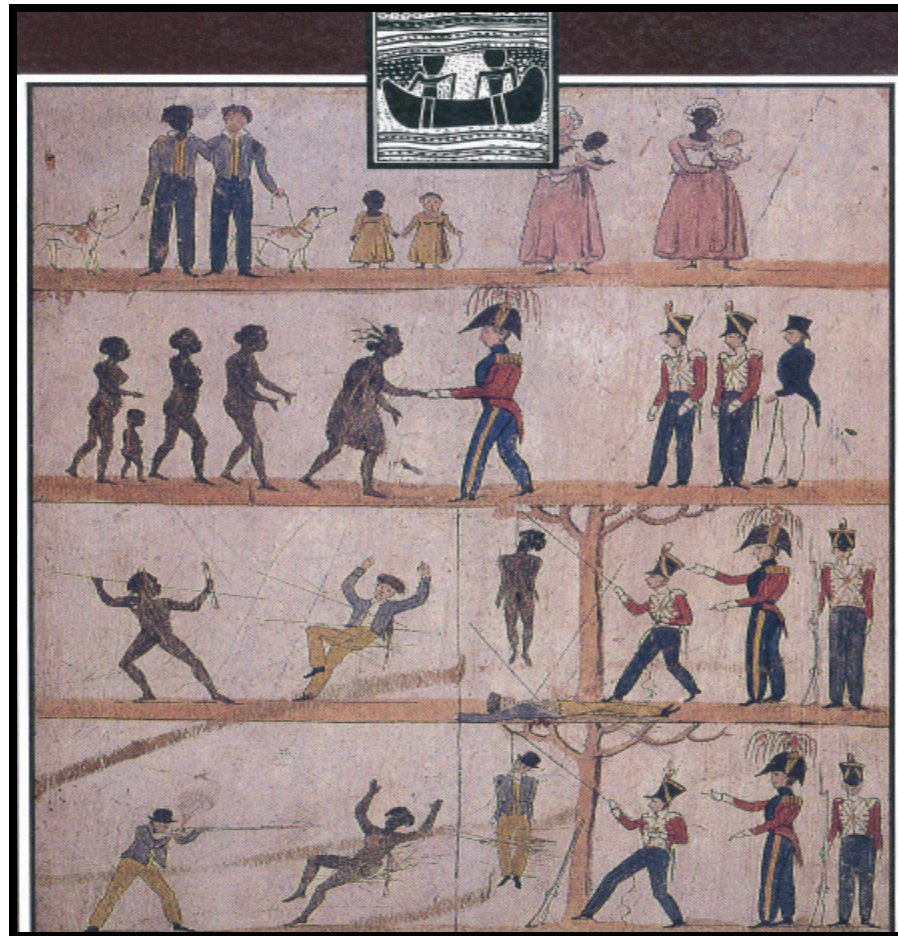


Colonisation Segregation & Control: Aboriginal Reserves in Victoria



Discussion Format:

- ⌘ **Interrogate the mindset of colonisation & its effect on Koori society in Victoria.**
- ⌘ **Examine the means by which colonial policy justified the taking of Indigenous lands & the segregation & control of Indigenous people on reserves**
- ⌘ **Highlight the background of colonial policy as a basis for understanding the ongoing Indigenous struggle for rights - land& heritage**

