

Mathias Thaler

Professor of Political Theory
Politics and International Relations
University of Edinburgh

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Curriculum Vitae

Short version (Last updated: 5/25/2023)

Education

2014: Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, University of Edinburgh

2003–2006: PhD in Philosophy (with distinction), University of Vienna. Supervisors: Prof Rainer Bauböck and Prof Franz M. Wimmer.

2003: MA in Philosophy and Political Science (with distinction), University of Vienna.

2001–2002: Studies in Philosophy and Political Science, Université de Paris VIII (Saint-Denis) and Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.

1997–2001: Studies in Philosophy and Political Science, University of Vienna, interrupted from 1999–2000 by one full year of civil service in a refugee camp.

Current positions

2022–present: Professor of Political Theory, University of Edinburgh.

Previous positions

2016–2022: Senior Lecturer in Political Theory, University of Edinburgh.

2012–2016: Chancellor's Fellow, Politics and International Relations, University of Edinburgh.

2008–2012: Senior Researcher, Centro de Estudos Sociais, Universidade de Coimbra.

2009–2012: Lecturer, Institut für Philosophie, University of Vienna and Institut für Philosophie, University of Klagenfurt.

Visiting positions

2019: Visiting Scholar, Sydney Social Sciences and Humanities Advanced Research Centre, University of Sydney.

2019: RIPPLE Visiting Scholar, KU Leuven.

2019: Sabbatical Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh.

2012: Visiting Research Fellow, Centre for Political Ideologies, University of Oxford.

2010: Visiting Research Fellow, Centre de Recherche en Ethique de l'Université de Montréal.

2007–2008: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Institute for European Integration Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences.

2006–2007: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre for Ethics, University of Toronto.

2005: Visiting Scholar, Institute of European Studies, UC Berkeley.

2004–2005: Visiting PhD Student, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna.

Fellowships and awards (selected)

2023: AHRC Networking Grant, with Co-I Davina Cooper (KCL). [£44,170]

2020: Leverhulme Research Fellowship. [£49,176]

- 2019: SSSHARC International Fellowship, University of Sydney. [AU\$10,000]
- 2019: RIPPLE Annual Visiting Fellowship, KU Leuven. [€5,000]
- 2013–2017: Marie Curie Career Integration Grant, FP7, European Commission. [€100,000]: <http://judgepol.sps.ed.ac.uk/>
- 2015–2019: Co-I and team member – *Transforming Political Settlements: Towards Open and Inclusive Settlements*: research consortium funded by the UK Department of International Development. [£4.300,000]: <http://www.politicalsettlements.org/>
- 2014: Innovation Initiative Grant, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Edinburgh. [£1,500]
- 2013: Knowledge Exchange Grant, University of Edinburgh. [£3,500]
- 2009: Travel grant, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (Portugal). [€1,500]
- 2009: Travel grant, Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft. [€1,500]
- 2008–2009: Max Weber-fellowship, European University Institute, Florence (declined). [€38,000]
- 2006–2007: Postdoctoral fellowship, Austrian Ministry for Science, Education and Culture. [€55,000]
- 2005: Research grant, Austrian Marshallplan Fund. [€5,000]
- 2003–2005: PhD-scholarship, Austrian Academy of Sciences. [€48,000]
- 1998–1999: Scholarship for excellent studies, University of Vienna. [€5,000]

Prizes

- 2012: Gulbenkian Award for the best paper published in an international journal in the past two years: “Political Judgment Beyond Paralysis and Heroism.” *European Journal of Political Theory* 10, no. 2 (2011): 225–253. [€5,000]
- 2010: Canada-Europe Award, International Council for Canadian Studies. [C\$10,000]
- 2010: Theodor Körner Preis, Theodor Körner Fonds. [€1,500]

Publications

Research monographs

- 1) *No Other Planet: Utopian Visions for a Climate-Changed World*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022.
- 2) *Naming Violence: A Critical Theory of Genocide, Terrorism and Torture*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018. (published in the *New Directions in Critical Theory* series).
- 3) *Moralische Politik oder politische Moral? Eine Analyse aktueller Debatten zur internationalen Gerechtigkeit*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2008.

