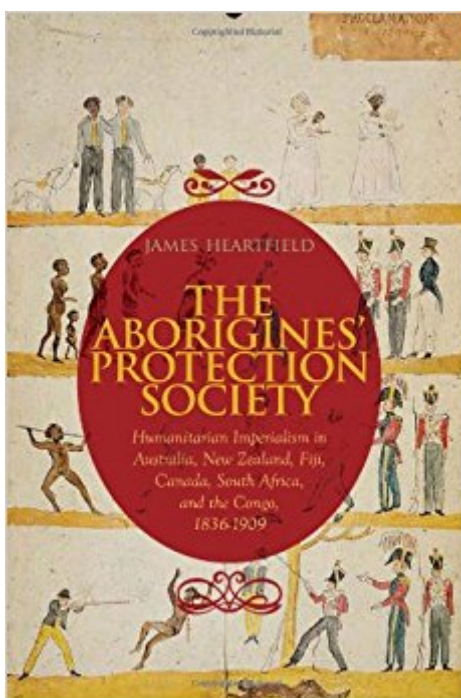


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The Aborigines' Protection Society: Humanitarian Imperialism In Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Canada, South Africa, And The Congo, 1837-1909 (Columbia/Hurst)



Synopsis

For more than seventy years the Aborigines' Protection Society (APS) fought to protect the rights of natives living under the rule of the British Empire. Active on four continents, the APS resisted the efforts of white supremacists while defending aboriginal interests across the globe. The APS put Zulu King Cetshwayo in contact with Queen Victoria and brought Maori rebels to the banqueting hall of the Lord Mayor. The society's supporters faced dangerous pushback by the powers they challenged and were labeled Zulu-lovers and traitors by senior British Army officers and white settlers. This book tells the story of the struggle among Britain's Colonial Office, white settlers, and aborigines that determined the development of the empire in its formative years. Particularly, it describes the pivotal role of APS in limiting the claims of white settlers for the sake of native interests. Despite this victory, native protection policy actually expanded imperial rule. Focusing on examples from southern Africa, the Congo, New Zealand, Fiji, Australia, and Canada, James Heartfield shows how the arguments made by supporters of native protection policy indirectly justified colonization. Highlighting the wreckage of humanitarian imperialism today, he sets out to identify its roots in the beliefs and practices of its nineteenth-century equivalents.

Book Information

Series: Columbia/Hurst

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Columbia University Press (September 20, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0231702361

ISBN-13: 978-0231702362

Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 5.7 x 1.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #6,129,243 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #60 in [Books > History >](#)

[Australia & Oceania > Fiji](#) #2862 in [Books > History > Africa > South Africa](#) #4062

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Customer Reviews

In this highly readable and fascinating account of the APS, James Heartfield highlights the problematic and unintended consequences of humanitarian intervention, regardless of the honorable motivations of its advocates. His balanced account of the problematic and shifting

relationship of the APS both to imperial power and to colonial settlers provides vivid insight into the understanding of ethical concerns in connection with the relations of power and interest. (David Chandler, University of Westminster, author of *Hollow Hegemony: Rethinking Global Politics, Power, and Resistance*) The Aborigines' Protection Society (APS) was one of the most important pressure groups to shape modern British colonial policy. A good history on it is long overdue. James Heartfield's deeply researched work fits the bill and more. His lively account will fascinate anyone interested in the historic background on human rights and international justice debates that loom large in politics today. (Nicholas Thomas, University of Cambridge) A published study of the APS is overdue. This is a thorough work examining the organization and activity of the APS in Britain, emphasizing the strong Christian spirit behind what was in many ways a continuation of the anti-slavery campaign, and then showing in detail how the society was involved in Britain's colonies in the nineteenth century. (Jonathan Derrick, author *Africa's Agitators: Militant Anti-Colonialism in Africa and the West, 1918--1939*)

James Heartfield has written on native rights for the *Journal of Pacific History*, *Arena*, the *Fiji Times*, and elsewhere. His work has also appeared in the *Times Educational Supplement*, the *Guardian*, the *Telegraph*, and the *Times*.

Gives one a greater understanding of the many paradoxes and dilemmas faced in defending the oppressed in our world; particularly in terms of squaring off against imperialism.

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