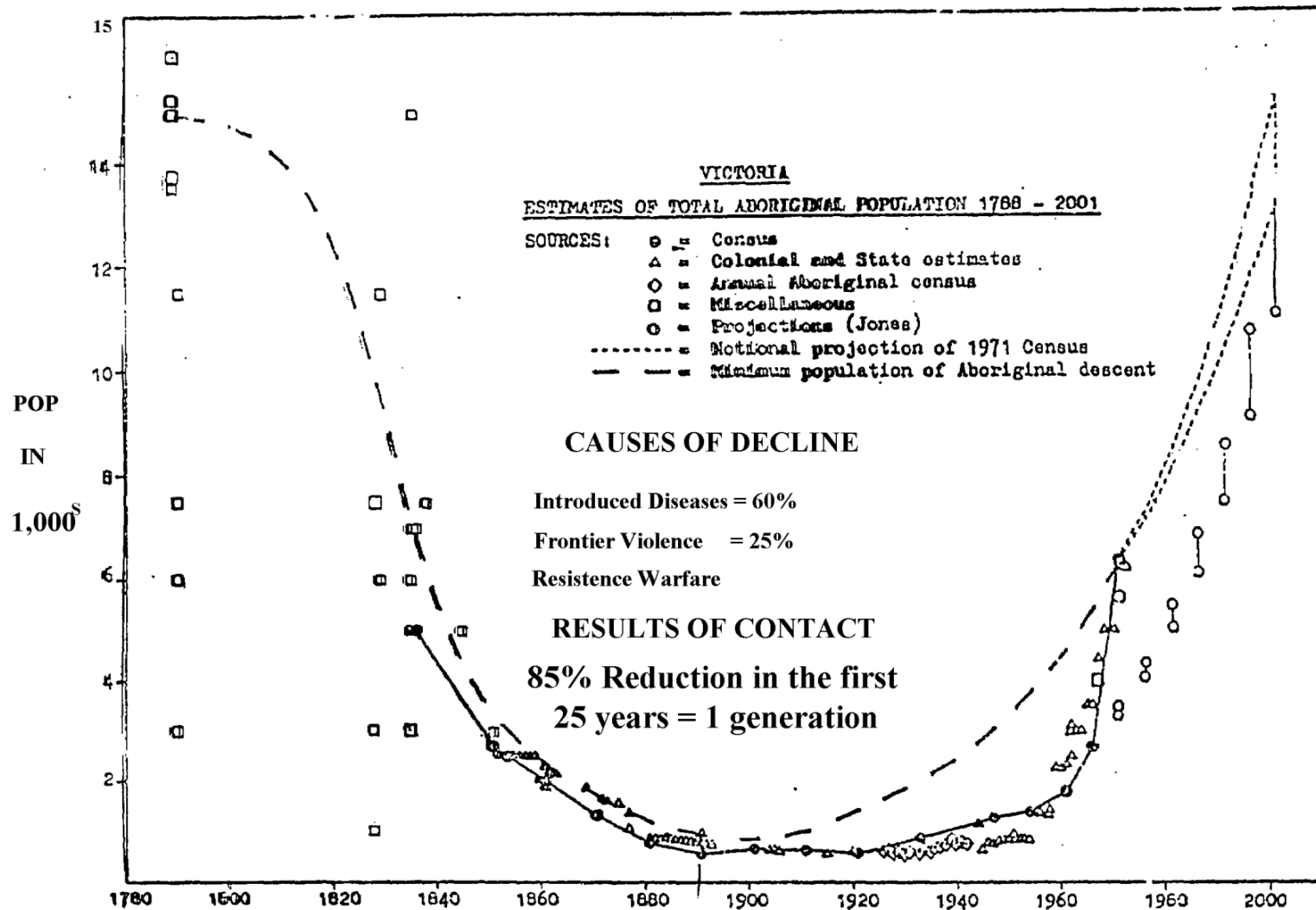
Terra Nullius: Indigenous Perspective



⌘ If you go to land where the people don't look like you or live like you, then you can pretend they don't exist and take their land (Galarrwuy Yunupinga, 1998).

Estimates of Aboriginal Population 1788-2001: Taken from "The Aboriginal Population of Australia

L.R. Smith, 1980 page 121



British Government Select Committee Inquiry, 1835



- ⌘ **Enquire into and report on the condition of Indigenous people in British colonies**
(Australia, North and South America (British Guiana), the West Indies (Caribs), Islands and in the South Pacific (New Zealand))
- ⌘ **Recommend ways of providing justice and protecting from further atrocities** (Select Committee Inquiry into Aborigines in British Colonies, 1836-37:3-14).