Edited books

- 1) *Political Violence and the Imagination: Complicity, Memory and Resistance*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2020. (edited with Mihaela Mihai)
- 2) *On the Uses and Abuses of Political Apologies*. Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. (edited with Mihaela Mihai)

Peer-reviewed journal articles

- 1) “Environmental Commemoration: Guiding Principles and Real-World Cases.” *Memory Studies*, 2023 (online first), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17506980231176037>. (co-authored with Mihaela Mihai)

- 2) “Eco-Miserabilism and Radical Hope: On the Utopian Vision of Post-Apocalyptic Environmentalism.” *American Political Science Review*, 2023 (online first), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000305542300031X>.
- 3) “Warning through Extrapolation: On the Practical Aims of Dystopia.” *Utopian Studies* 33, no. 1 (2022): 90–106. <https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.33.1.0090>.
- 4) “What If: Multispecies Justice as the Expression of Utopian Desire.” *Environmental Politics* 31, no. 2 (2022): 258–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2021.1899683>.
- 5) “Multispecies Justice: Theories, Challenges, and a Research Agenda for Environmental Politics.” *Environmental Politics* 30, no. 1–2 (2021): 119–40. <https://doi.org/10/ghd4fd>. (co-authored with Danielle Celermajer, David Schlosberg, Lauren Rickards, Makere Stewart-Harawira, Petra Tschakert, Blanche Verlie, and Christine Winter) – shortlisted for the 2021 Best Article of the Year award in *Environmental Politics*.
- 6) “Multispecies Justice: Climate-Just Futures with, for and beyond Humans.” *WIREs Climate Change* 12, no. 2 (2021): e699. <https://doi.org/10/ghq9vw>. (co-authored with Petra Tschakert, David Schlosberg, Danielle Celermajer, Lauren Rickards, Christine Winter, Makere Stewart-Harawira, and Blanche Verlie)
- 7) “Peace as a Minor, Grounded Utopia: On Prefigurative and Testimonial Pacifism.” *Perspectives on Politics* 17, no. 4 (2019): 1003–18. <https://doi.org/10/ggdx fj>.
- 8) “Bleak Dreams, Not Nightmares: Critical Dystopias and the Necessity of Melancholic Hope.” *Constellations* 26, no. 4 (2019): 607–22. <https://doi.org/10/gft37p>.
- 9) “Political Violence and the Imagination: An Introduction.” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 22, no. 5 (2019): 497–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230.2019.1565691>. (co-authored with Mihaela Mihai)
- 10) “Unhinged Frames: Assessing Thought Experiments in Normative Political Theory.” *British Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2018): 1119–41. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123416000259>
- 11) “Reconciliation through Estrangement.” *The Review of Politics* 80, no. 4 (2018): 649–73. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670518000505>.
- 12) “Hope Abjuring Hope: On the Place of Utopia in Realist Political Theory.” *Political Theory* 46, no. 5 (2018): 671–97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591717740324>.
- 13) “A Pragmatist Defence of the Ban on Torture: From Moral Absolutes to Constitutive Rules of Reasoning.” *Political Studies* 64, no. 3 (2016): 765–81: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12229>
- 14) “Political Imagination and the Crime of Crimes: Coming to Terms with ‘Genocide’ and ‘Genocide Blindness.’” *Contemporary Political Theory* 13, no. 4 (2014): 358–79: <https://doi.org/10.1057/cpt.2013.48>
- 15) “On Time in Just War Theory: From Chronos to Kairos.” *Polity* 46, no. 4 (2014): 520–46: <https://doi.org/10.1057/pol.2014.20>
- 16) “Neo-Grotian Predicaments: On Larry May’s Theory of International Criminal Law.” *Journal of International Political Theory* 10, no. 3 (2014): 345–60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1755088214539418>.
- 17) “Political Judgment beyond Paralysis and Heroism.” *European Journal of Political Theory* 10, no. 2 (2011): 225–53: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885110395479>
- 18) “The Illusion of Purity: Chantal Mouffe’s Realist Critique of Cosmopolitanism.” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 36, no. 7 (2010): 785–800. <https://doi.org/10/fpww6h>.

