Atmospheric Pressures: 
On Race and Affect

Renisa Mawani

In this paper I place Frantz Fanon’s brief comments on atmosphere in conversation with more recent efforts to theorize affect through the ephemeral, mutable, and material impress of atmosphere. In so doing, I initiate a close reading of Fanon’s essay, “Racism and Culture” alongside his better known and more widely read The Wretched of the Earth. I consider Fanon’s reflections on the psycho-affective traumas of colonialism, racism, and colonial violence through affective registers rather than the more conventional and established psychic ones. In so doing, my objective is not to recuperate an authentic Fanonian voice. Nor is it to dispute the phenomenological and psychoanalytic readings of Fanon that have been so influential in postcolonial studies, critical race theory, and beyond. Rather, my goal is to consider how Fanon’s brief remarks on atmosphere might be reworked and expanded toward an affective and materialist account of race.

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at 13h00

Please write to cissc@concordia.ca (with "ATMOSPHERES" in the subject line) to register and you will be sent a Zoom link.

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