

BIOGRAPHY



Johannes Kaminski

**Institute of World
Literature SAS**

**Project number
IM-2024-105**

**Project duration
1.10.2025-30.9.2030**

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"IMPULZ offers me the unique opportunity to gather experience as a team leader and to carry out cutting-edge interdisciplinary research."

At the heart of my research stand the intersections between literature and the real world. Through my engagement with academic research and the wider audience, I hope to make a strong case for the value of the literary imagination as a means to meaningfully engage with the future. Being a specialist in German, Anglophone and Chinese literature, extensive research stays at Cambridge University, Academia Sinica (Taiwan) and University of Vienna have taught me how to navigate discrete sociocultural paradigms and to advance my understanding of the shared ground between fictional and non-fictional writing. After having successfully attracted funding from the British Academy and the European Union's Horizon 2020 scheme (twice), I am now looking forward to the challenge of securing an ERC Consolidator grant.

Fragile Futures: A Critical Investigation of the Intersections between Fictional and Non-fictional Accounts of the Long-term Future

Never before has the future presented such a broad spectrum of possibilities. Decisions made by human actors today will likely have a greater impact on future generations and their livelihoods than those of any period in the past. This project draws on the long-term risk projections of strategic foresight reports, as published by inter-governmental organisations and multi-national companies, and places them in a dialogue with speculative and science fiction. Regardless of their stylistic and methodological differences, both types of futurology are united by a set of features that require close analysis: a reliance on narrative patterns, the extrapolation of isolated data points, a commitment to particular ideologies and a tendency to offer prescriptive accounts of how the world of tomorrow will, should or should not look like.

By placing the world-making accounts produced by both foresight and SSF on a horizontal plane, the project breaks down the knowledge silos generated not only by subject specialization, but also by cultural boundaries. Both China's bold future imagination and Russia's neo-imperialist projections differ dramatically from the more toned-down visions offered by their Western counterparts. The entailed cross-investigation of the futures that are currently in circulation takes notice of their antagonisms, incompatibilities of different target audiences. The project closes in on four areas of investigation: environmental, social, geopolitical and AI futures. In non-fictional future writing, the discussion of the overlaps between said fields remains the exception rather than the rule. Meanwhile, fiction excels at drawing on such areas, as plots weave their ways through uncharted lifeworlds. It is imperative to offer an integrative picture of future-making while gauging its relevance to real-world data.

By tracing the future imaginations that are currently in circulation, the team will detect the major fallacies that determine 'the shape of things to come' and point at profitable pathways. After all, the future is a phenomenon that is not only determined by technological innovation, extraordinary events and crisis-managing institutions, but also by the collectively negotiated choices that lie ahead.



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TOP 5 PUBLICATIONS



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1. *Dreams in Chinese Fiction: Spiritism, Aestheticism, and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 2024) – book monograph
[Dreams in Chinese Fiction: Spiritism, Aestheticism, and Nationalism –](#)
2. *Lives and Deaths of Werther: Literary Interpretation, Translation and Adaptation in European and East Asian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023) - book monograph
[Lives and Deaths of Werther: Interpretation, Translation, and Adaptation in Europe and East Asia | British Academy Scholarship Online | Oxford Academic](#)
3. 'Universalising Government, Language and Race in H.G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* and Kang Youwei's *The Great Unity*.' *World Literature Studies* 16.4 (2024), pp. 29–46 – peer-reviewed article
[12161319WLS_4_2024_Kaminski.pdf](#)
4. 'On Human Expendability: AI Takeover in Clarke's *Odyssey* and Stross's *Accelerando*.' *Neohelicon* 49 (2022), pp. 495–511 - peer-reviewed article
[On human expendability: AI takeover in Clarke's Odyssey and Stross's Accelerando | Neohelicon](#)
5. (with Julia Boog-Kaminski and Andree Michaelis-König): *Spielarten des Naiven: Kindliche, künstliche und manierierte Erzählweisen in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur* [Naiveté in Motion: Child-like and Artificial Narrative Modes in Contemporary German Literature] (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2024) – edited volume
[Spielarten des Naiven – Kindliche, künstliche und manierierte Erzählweisen in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur – Julia Boog-Kaminski, Johannes Kaminski, Andree Michaelis-König \(Hrsg.\) – ISBN 9783826088070 / 978-3-8260-8807-0 / 978-3-8260-8807-0 – Verlag Königshausen & Neumann](#)



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