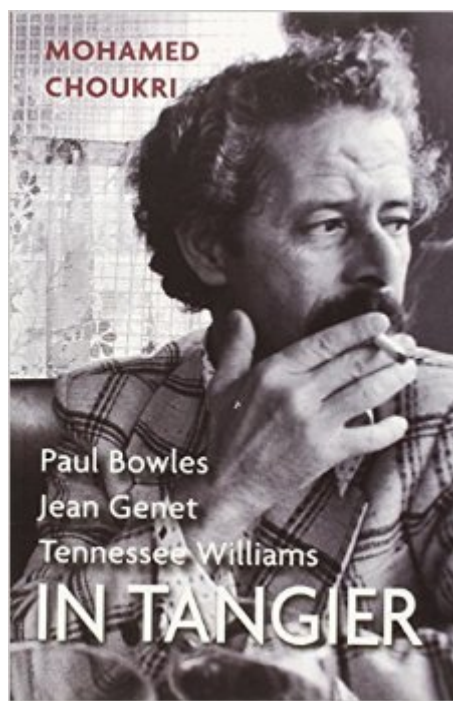


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# In Tangier



## Synopsis

"As I read Choukri's notes, I saw and heard Jean Genet as clearly as if I had been watching a film of him. To achieve such precision simply by reporting what happened and what was said, one must have a rare clarity of vision."#151;William Burroughs, from the introduction to Genet in *Tangier* Tangier, "the most extraordinary and mysterious city in the world," according to Mohamed Choukri, was a haven for many Western writers in the early twentieth century. Paul Bowles, Jean Genet, and Tennessee Williams all spent time there, and each was in turn befriended by Choukri. Collected here in one volume, for the first time in English, are his delightful recollections of these encounters, offering a truly fresh and unpretentious insight into the lives of these cult figures. Includes an afterword by Choukri previously published only in French. As we walked, I showed Tennessee the Arabic translation of his play, and explained that the title in Arabic meant: A cat on the fire. I added that several of his plays, both full-length and one-acters, had been published in Arabic, as well as some of his short stories. I heard his noisy laugh for the first time. Many books, many boys! Mohamed Choukri (1935#150;2003) is one of North Africa's most controversial and widely read authors. After a childhood of poverty and petty crime, Choukri learned to read and write at the age of twenty. He then became a teacher and writer, finally being awarded the chair of Arabic literature at Ibn Batuta College in Tangier.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

this book consists of three parts: 1) "jean genet in tangier" from 1977 (without the photographs of the original) is 51 pages long. 2) "tennessee williams in tangier" from 1979 is 62 pages. 3) "paul

bowles in tangier" is 179 pages and originally appeared in french in 1997. the first two are minimalist reports of various informal encounters. the essay on paul bowles is of a totally different type. when paul bowles wrote about morocco in the 1950s he didn't imagine that at some later time he would be read and criticized by moroccan intellectuals (the first was tahar ben jelloun in 1972). bowles praised the traditional moroccan way of life but choukri charges that "there is something in him that is purely colonialist" and never explains what he means. he drops at least ten of these unsubstantiated "bombs" and quickly moves on, as if nothing outrageous has been said, diverting attention to bowles' wife jane (whom choukri never met) until his next attack. some readers will find the various charges ridiculous, nasty or even deranged ("paul bowles is a potential sex criminal who never perpetrated his crimes"). it is typical of choukri's honesty however that a possible reason for his hostility emerges towards the end when he claims that bowles embezzled the money from the english editions of his excellent first book , "for bread alone".

Riveting. A wonderful look at a country and it's impact on the artists and expatriates who spend time there. Choukri is a very reliable witness to some truly remarkable men.

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