Mrabet, Mohammed, 1940-

Mohammed Mrabet correspondence, reviews, and other material
1968-1989

Abstract: Moroccan author and artist Mohammed Mrabet (born 1940) worked closely with American expatriate writer and musician Paul Bowles (1910-1999). This collection contains letters from several of Mrabet's friends and acquaintances, most notably from American writers and editors Irving Stettner (1922-2004) and Michael Wolfe (born 1945). Also included are reviews of Mrabet's works and photocopied dust jackets from his books.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 674
Creator: Mrabet, Mohammed, 1940-
Title: Mohammed Mrabet correspondence, reviews, and other material
Inclusive Dates: 1968-1989
Extent: .33 linear feet (1 box)
Language: Materials in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Dutch.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 674, Mohammed Mrabet correspondence, reviews, and other material, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes (1 inch)
Location: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Source: Purchase, August 2013.
Processing: Processed and encoded by Rachael Green, November 2013.
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Biographical Note

Moroccan author and artist Mohammed Mrabet (born 1940) worked closely with American expatriate writer and musician Paul Bowles (1910-1999). Mrabet published several novels and collections of short stories by dictating to Bowles, who recorded the stories Mrabet related in Moghrebi and then translated them into English.

Mrabet was born as Mohammed ben Chaib el Hajjam. His family is a part of the Temsamani tribe. During his childhood, his family moved to Tangier, where he worked and continues to work primarily as a fisherman. Mrabet had no formal education outside of personal study of the Quran.

Bowles recorded the stories Mrabet told him and then transcribed them in English, from which they have been translated into over fourteen languages. Mrabet's work often depicts the intersections between Western culture and Moroccan tradition. Drawing on traditional Moroccan tales, Mrabet's work is rooted in an oral storytelling tradition that contributes to the multiple layers and often inconclusive endings found in his work.


Mrabet is also known widely for his art and has had many of his artworks published in the magazine *Stroker* and exhibited in galleries in the United States. Mrabet visited the United States twice and wrote about his experiences in his autobiographical novel *Look and Move On* (1976).

Sources:

Biographical information derived from collection.

Moroccan author and artist Mohammed Mrabet (born 1940) worked closely with American expatriate writer and musician Paul Bowles (1910-1999). This collection contains letters from several of Mrabet's friends and colleagues; significant correspondents include the American writers and editors Irving Stettner (1922-2004) and Michael Wolfe (born 1945). Also included are reviews of Mrabet's works and several photocopied dust jackets from his books.

The material in the collection reflects the interest in Mrabet's literary work during a productive period of his career. The reviews of Mrabet's books in English, Dutch, and Arabic, among other languages, are indicative of his international appeal through collaborations with Paul Bowles as his compiler and translator.

Stettner's letters to Mrabet frequently discussed personal matters as well as his literary magazine Stroker, to which Mrabet frequently contributed. Stettner was a great admirer of Mrabet's work and published several of his letters, ink drawings, and stories.

The letters from Michael Wolfe reveal admiration for Mrabet's work, as well as the personal bond the two writers shared, revealing a planned trip to Mecca as well as a road trip across Northern Africa.

Other letters in the collection include a letter from Mrabet to his agent, Roberto de Hollanda; a note from photographer Cherie Nutting to Mrabet; a letter from publisher Paola Iglioni; a letter from publisher Basilio Balthasar in Spanish; a letter from American expatriate and diarist John [Hopkins]; and a note from Paul Bowles in French.

The collection includes approximately thirty-four reviews of Mrabet's books in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Dutch. Titles include Love with a Few Hairs, M'Hashish, The Beach Café and the Voice, The Chest, and The Lemon. The collection also contains several photocopied dust jackets from Mrabet's books and a catalog from the University of Delaware Library's 1990 exhibition, "Paul Bowles at 80," which featured books and artwork by Mrabet.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Mrabet, Mohammed, 1940-


Stettner, Irving, 1922- --Correspondence.

Wolfe, Michael, 1945- --Correspondence.

Topical Terms

Authors, American--20th century--Correspondence.

Authors and publishers--20th century.

Geographic Names

Tangier (Morocco)--Intellectual life--20th century.

Tangier (Morocco)--Social life and customs--20th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Correspondence.

Clippings (information artifacts)

Photocopies.

Book jackets.

Exhibition catalogs.

Reviews (document genre)

Occupation

Authors.

Artists (visual artists)

Personal Contributors

Stettner, Irving, 1922-, correspondent.
Wolfe, Michael, 1945- , correspondent.

Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 163, Paul Bowles papers
MSS 164, Paul Bowles collection

Materials Cataloged Separately

A Room with a View: A History of the Grand Hotel Villa de France (Clandermond and McCarthy, Tangier, 2012) has been removed for cataloging with imprints in Special Collections.
## Detailed Description of the Collection

Letters from Irving Stettner, 1979-1989

Also included with Stettner's letters is a letter from Don Kennison, who was working with Stettner to publish Mrabet's letters to *Stroker* in a collection.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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Autograph letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1980 June 28 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1980 June 30 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph card signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1980 November 08 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1980 November 18 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1979 October 3 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1980 December 23 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1981 March 23 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (2 p.)

Typed letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1981 May 16 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1981 July 20 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1981 August 26 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1982 March 1 [Box 1 F1]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Irving Stettner to Mohammed Mrabet, 1982 March 19 [Box 1 F1]
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<td>1982 September 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989 May 13</td>
<td>Typed letter signed from Don Kennison to Mohammed Mrabet</td>
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**Letters from Michael Wolfe, 1981-1989**

The letters from Wolfe discussed his efforts to publish some of Mrabet's short stories in a collection. The letters also included planning a trip to Mecca together as well as a road trip across Northern Africa. Wolfe wrote about his trip to Mecca in *The Hadj: An American's Pilgrimage to Mecca* (1998).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Box</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981 August 7</td>
<td>Typed letter signed from Michael Wolfe to Mohammed Mrabet</td>
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<td>1982 January 20</td>
<td>Typed letter signed from Michael Wolfe to Mohammed Mrabet</td>
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Typed letter signed from Michael Wolfe to Mohammed Mrabet, 1982 March 26 [Box 1 F2]

1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Michael Wolfe to Mohammed Mrabet, 1989 January 6 [Box 1 F2]

1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Michael Wolfe to Mohammed Mrabet, 1989 January 25 [Box 1 F2]

1 item (1 p.)

Letters and notes from others, 1974-1989

Typed letter signed from Basilio Baltasar to Mohammed Mrabet, 1987 July 27 [Box 1 F4]

1 item (2 p.)

Letter in Spanish from Basilio Baltasar, the editor of the magazine *Bitzoc Literatura*. The letter acknowledged the receipt of the story "The Safe." Envelope included.

Envelope from Black Sparrow Press to Mohammed Mrabet, 1979 November 17 [Box 1 F4]

1 item (1 p.)

Envelope for a letter (not included) from Black Sparrow Press, which published several of Mrabet's works.

Autograph note signed from Cherie [Nutting] to Mohammed Mrabet, undated [Box 1 F4]

1 item (1 p.)

A note from Nutting, an American photographer most known for her pictures of Paul Bowles.

Autograph letter from Mohammed Mrabet to Roberto [de Hollanda], undated [Box 1 F4]

1 item (1 p.)

Mrabet asked de Hollanda, a translator and writer who worked as Mrabet's literary agent, to forward a letter to Paola Igliori, and requested the reviews she had sent to de Hollanda.

Typed letter signed from Paola Igliori to Mohammed Mrabet, 1989 October 25 [Box 1 F4]

1 item (2 p.)
Igliori, an editor for Inanout Press, outlined a collaboration with Philip Taafe for a publication of Mrabet's stories and Taafe's illustrations. Includes a post script in French.

Photocopy of typed letter signed from Paul Bowles, 1974 June 2 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (1 p.)
Note in French confirming Mrabet's employment with Bowles, most likely to a government agency.

Autograph letter signed from John [Hopkins] to Mohammed Mrabet, 1979 June 9 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (2 p.)
A letter in Spanish, discussing Jilala, a type of Moroccan music and Hopkins's experiences in Morocco.

Typed letter signed from "Bill" to Mohammed Mrabet, 1974 May 16 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (7 p.)
Letter from a correspondent identified only as "Bill" and his experience as an expatriate in Morocco.

Reviews of published works, 1968-1986 [Box 1 F3]
Reviews for Mrabet's works in English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Dutch. Titles include Love with a Few Hairs, M'Hashish, The Beach Café and the Voice, The Chest, and The Lemon. Some of the clippings are pasted onto scrapbook paper.

Dust jackets, undated [Box 1 F5]
8 items
Includes photocopies of dust jackets and one original dust jacket.

Paul Bowles at 80: checklist of exhibition at the University of Delaware, 1990 [Box 1 F6]
An exhibition catalog detailing the inventory of "Paul Bowles at 80," an exhibition at the University of Delaware Library, which included some of Mrabet's works.