

A Quest for Third Space in Paul Bowles's "By the Water" (1946), "The Scorpion" (1948) and "Tea on the Mountain" (1950)

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Abstract: This article analyzes space in the short stories "By the Water" (1946), "The Scorpion" (1948) and "Tea on the Mountain" (1950), written by the American travel writer Paul Bowles. The latter's short fiction is a product of his travel and expatriation in North Africa, mainly Morocco where he chose to settle from 1947 until his death in 1999. Tangier became an 'inhabited space' and refuge for him as it was the case of many disillusioned western writers who fled the American mechanized environment after World War II. The stories depict American characters who look for integration in another space. Though they undergo a kind of self dilemma between rejection and integration, they finally succeed to settle in what Edward Soja calls 'Thirdspace' after incorporation with the natives. This cohabitation is also the result of exploring others' intimate spaces as it is explained by Gaston Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space (1958)*. Bowles's stories portray a kind of space that stimulates inclusion rather than exclusion, and this is what contradicts previous criticism that used to associate Bowles's spaces with Orientalism.

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Key words: Paul Bowles's short fiction, North Africa, Thirdspace, the self, dilemma, integration.

البحث عن الفضاء الثالث في روايات بول بولز القصيرة "بجانب المياه" (1946)، "العقرب" (1948) و"الشاي فوق الجبل" (1950)

المخلص: يتناول هذا المقال موضوع الفضاء في الروايات القصيرة "بجانب المياه" (1946) "العقرب" (1948) و"الشاي فوق الجبل" (1950) بقلم كاتب الرحلات الأمريكي بول بولز. معظم رواياته القصيرة كتبت نتيجة سفره واغترابه في شمال إفريقيا خاصة المغرب أين اختار الاستقرار منذ عام 1947 حتى وفاته في عام 1999. أصبحت طنجة مساحة مأهولة وملجأ له كما هو الحال بالنسبة لكاتب آخرون عانوا من خيبة أمل في وطنهم. معظم هؤلاء الكتاب فروا من البيئة الميكانيكية الأمريكية بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية. تصور هذه القصص شخصيات أمريكية تبحث عن الاندماج في فضاء آخر. رغم مرورهم بنوع من المعضلة الذاتية بين الرفض والاندماج إلا أنهم نجحوا أخيرا في الاستقرار فيما يسميه ادوارد سوجا "الفضاء الثالث" بعد الاندماج مع السكان الأصليين. هذا التعايش هو أيضا نتيجة استكشاف المساحات الحميمة للآخرين كما أوضحه غاستون باشيلارد في نظريته "شاعرية الفضاء" (1958). قصص بولز تصور نوعا من الفضاء الذي يحفز الإدماج بدلا من الإقصاء وهذا ما يعارض النقد السابق الذي كان يربط موضوع الفضاء في رواياته بالاستشراق.

الكلمات المفتاحية: روايات بول بولز القصيرة ، شمال إفريقيا ، الفضاء الثالث ، الذات المعضلة ، التكامل

1-Introduction:

Spatial studies have occupied an outstanding position in recent years comparing with past decades. During the post modern period, theorists such as Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre studied the nature of space in relation to power. Their ideas have marked "the spatial turn" (Gul Kocsoy, 2018: 101)

which is a new way of considering space. Foucault associates the nineteenth century with time (history) and the contemporary era with space. He considers the current eon as the age of simultaneity and juxtaposition. It is also the epoch of the “near and far,” “the side-by-side,” and “the dispersed” (Qtd in Jay Miskowiec, 1984: 1). Lefebvre’s perception of space is also revolutionary. For him, space is no longer a “static entity” (Qtd in Gul Kocsoy, 2018: 101), but an active and changing process which functions in agreement with its individuals who interact to change and reproduce it.

Following the same principle of space reproduction, this article aims to show how space is shaped and recreated by the characters in Paul Bowles’s short stories “By the Water” (1946), “The Scorpion” (1948) and “Tea on the Mountain” (1950), included in his work *Collected Stories* (2001). This study aims to prove that in these stories the characters are not consumers but producers of their spaces. In fact, the interaction between native and western characters leads to the production of a thirdspace where all constructed limits and obstacles are overcome and self satisfaction is reached. This space is characterized by harmony and agreement instead of rejection and collision.

