

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.

**Friday, September 25
at 13h00**

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

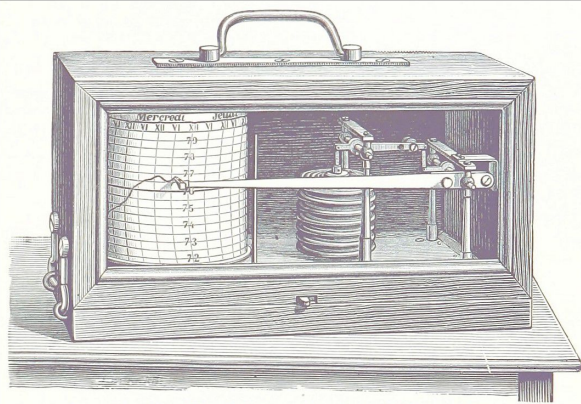


Fig. 160. *The Self-Recording Aneroid Barometer.*

*Gately's World's Progress. A General History of the Earth's Construction
and of the Advancement of Mankind. Edited by C. E. Beale (1886)*

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Renisa Mawani is Professor of Sociology at The University of British Columbia, located on the unceded territories of the Musqueam Peoples. She is the author of *Colonial Proximities* (University of British Columbia Press, 2009) and *Across Oceans of Law* (Duke University Press, 2018), which was a finalist for the U.K. Socio-Legal Studies Association Theory and History Book Prize (2020) and won the Association of Asian American Studies Book Prize for Outstanding Contribution to History (2020). With Rita Dhamoon, Davina Bhandar, and Satwinder Bains, she is co-editor of *Unmooring the Komagata Maru* (University of British Columbia Press, 2019); and with Antoinette Burton, she is co-editor of *Animalia: An Anti-Imperial Bestiary of Our Times* (Duke University Press, 2020).