



LSU-UA Exchange: Martinique and Guadeloupe

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“Édouard Glissant, Philosophe” Seminar and “L'éclat et l'obscur” Conference

My attendance to Dr. Leupin's seminar and the conference sessions also demonstrated the potential that Glissant's work has in inspiring radically new ways of thinking. While in Dr. Leupin's course at LSU provided me with an ample introduction to Glissant, these activities showed that his work provides multiple entry points, directions, and connections that are renewed with each reading. Listening to Dr. Leupin's lectures and to the speakers at the conference, Glissant's writing was much more than an object of study or analysis. Rather, it became a generative source for shifting our understanding of different social, political, philosophical, and aesthetic realms. The multiple approaches to Glissant's work that I could listen to at the conference also helped me realize that thinking about and with Glissant is always an unfinished endeavor: his expansive writing demands ongoing, careful, and often collaborative engagement.

Visits: Fondation Clément and Memorial ACTe

Our visits provided us with opportunities to reflect about the ways in which historical memory is preserved and narrated from public and private institutions. The exhibitions at Fondation Clément showed an attempt to resignify the space in which it is located -- an old plantation-- into a space that encompasses both a genealogy of different African cultures and new avenues of aesthetic experimentation that range from local to global practices. A similar gesture is present in Guadeloupe's comprehensive Memorial ACTe, which attended to the particularities of the Franchophone Caribbean, but also linked them to wider hemispheric and global contexts. It was very useful to experience both museographic projects in order to understand the ways in which the Francophone Caribbean presents itself institutionally.

Rocher du Diamant

My fascination with Édouard Glissant's writing began when I took Dr. Leupin's course on the philosophy of the Whole-World. In our readings, I was taken by his imaginaries of Martinican geography, the ways in which he described --so I thought-- what I would encounter a year later in our exchange program. We travelled to Le Diamant on the first day of the conference “Édouard Glissant, l'éclat et l'obscur.” I was anticipating this day because we would finally see the le Rocher du Diamant, the volcanic plug whose texture and particularity Glissant often includes as one of the kernels of his thinking. Facing le Rocher du Diamant, the achievement of Glissant's imaginary became even more patent. Le Rocher du Diamant is undoubtedly an incredible sight, but the place and language that Glissant develops around it is not a mere representation of picturesque scenery. That he was able to insert this geographical reality into his philosophical thinking, or rather, develop his philosophical thinking from the materiality of this geographical fact, made me think of the potency of his ability to transform modalities of seeing, sensing, and knowing.