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Meditation on a Meditation on the Border

I had heard of Batuz in Paris; I had seen books about him, but never his works. He lived at that time in Connecticut. During a trip to New York friends of mine took me to his large, grass-overrun estate, and we made each other's acquaintance in the midst of torrential rain. Indeed, a bridge over a river that had burst its banks collapsed, shortly after we had crossed it on our return journey. I dived into his meadows of colour, I threaded my way along his fissures under a downpour of evocative memories, while we talked about childhood, travels, hopes, difficulties, meetings; and almost naturally about the next exhibitions, the possibilities of a joint project. It was there that the original meditation started to germinate. Then years passed, we crossed other borders; I met Batuz again in Germany. The plans for a book slowly matured, becoming ever more ambitious. Not only the reproductions - as artistically made as is imaginable - of works that had inspired me gave way to series of new works, children of the former, but also my own text found itself engraved in similar material, sewn in the same plain, watered and battered by the same transatlantic rain, the same transequatorial wind, for all was finally realized during a return to Argentina. And in order to provide shelter for these lands that one can leaf through, this humus of signs, a sort of suitcase had to be invented covered in overseas leather, certainly transportable, but only by giants - perhaps during a move - a vehicle vehicle with which one can transport one's own borders with oneself.

Michel Butor, Gaillard, June 19, 1987