

After the Imperial Turn
Thinking with and through the Nation
ANTOINETTE BURTON, EDITOR



Prince Phillip and Queen Elizabeth II of England visit the Tjapukai Aboriginal cultural park in Cairns, Australia, 2002. Photo by Fiona Hanson/PA

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From a variety of historically grounded perspectives, *After the Imperial Turn* assesses the fate of the nation as a subject of disciplinary inquiry. In light of the turn toward scholarship focused on imperialism and post-colonialism, this provocative collection investigates whether the nation remains central, adequate, or even possible as an analytical category for studying history. These twenty essays, primarily by historians, exemplify cultural approaches to histories of nationalism and imperialism even as they critically examine the implications of such approaches.

While most of the contributors discuss British imperialism and its repercussions, the volume also includes, as counterpoints, essays on the history and historiography of France, Germany, Spain, and the United States. Whether looking at the history of the passport or the teaching of history from a postnational perspective, this collection explores such vexed issues as how historians might resist the seduction of national narratives, what—if anything—might replace the nation's hegemony, and how even history-writing that interrogates the idea of the nation remains ideologically and methodologically indebted to national narratives. Putting nation-based studies in international and interdisciplinary contexts, *After the Imperial Turn* points toward ways of writing history and analyzing culture attentive both to the inadequacies and endurance of the nation as an organizing rubric.

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