- 19) “How (not What) Shall We Think about Human Rights and Religious Arguments: Public Reasoning and Beyond.” *e-cadernos CES*, no. 9 (2010): 115–133.
<http://www.ces.uc.pt/e-cadernos/media/ecadernos9/6%20-%20Mathias%20Thaler.pdf>
- 20) “From Public Reason to Reasonable Accommodation: Negotiating the Place of Religion in the Public Sphere.” *Diacrítica. Revista do Centro de Estudos Humanísticos da Universidade de Minho* 23, no. 2 (2009): 249–270.
<http://ceh.ilch.uminho.pt/publicacoes/diacritica23-2.htm>

Peer-reviewed book chapters

- 1) “Norms, Stories and Ideologies: What We Talk About When We Talk About Political Secularism.” In *Multireligious Society: Dealing with Religious Diversity in Theory and Practice*, edited by Francisco Colom González and Gianni D’Amato, 29–41. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- 2) “Introduction.” In *On the Uses and Abuses of Political Apologies*, edited by Mihaela Mihai and Mathias Thaler, 1–9. Rhetoric, Politics and Society 1. Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. (with Mihaela Mihai).
- 3) “Deep Contextualism and Radical Criticism: The Argument for a Division of Labor in Contemporary Political Theory.” In *Facts, Values and Objectivity in Economics*, edited by José Maria Castro Caldas and Vítor Neves, 138–157. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- 4) “Filosofia Política.” In *Filosofia: Uma Introdução Por Disciplinas*, edited by Pedro Galvão, 175–213. Extra Coleção 155. Lisbon: Edições 70, 2012. (with João Cardoso Rosas and Iñigo González)

Special journal issues

- 1) “Political Violence and the Imagination.” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 22, no. 5 (2019). Contributions from Maria-Alina Asavei, Alexandre Christoyannopoulos, Eliza Garnsey, Bronwyn Leebaw, Mihaela Mihai, Jade Schiff and Shari Stone-Mediatore.
- 2) “Secularismos hoje.” *E-cadernos CES*, no. 13 (2011). (edited with Teresa Toldy)
- 3) “Gerechter Krieg?” *polylog: Zeitschrift für interkulturelles Philosophieren*, no. 16 (2007).
- 4) “Menschenrechte zwischen Wirtschaft, Recht und Ethik.” *polylog: Zeitschrift für interkulturelles Philosophieren*, no. 14 (2006).

Book reviews

- 1) Review of *Utopia in the Age of Survival: Between Myth and Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021), by S. D. Chrostowska. *The Review of Politics* 85, no. 1 (2023): 141–44. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670522000869>.
- 2) Review of *Between Specters of War and Visions of Peace: Dialogic Political Theory and the Challenges of Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), by Gerald M. Mara. *Perspectives on Politics* 18, no. 1 (2020): 253–55. <https://doi.org/10/ggkx3r>.
- 3) Review of *Staged: Show Trials, Political Theater, and the Aesthetics of Judgment* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), by Minou Arjomand. *Contemporary Political Theory* 19, no. 2 (2020): 134–37. <https://doi.org/10/ggdxfh>.
- 4) Review of *The Democratic Horizon: Hyperpluralism and the Renewal of Political Liberalism* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), by Alessandro Ferrara. *Political Theory* 44, no. 3 (2016): 431–37: <https://doi.org/10/ggdxfg>.
- 5) Review of *The Politics of Official Apologies* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), by Melissa Nobles. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, no. 88 (2010): 241–43.

- 6) Review of *Religious America, Secular Europe?: A Theme and Variation*, 2008 by Peter L. Berger, Grace Davie, and Effie Fokas, *Religion & Society: Advances in Research* 1, no. 1 (2010): 191–193.
- 7) Review of *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship*, 2009 by Geoffrey Brahm Levey and Tariq Modood (ed.), *Religion & Society: Advances in Research* 1, no. 1 (2010): 191–193.

Supervision of postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows

PhD students at Edinburgh: *Finished:* Louis Fletcher (2015–2020); Gisli Vogler (2016–2019); Alec Ross (2017–2021); Lukas Slothuus (2015–2022). *Ongoing:* Grace Garland (2020–present); Talia Shoval (2019–present); Max Rozenburg (2018–present); Camilo Andrés Ardila Arévalo (2018–present). All my PhD students have received funding.

Postdoc: Dr Max Jaede (Postdoc at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, 2016–17).

I have also supervised more than 30 undergraduate and postgraduate theses over the past 5 years.

