

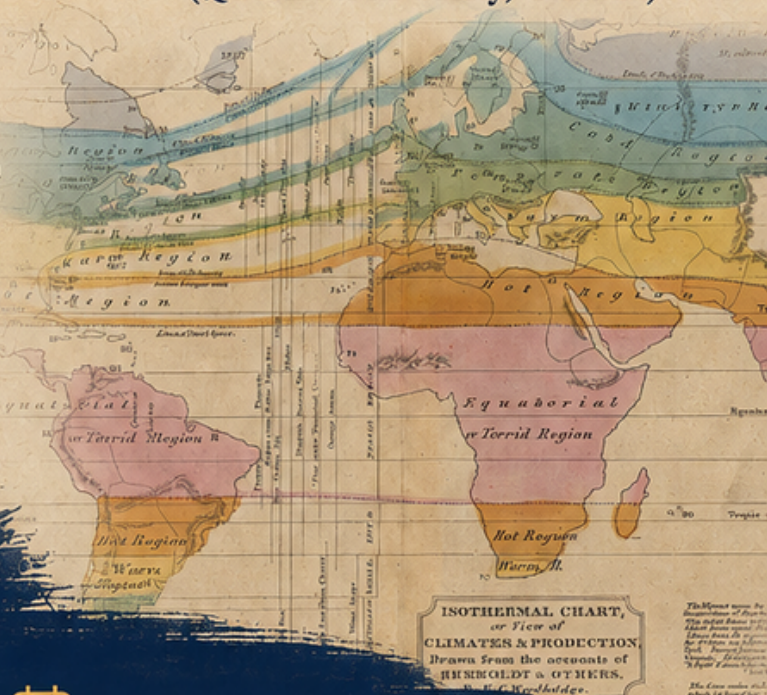
East and West: Two Climate Histories, One Climate Future

Although climate change tends to be treated as a single, universal problem, our sense of what climate is has deep and divergent roots. This talk traces two cultural histories of climate, one Western, one Chinese, each shaping how societies today understand, narrate, and respond to a warming world. In the West, ancient attitudes about daily survival and divine judgement shifted in the Enlightenment to become abstract and measurable data. Meanwhile, China's relationship to climate has followed a different path over two millennia of dynastic weather-recording, bound up with Taoist and Confucian ideas of the reciprocal relationship between heaven and human governance that persist into the modern era. Surrounded by reminders of Suzhou's enduring relationship with the elements, I hope to bring these two histories into dialogue to ask what each tradition might learn from the other.

BIO

Adeline Johns-Putra is a Professor in the Department of English Literature and Creative Writing at Queen's University in Canada. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (UK), an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the University of Liverpool, and an Honorary Professor at the University of Hong Kong. She was previously Professor of Literature at XJTLU and Founding Director of the University Research Centre for Culture, Communication, and Society. From 2011 to 2015, she was President of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (UK and Ireland). Her books include *Climate Change and the Contemporary Novel*, *Climate and Literature*, and *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and Climate* (all with Cambridge University Press).

Prof Adeline Johns-Putra
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1 September 2026 (Tue)



1:00 PM–3:00 PM



X-Bar, South Campus