, and gave 'some insolence' on being challenged about this matter. John Green, who visited the mission in his capacity as Inspector for the Board, wrote in the Annual Report that he had managed to convince the Aboriginal people involved to forgive Shaw 'for all past things', and to 'go on the same as though nothing had happened'; for Green, it seems, the 'satisfactory' progress that Shaw was making in other aspects of mission management was enough for him to overlook this relatively minor problem.⁹²

For the most part, missionaries aspired to manage Aboriginal people through their own personal authority, and not through the hard power of legislation. Nonetheless, as Bain Attwood observes, 'physical coercion, legal action and government regulation were the ultimate sources of their authority'.⁹³ In contrast to Attwood's contention that it was 'the less powerful missionary managers' that most often 'turned to these temporal sanctions', the material examined in this paper (as well as Attwood's own analysis of Hagenauer's involvement in the framing of the 1886 Act, and his high level of involvement in colonial politics) suggests that the more personally powerful missionaries also appreciated the need for legislative and political support, and that those who refused to engage in politicking were less likely to meet with success.⁹⁴

87 Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*: 128–129.

88 In a subtle, but nonetheless significant difference in terminology, Attwood characterised these engagements as 'battles'. Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 34.

89 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 8.

90 Kenny, 'Johann Heinrich Stähle'.

91 Seventh BPA Annual Report (1871), Appendix 1: 6.

92 Seventh BPA Annual Report (1871), Appendix 1: 6.

93 Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*: 28.

94 See, for example, Jenz's discussion of Spieseke's failure to engage with colonial politics. Jenz, *Influential Strangers*: 195.

Conclusion

Confinement, discipline and intimate intervention meant that time and time again it was made clear to Aboriginal people in colonial Victoria that missions and reserves were not their ‘homes’. They had no guaranteed rights of residence, limited freedom of movement both on and off the missions, and faced a range of measures designed to coercively control and regulate their lives. If British notions of paternalism sustained the authority of the head of the household to determine the ‘best interests’ of those who lived within it, then this right of rule took on remarkable regulatory consequences in the reserve system without the tempering influences of familial obligation. In the words of Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, although ‘[a] man’s conduct towards all of his dependants was to be respectful and kind, as well as authoritative and instructive ... the reality of conforming to this specific mandate for masculinity was ambivalently pressured in ways that became acute in certain contexts, such as on the colonial frontier’.⁹⁵

The paternalism that prevailed on missions and reserves was thus a specific mobilisation of some of the elements of paternal power in service of certain articulations of settler colonialism: the power to control movement operationalised to segregate, concentrate, and create assimilable populations/peoples; the regulation of sexuality operationalised to assimilate both socially and biologically; the power to manage household finances operationalised to limit Aboriginal people’s financial independence and social mobility. The male missionary’s position as father of the mission residents was both an effect of, and produced, settler colonialism in Victoria ‘between the Acts’. And this was the case because the domestic everyday was a location of government, a location that should be thought of as different to that of police and formal judicial regulation, but not as fundamentally distinct. Violence and paternalism were, as Eugene Genovese has observed for the context of North American slave plantations, two sides of the same coin.

After 1869, as Boucher has noted elsewhere, the limitations on Aboriginal rights seemed to turn Aboriginal subjects into the Board’s legal children; for these ‘children’, however, there would be no passage into the civil or personal rights of adulthood. Instead these were endlessly deferred, with missionaries and station managers standing in as both paternal protectors from, and arbiters of, settler colonial governmental power. In this context, the ‘homes’ that provided one of the few spaces for communities to remake their lives only offered the emotional nourishments of family and community because Aboriginal people struggled hard to forge them.

95 Lester and Dussart, ‘Masculinity, “race”, and family’: 64.

Table 1: Numbers of Aboriginal residents at the six missions and reserves, 1868–1886.

Mission	1868⁹⁶	1871⁹⁷	1872	1876⁹⁸	1877⁹⁹	1878¹⁰⁰	1879¹⁰¹
<i>Coranderrk</i>	76	107	111–128 ¹⁰²	137	145	148	113
<i>Ebenezer</i>	57–95 ¹⁰³	80	100+ ¹⁰⁴	67	65	70	91
<i>Lake Tyers</i>	23	87	60 ¹⁰⁵	63	63	88	88
<i>Ramahyuck</i>	69	74	76 ¹⁰⁶	81	86	87	83
<i>Lake Condah</i>	80	81	70 ¹⁰⁷	89	85	83	81
<i>Framlingham</i>	N/A ¹⁰⁸	63	58 ¹⁰⁹	63	59	70	67

Mission (cont)	1880¹¹⁰	1881¹¹¹	1882	1883¹¹²	1885¹¹³	1886¹¹⁴
<i>Coranderrk</i>	105	93	101	112	107	98
<i>Ebenezer</i>	78	81	85	76	78	73
<i>Lake Tyers</i>	90	112	112	112	110	101
<i>Ramahyuck</i>	81	76	80	83	83	83
<i>Lake Condah</i>	92	100	105	89	112	110
<i>Framlingham</i>	75	75	83	96	104	91

96 Sixth CBPA Annual Report (1869).

97 Seventh BPA Annual Report (1871), 3.

98 Twelfth BPA Annual Report (1876): 3.

99 Thirteenth BPA Annual Report (1877): 3.

100 Fourteenth BPA Annual Report (1878): 3.

101 Fifteenth BPA Annual Report (1879): 3.

102 The higher number comes from Dr J Gibson's report from 30 March 1872; the lower is the daily average as estimated by the manager John Green. Eighth BPA Annual Report (1872), Appendix IV: 12; Appendix VIII: 17.

103 Bill Edwards, 'Ebenezer through Ernabella Eyes': 13. Edwards does not specify where his numbers come from.

104 Bill Edwards, 'Ebenezer through Ernabella Eyes': 13.

105 Numbers taken from Dr James Jamieson's report from 8 May 1872 in the Eighth BPA Annual Report (1872), Appendix V: 14–15.

106 Average of daily attendance at Ramahyuck between January–December 1871, Eighth BPA Annual Report (1872), Appendix VIII: 19.

107 Average of daily attendance at Lake Condah between January–December 1871, Eighth BPA Annual Report (1872), Appendix VIII: 20.

108 As the status of Framlingham was uncertain in 1867–68, it was not included in the 1868 Sixth CBPA Annual Report (1869).

109 Average of daily attendance at Framlingham between January–December 1871, Eighth BPA Annual Report (1872), Appendix VIII: 22.

110 Sixteenth BPA Annual Report (1880): 3.

111 Seventeenth BPA Annual Report (1881): 3.

112 Nineteenth BPA Annual Report (1884): 3.

113 Twenty-first BPA Annual Report (1885): 3.

114 Twenty Second BPA Annual Report (1886): 3.

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