Teaching activities

My teaching initiatives are guided by basic principles of critical theory, enabling students to make use of the knowledge acquired in class to reflectively examine their life-worlds. I have been teaching eight different undergraduate and postgraduate courses since arriving at Edinburgh in 2012, with on average 50 students. My teaching at Honours level includes classes on democratic theory, populism, and the ethics of warfare. On sub-Honours level, I teach on the introductory course to Political Theory, with more than 500 students. In terms of postgraduate teaching, I served for three years as the Programme Director of our School's MSc degree in International Political Theory, significantly reforming the degree, expanding its scope and raising student numbers. Currently, I am external examiner for the undergraduate degree in Politics and International Relations at Queen Mary, University of London. In 2021, I was a visiting lecturer for the MA degree in Political Philosophy at Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona. Since 2013, I also serve as a regular invited professor at the University of Vienna's MA in human rights. Before joining Edinburgh, I have independently designed and run seven courses at three European universities (Vienna, Klagenfurt and Coimbra), and given lectures at two North-American universities (Arizona State and Toronto). My pedagogical activities have been recognized through sustained teachings award nominations and consistently positive student feedback (reports available upon request). I am also a fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy, having finished the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in 2014.

Institutional responsibilities

2020–present: Co-Director of Research, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Edinburgh.

2017–present: Member of the Steering Group, Centre for the Study of Modern and Contemporary History, University of Edinburgh.

2020–2021: Research Convenor, Politics and International Relations, University of Edinburgh.

2019–2020: Member of the Strategy Committee, Politics and International Relations, University of Edinburgh.

2017–2020: Member of the Teaching and Research Committee, Politics and International Relations, University of Edinburgh.

2016–2019: Programme Director for International Political Theory, University of Edinburgh.

2016–2019: Co-Director, Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.

2015–present: Member of the Steering Group, Security Research Centre, University of Edinburgh.

2013–2015: Scientific Coordinator, Political Theory Research Group, University of Edinburgh.

2014–2016: Director, Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.

2014–2014: Deputy Director, Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.

2010–2012: Scientific Coordinator, Observatory for Religious Pluralism, Centro de Estudos Sociais, Universidade de Coimbra.

2009–2012: Vice-President of the Research Council, Centro de Estudos Sociais.

Organization of scientific meetings (selected)

2022: Main organizer and local of the ECPR Joint Sessions 2022 at the University of Edinburgh.

2022: University of Edinburgh, organizer (with Davina Cooper) of a workshop series on utopia and failure.

2019: University of Edinburgh, organizer (with Fabian Hilfrich, Juliet Kaarbo and Louis Fletcher) of a conference entitled “Peace among the Ruins”, with, amongst others, Duncan Bell, Patricia Owens and Erez Manela.

2018: University of Edinburgh, organizer (with Toby Kelly and Nicola Perugini) of a workshop entitled “Politics in the Face of Death”, with, amongst other, Banu Bargu and Achille Mbembe.

2016: University of Edinburgh and University of St Andrews: organizer of a workshop and panel entitled “Political Ontology, Critique and Democratic Politics”, with Aletta Norval, Lois McNay, Oliver Marchart and Sergei Prozorov.

2016: Scuola Normale Superiore, Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna and the University of Pisa: organizer of a workshop entitled “Imagining Political Violence”, during the ECPR Joint Sessions 2016.

2015: University of Edinburgh: organizer of the Summer School “Political Violence: Perspectives from Law, History and Political Theory” with Christine Bell, Donald Bloxham, Elizabeth Frazer, John Horne, Kimberly Hutchings and Manfred Nowak.

2014: University of Edinburgh: organizer of a workshop on “Spectating and Acting” with Jeffrey Green, Carol Gould and Andrew Schaap.

2012: Centro de Estudos Sociais, Lisbon (Portugal): organizer of the Summer School “Secularism, Gender and Democracy” with Veit Bader, Rajeev Bhargava and Chia Longman.

2012: Centro de Estudos Sociais, Universidade de Coimbra: organizer of the “Semana da Filosofia Política” with Alessandro Ferrara and Serdar Tekin.

2011: Centro de Estudos Sociais, Universidade de Coimbra: organizer of the international conference “Challenging Citizenship” with, amongst others, James Tully, Simone Chambers, Rainer Bauböck and Rajeev Bhargava.

