

## Indigenous Rights and Colonial Subjecthood

Amanda Nettelbeck explores how policies designed to protect the civil rights of indigenous peoples across the British Empire were entwined with reforming them as governable colonial subjects. The nineteenth-century policy of ‘Aboriginal protection’ has usually been seen as a fleeting initiative of imperial humanitarianism, yet it sat within a larger set of legally empowered policies for regulating new or newly mobile colonised peoples. Protection policies drew colonised peoples within the embrace of the law, managed colonial labour needs, and set conditions on mobility. Within this comparative frame, Nettelbeck traces how the imperative to protect indigenous rights represented more than an obligation to mitigate the impacts of colonialism and dispossession. It carried a far-reaching agenda of legal reform that arose from the need to manage colonised peoples in an Empire where the demands of humane governance jostled with colonial growth.

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*Protection and Reform in the  
Nineteenth-Century British Empire*

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Amanda Nettelbeck

*University of Adelaide*



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This book uses the term ‘indigenous people’ when referring to First Peoples in a transnational context, ‘Aboriginal people’ when referring to Australia’s First Peoples in the national context, and the names of traditional owners from specific regions where possible.