Findings of Report

- ⌘ **British colonisation 'was one of economic and physical exploitation and the mass extermination of indigenous people'.**
- ⌘ **Indigenous occupants have 'incontrovertible-plain and sacred right to their own soil'. Oxford Definition of incontrovertible (irrefutable, indisputable, undeniable, incontestable, unquestionable, certain, definitive, absolute.**
- ⌘ **'Europeans have entered their borders uninvited, and have punished the natives as aggressors if they have evinced a disposition to live in their own country'.**

Findings of Report (Cont)

- ⌘ **If Indigenous occupants 'have been found upon their own property, they have been treated as thieves and robbers. They are driven back into the interior as if they were dogs or kangaroos.'**
- ⌘ **Through our taking possession of their hunting -grounds, we have despoiled them of the means of existence (Report From the Select Committee, 1836-37:5-6)**

Recommendations of Committee

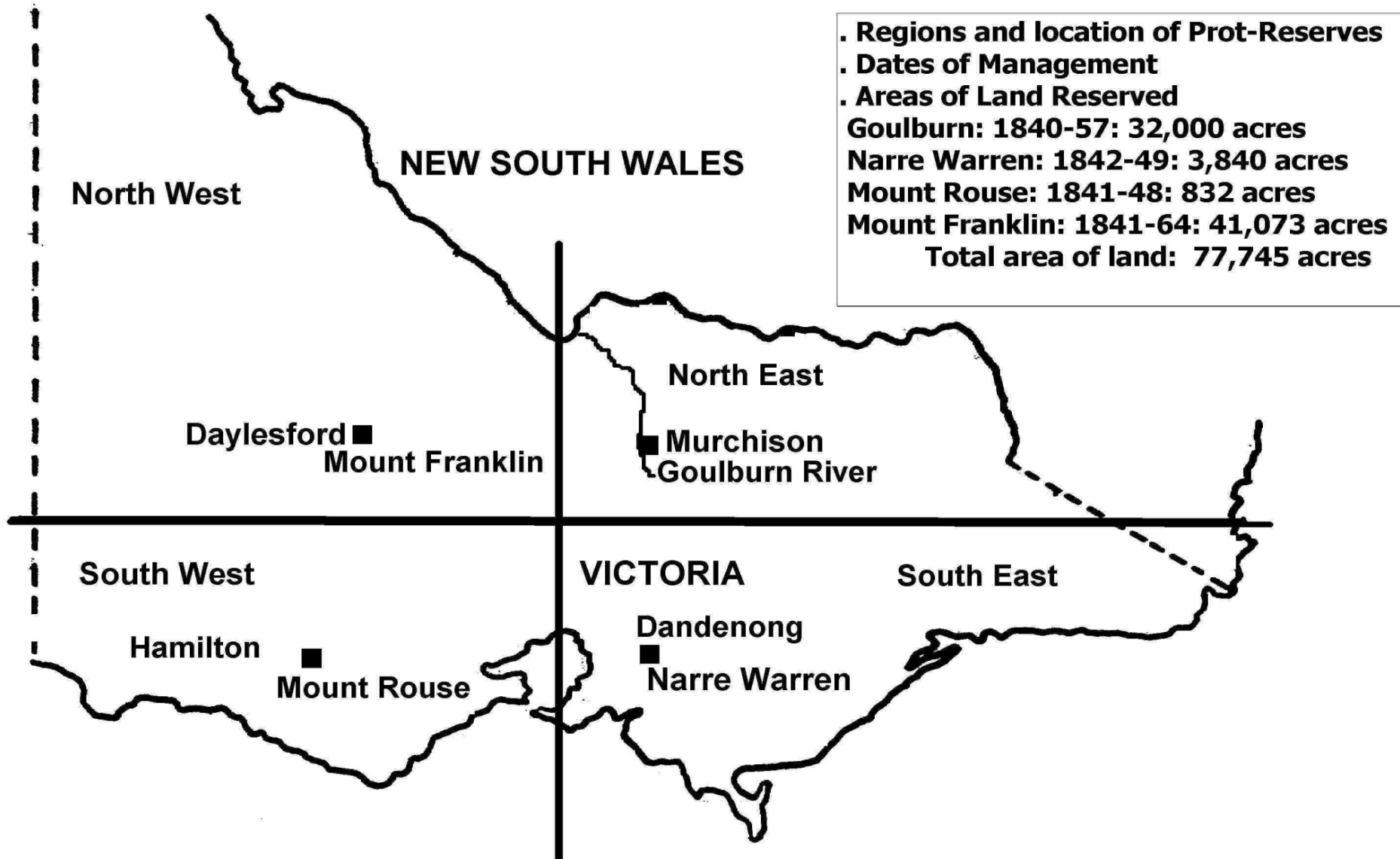


- ⌘ **Establish protectorate stations, where Aborigines could be relocated and separated from contact with whites. (segregation and control)**
- ⌘ **Provide physical protection for Aborigines and conversion to christianity.**

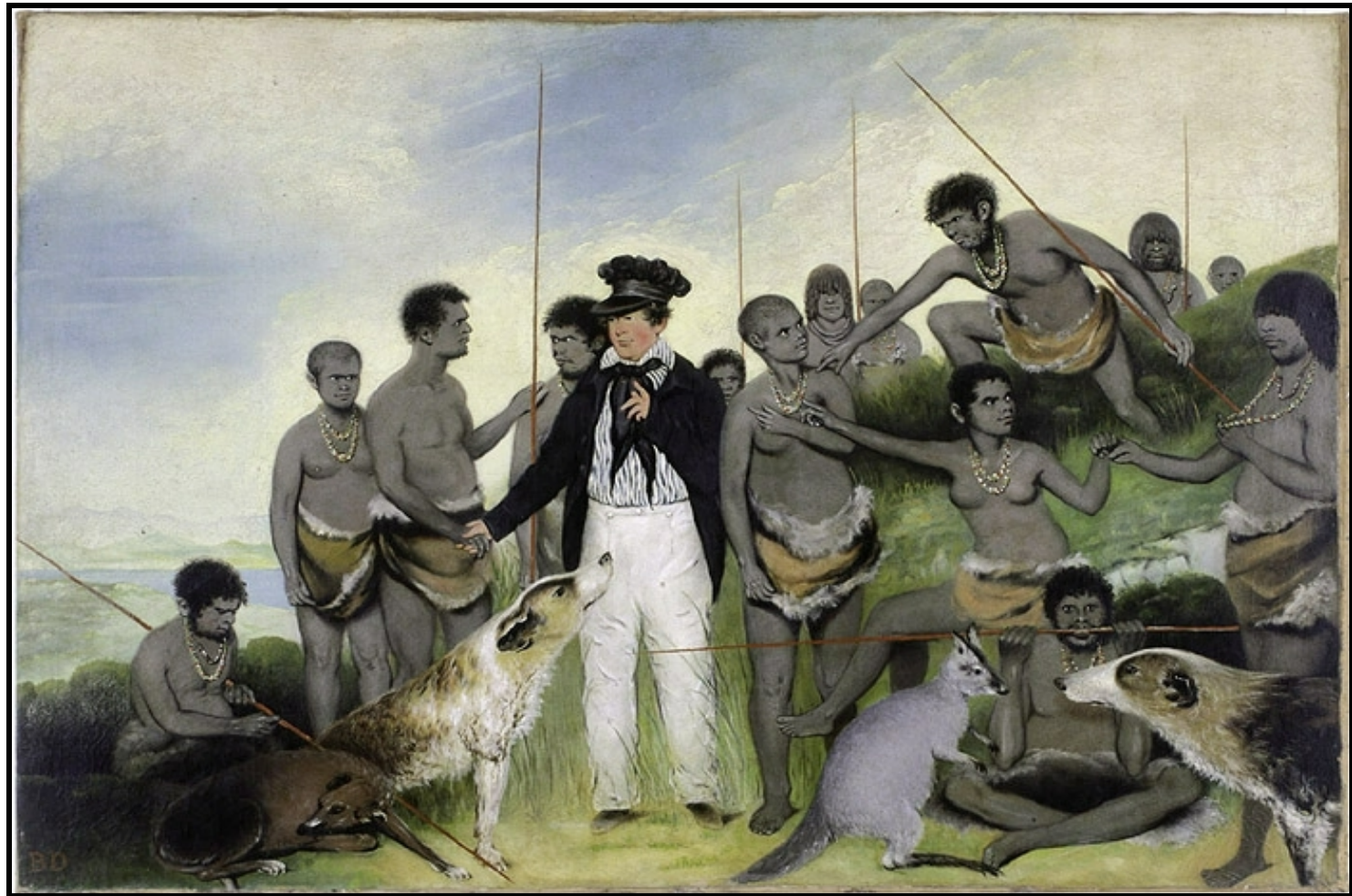
Despatch to Governor Gipps, by Lord Glenelg, (Secretary of State) outlining duties of Protectors, 1838