Refereeing

Journals

American Political Science Review; British Journal of Politics and International Relations; Constellations; Contemporary Political Theory; Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy; Development and Change; Environmental Politics; Ethical

Perspectives; European Journal of Political Theory; International Journal of Human Rights; International Journal of Transitional Justice; Journal of Human Rights; Journal of International Political Theory; Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft; Perspectives on Politics; Political Theory; Polity; polylog; Relações Internacionais; Res Publica; Review of International Studies; Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais; Sociological Review; Time & Society; Utopian Studies.

Funding agencies

Australian Research Council; Economic and Social Research Council (UK) – member of the Peer Review College; EURIAS Fellowship Programme; Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, Vlaanderen; French Institutes for Advanced Study; Leverhulme Trust; Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, European Commission; The Northern Ireland and North East (NINE) Doctoral Training Partnership.

Publishing houses

Brill; Edinburgh University Press; Macmillan; Oxford University Press; Palgrave; Polity; Routledge; Springer.

Presentations (selected)

- 2023: Cluj (Romania), “No Other Planet: Utopian Visions for a Climate-Changed World” (book talk). [refereed]; Glasgow (UK), “On the multiple purposes of social dreaming in the Anthropocene”, during the annual BISA conference. [refereed]; Universidade do Minho, Braga (Portugal): Keynote panel on political theory today. [invited]; University of California, Irvine (USA): “No Other Planet: Utopian Visions for a Climate-Changed World” (book talk). [invited]; University of California, Los Angeles (USA): “No Other Planet: Utopian Visions for a Climate-Changed World” (book talk). [invited]
- 2022: Indian Institute of Technology, Indore (India): “Commemorating Ecological Loss in the Age of Omnicide”. [invited]
- 2021: Pompeu Fabra University (Spain): “Warning through Extrapolation”. [invited]
- 2020: University of Minho, Braga (Portugal): “Utopias in the Anthropocene”. [invited]; University of Bath (UK): “Rethinking Political Violence”. [invited]; University of Leeds (UK): “Rethinking Political Violence”. [invited]
- 2019: University of Sydney (AU): “Hope and Fear in the Anthropocene”. [invited]; KU Leuven (BE): “Peace as a Minor, Grounded Utopia”. [invited]; University of York (UK): “Bleak Dreams, not Nightmares: Critical Dystopias and the Necessity of Melancholic Hope”. [invited]; University of Oxford (UK): “Bleak Dreams, not Nightmares: Critical Dystopias and the Necessity of Melancholic Hope”. [invited]
- 2018: Stellenbosch University (SA): “Reconciliation through Estrangement”. [invited]; University of Cambridge (UK): “Peace as a Minor, Grounded Utopia”. [invited]; University of East Anglia (UK): “Peace as a Minor, Grounded Utopia”. [invited]; Boston (APSA General Conference): “Reconciliation through Estrangement”. [refereed]
- 2017: University of Erlangen (DE), “Hope Abjuring Hope”. [invited]; University of Oslo (NO), “Reconciliation through Estrangement”; ECPR General Conference. [refereed]; 2017, Monash University Prato (IT): “Reconciliation through Estrangement”. [invited]
- 2016: Strathclyde University (UK): “Peace as a Minor, Grounded Utopia”; PSA General Conference. [refereed]; Durham University (UK): “Political Theory and its Audience: Reflections on a Contentious Relationship”. [invited]; University of Cambridge (UK): “Imagining Violence”. [invited]
- 2015: San Francisco (USA): “Unhinged Frames: When Hypotheticals About Torture Go Wrong”; APSA General Conference. [refereed]

- 2014: University of Westminster (UK): “Discursus Interruptus: Revisiting James Tully’s Democratic Conception of Public Philosophy”. [invited]; University of Copenhagen (DK): “A Pragmatist Defence of the Ban on Torture”. [invited]
- 2013: University of St. Andrews (UK): “Law in Larry May”. [invited]; University of York (UK): “Flexible Banister? Hannah Arendt and the Pragmatist Ethos” [invited]
- 2012: Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster (UK): “Historical Injustice and the Politics of Apology”. [invited]
- 2011: Université de Neuchâtel (CH): participation in the workshop “The Public Management of Religion”. [invited]; 2011, Universität St. Gallen (CH); ECPR Joint Sessions. [refereed]; 2011, Universidade de São Paulo (BR): “Just Pretending: Political Apologies for Historical Injustice and Vice’s Tribute to Virtue”; IPSA-ECPR conference. [refereed]