

# Call for Papers

## Pocockian Moments: A Symposium on the Centenary of J.G.A. Pocock

*Hosted Online at the European University Institute*

The voluminous work of the late J. G. A. Pocock (1924–2023) challenged, redefined, and fashioned multiple fields of study, offering successive moments of transformation in scholarship. The book that emerged from Pocock’s doctorate, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (1957), was a landmark contribution that affirmed the pivotal role of historiography to politics, as he demonstrates in the debates of seventeenth-century England. Pocock is perhaps most famous for his theoretical and historical challenge to liberalism and capitalism, most notably in his commanding *chef-d'oeuvre* on civic humanism, the republican tradition, and political economy, *The Machiavellian Moment* (1975), a work inextricably tied to the co-creation and development of a contextualist history of political thought as well as a revived interest in republicanism within contemporary political theory. This self-reflexive ‘Cambridge method’ to investigating the past, orientated towards context and sensitive to theory, language, and historicity, has also been associated with Quentin Skinner, John Dunn, Peter Laslett, and others. Pocock’s own contribution was groundbreaking in its scope, but also in its stress on the essential role of temporality in the history of political thinking and its discourse.

Alongside this work on early modern England and the republican tradition, Pocock also delivered a pioneering call for a new mode of British history understood within what he coined the ‘Atlantic archipelago’ and its diffusion across the globe. Similarly, Pocock offered a reassessment of Europe and its Enlightenment – or *Enlightenments* – as manifold; this is particularly visible in his work on Edward Gibbon, who is revealed to be a distinctive historian of Afro-Eurasia, as Pocock sets out across a monumental six volumes (1999–2015). Pocock made repeated attempts to demarginalise various modes of thinking from older ways of approaching the past and politics, including historiography itself, but also Indigenous thought. Indeed, his deprovincialisation of the Atlantic archipelago was joined by interventions into the history of its Antipodean counterpart, his home of New Zealand, and an engagement with Māori thinking on questions of sovereignty.

Attentive to archipelagic and planetary constellations, connections, and circulations, the expansive spatial, temporal, and discursive scope of Pocock’s scholarship inspired and contributed to something of a global turn in the study of historical political thought. In one of his final articles, ‘On the unglobality of contexts’ (2019), Pocock recognised the need for further reformation in how we theorise and practice intellectual history and proposed a ‘world history of political thought’. Myriad further moments of varying magnitude can be found across Pocock’s various books and edited volumes as well as articles, chapters, and reviews, which number in the hundreds.

The Association for Global Political Thought is excited to announce a symposium to examine the multifarious contributions and legacy of J. G. A. Pocock and celebrate his work as a historian and historiographer in the year that marks the centenary of his birth. The symposium will take place online on **Monday-Tuesday, 20-21 May, 2024**. Keynote lectures will be delivered by [Richard Whatmore](#) (St Andrews) and [Rosario López](#) (University of Málaga).

We invite submissions on any aspect of Pocock's work and its legacies. We are particularly enthusiastic to receive papers that examine globality, what can be called the global turn, and the future of world or global approaches to historical political thought. Early career researchers are welcome to apply and will be included in the symposium.

To apply to the symposium send an abstract (no more than 300 words) and a bio (no more than 75 words) to [agpt.symposium.24@gmail.com](mailto:agpt.symposium.24@gmail.com). **Submissions are due by Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at midnight Central European Time.** Early career researchers are encouraged to apply. Notice of acceptance will be given by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March. Confirmed participants should be prepared to submit draft papers (no more than 10,000 words, including citations) by **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**. These will then be pre-circulated to all participants before the symposium. We hope that from the symposium some papers will be selected and developed into a special issue to be proposed at a peer-reviewed journal.

**Further information and inquiries:** The symposium is convened by Thomas Ashby and Laurelin Middelkoop at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, in collaboration with the organising committee of the Association for Global Political Thought. Applicants should email [agpt.symposium.24@gmail.com](mailto:agpt.symposium.24@gmail.com) or Thomas Ashby ([thomas.ashby@eui.eu](mailto:thomas.ashby@eui.eu)) or Laurelin Middelkoop ([laurelin.middelkoop@eui.eu](mailto:laurelin.middelkoop@eui.eu)) with further questions.

**Who we are?** [The Association for Global Political Thought](#) is an international, interdisciplinary, and intercollegiate project founded in 2021 at Harvard University. Dedicated to the study of political ideas in international society and global contexts, supported by humanists and social scientists from across global institutions. More information about the Association may be found on [our website](#).

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