- ⌘ protect them physically, and to assist them in this task they were invested with the commission of Magistrate**
- ⌘ move with the Aborigines, learning their languages and customs, their numbers and tribal areas**
- ⌘ educate them to a settled European life style and convert them to Christianity**
- ⌘ promote the well-being *of* the Aborigines and represent their interests or grievances to the colonial executive, or if necessary, the British government.**
- ⌘ safeguard them from encroachments on their property, and from acts of cruelty, of oppression or injustice (M.F. Christie, 1979: 89).**

Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate: 1838-1849



Painting of George Augustus Robinson, who took up the post of 'Protector of Aborigines' in Van Diemen's Land on 27 January 1830. Robinson was later appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines in Victoria 1837-1849 (Benjamin Duterraus Tasmanian Museum)





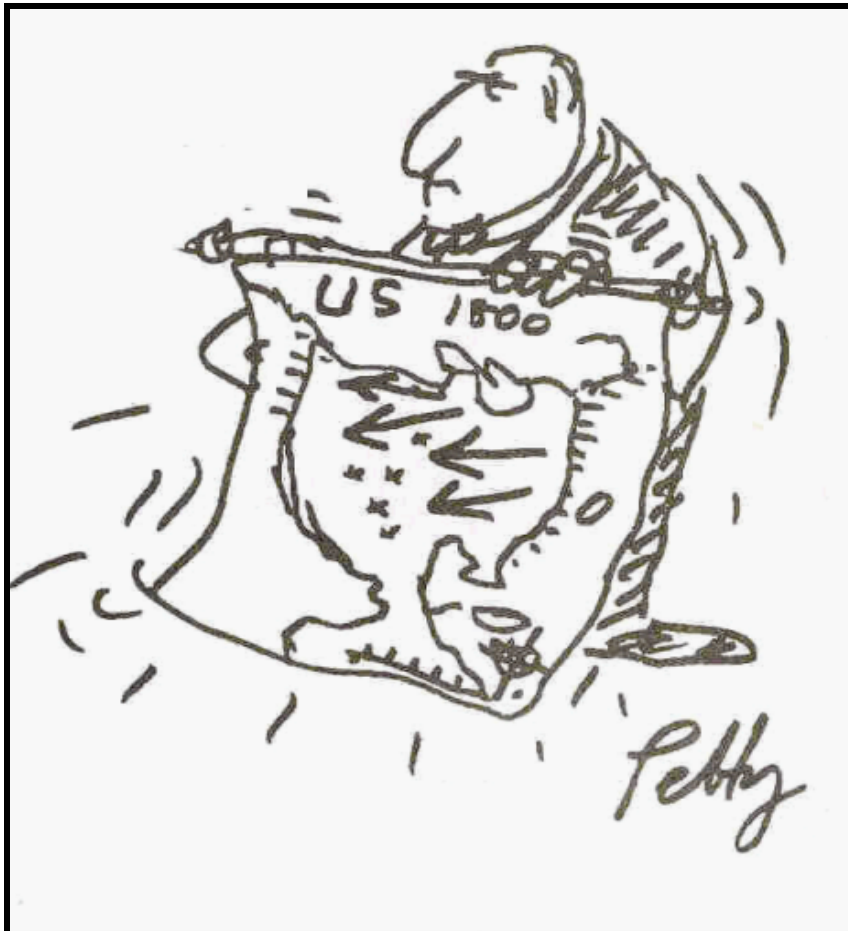
Failure of Protectorate

- ⌘ **Scheme was beyond capabilities of Protectors-Too Hard**
- ⌘ **Lack of Support from Government**
- ⌘ **Gap between law - theory & practice**
- ⌘ **Opposition from Settler Interests (admin of system came from land revenue)**

Segregation & Control

- ⌘ **The removal policy itself had its origins in the Victorian Aborigines Acts 1869 and 1886.**
- ⌘ **powers to remove Aboriginal people to Govt reserves, to take control of children (*Aborigines Protection Act 1869-1886; Bell, 1983: 47*).**
- ⌘ **Effects of forced removal reflected in Aust Bureau Stats survey, 1994 found that 1 in 10 over 24 years had been a removed child.**

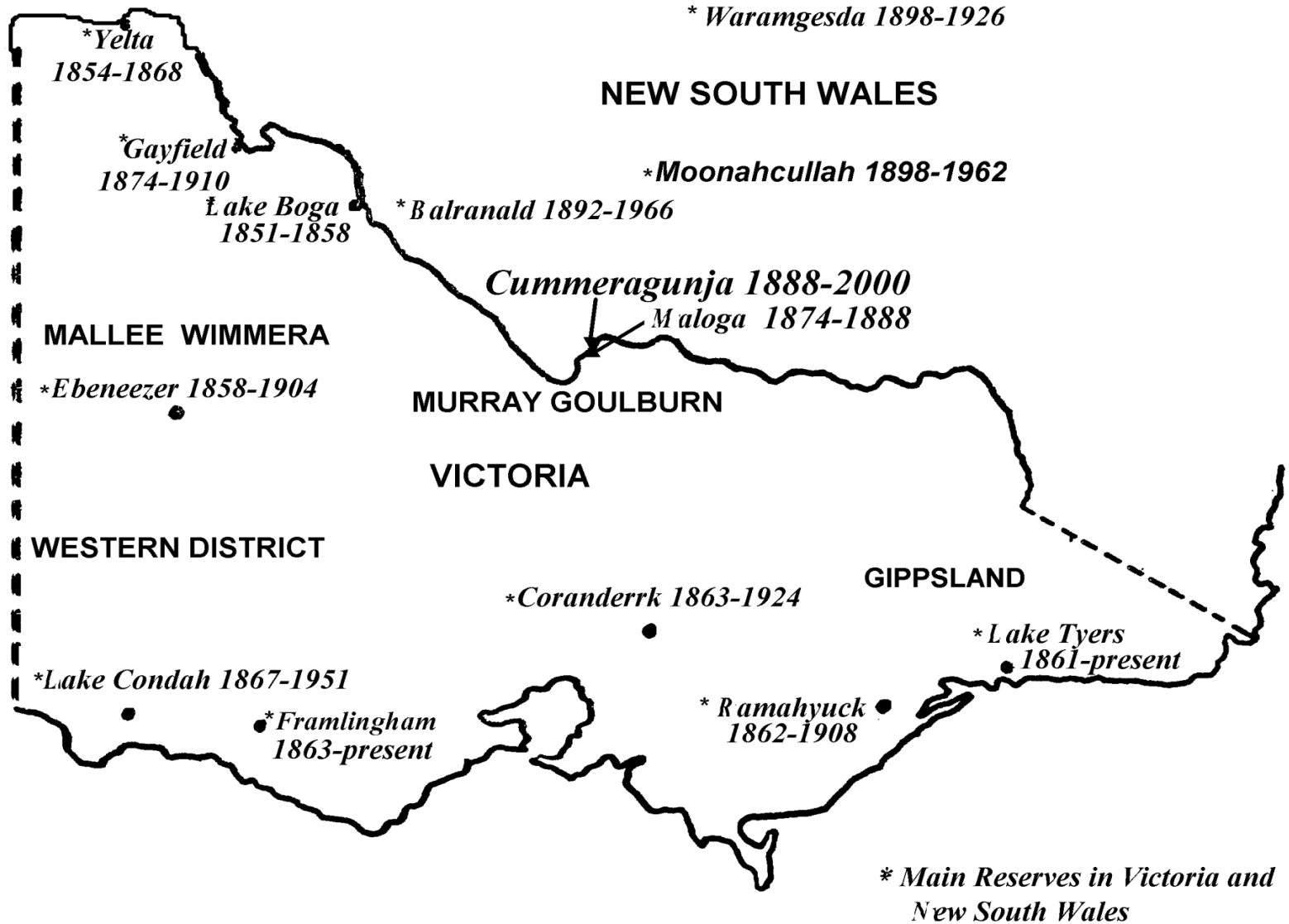
Origins of Reserve System & practice of Segregation & Control



- ⌘ Reserve System underpinned Colonisation & dispossession
- ⌘ Practiced on Irish in 17th Century
- ⌘ Imported to US: Indian Removal Act 1830s
- ⌘ Was well developed before introduced in Australia.
- ⌘ Policy shaped South African Apartheid system, 1948-1992.

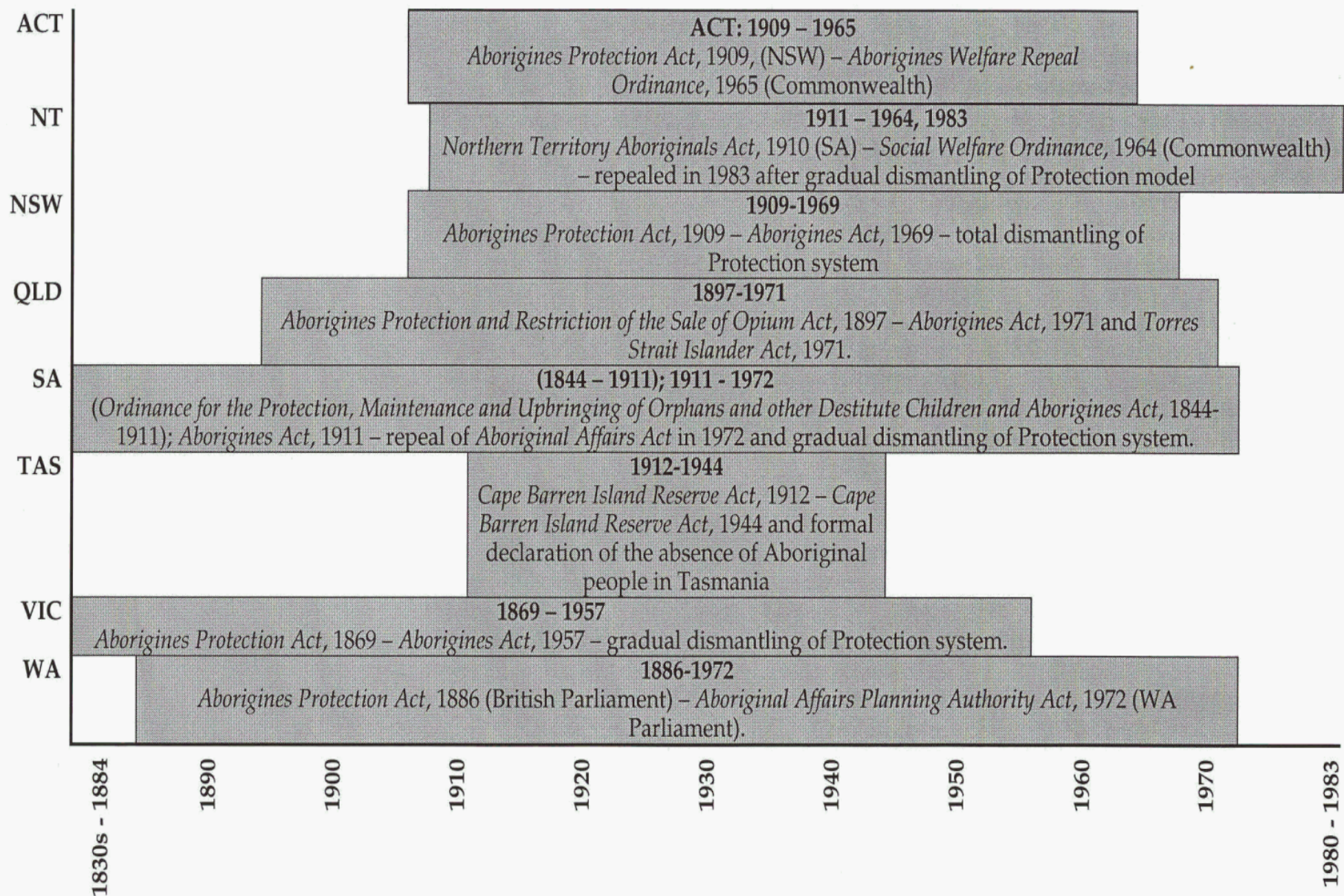
Figure:8

Location of Cummeragunja Reserve and Maloga Mission

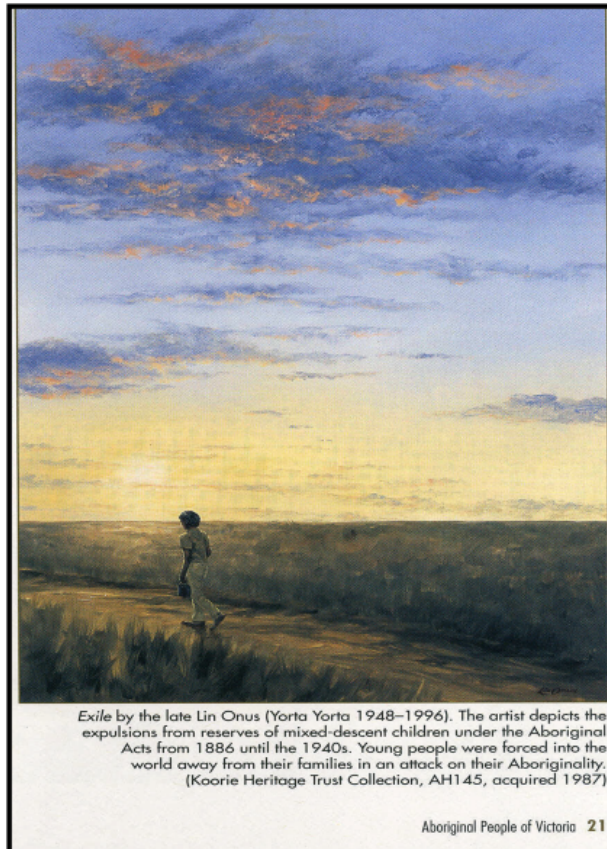


Wayne Atkinson, 2000

Duration of Aborigines Protection Legislation in Australian Colonies/States



Exiled by the Law



- Painting by Lyn Onus depicting the devastating effects of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1886
- Compelled people of mixed ancestry under age of 35 to leave families and reserves.

Summary of Colonial Experience



- ⌘ **History demonstrates that Koori survival is the outcome of the colonial process.**
- ⌘ **Yorta Yorta connections have never been washed away by euphemistic phrases like the 'tides of history'.**
- ⌘ **There has been a continuing process of political struggle.**
- ⌘ **Koori history questions the values of justice and racial equality and challenges the principles of justice and a fair and just society for all.**
- ⌘ **Dealing with the legacy of the past in a fair and just manner is the task ahead for truth justice and the treaty process**