Bowles’s travel writings on North Africa belong to the American expatriate literary tradition. After the First World War, authors such as Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot chose to exile to Europe, and the Lost Generation writers settled in Paris which became a source of inspiration for their writings (Spindler, 1989: 35). After The Second World War, however, Europe had been Americanized, and the nature of expatriation changed and became “bohemian in character” (Ibid., p. 36). Thus, famous cities such as London and Paris lost their attraction and were replaced by other unfamiliar places in Africa, Asia and South America that seduced more travel writers. Many American authors such as William Bouroughs and Jack Kerouak escaped the “conformist mechanized

America” (Ibid.) that they considered as an “air conditioned nightmare” (Ibid.) to settle in Tangier with Paul Bowles. The latter also regarded his motherland after WWII as a “prison” (Ibid.).

Paul Bowles was an existentialist writer who was influenced by both Jean Paul Sartre’s and Albert Camus’s philosophies. He was so inspired by Sartre’s first novel *La Nausée* and translated his play *Huis Clos* into *No Exist* in 1946. Moreover, his reading of all the repertoire of Camus affected his travel fiction, in which the absurdity of the world and the meaninglessness of life are well-portrayed (Spindler, 1989: 40). When Bowles’s selected short stories were written, Albert Camus’s *The Stranger* had been already published in 1942. At that time, strangeness was one of the outcomes of the violent world wars that had a traumatic impact on humanity and alienated individuals from each other even in their own homelands (Kate Lohne and Cathy Lowne, Encyclopedia Britannica). It was under such callous living conditions that Paul Bowles, like many other expatriate writers, expressed their pursuit for inner peace in other alien spaces. Most American exiled authors kept faithful to the American context in their writings. Unlike them, Bowles distinguished his short travel fiction by using foreign settings and native characters that belong to the spaces he visited. That is why the discourse of his short stories is ambivalent, representing a western writer and a native consciousness.

The issue of space holds a central position in Paul Bowles’s short fiction, and spatial criticism in the latter falls into two contrasting categories. Some critics consider North Africa as a healing and curative milieu for Bowles who was deeply injured by the Second World War. Others, however, regard this space as a vehicle through which he reinforces the previous orientalist discourse. Holding the first view, critics such as Bouachrine Assila studied space in Bowles’s fiction from a psychoanalytical angle. She considers that

Bowles's expatriation in Morocco and his attempt to understand the space may be interpreted in relation to Lacan's theory of a child who masters a new environment and who tries to make his own entourage an unfamiliar area (2014: 169). Bowles's dealing with North African locations exemplifies Lacan's concept of space, and most Moroccan settings mirror the author's "imagery of the ego" (Qtd in J.P. Muller and W.J.Richardson, 1994: 50). Morocco stands for the reflected space and contains the author's self imagery. His engagement with that locus reflects his ego and desire for "freedom, harmony, plenitude and unity" (Assila, 2014: 170). In a word, Bowles is looking for self-restoration in the foreign localities he explores.

This view is reinforced by other critics such as Isabel Oliveira Martins who thinks that after WWII, some authors preferred to introduce protagonists who are at odds with their own culture and identity since, though the American was then idealized, he was still confused (Duarte, 2014: 277). Correspondingly, Bowles makes use of foreign settings which are completely different from his in order to confirm the self: "There is perhaps no better way to know one's own society or to come to terms with one's inner self than when one is confronted with difference, with the Other." (Ibid.). So, self discovery is at the core of Bowles's travel fiction: "traveling to a different place, typically in order to know more about it, usually corresponds to a journey into self-knowledge." (Ibid.). Therefore, one may deduce that this first category of criticism keeps Bowles's short travel fiction far from any ideological or stereotyped considerations.

Conversely, a wide range of criticism has studied Bowles's short fiction from an orientalist perspective, and North Africa is viewed as the space that undergoes this stereotyped belief. Though, in his autobiography *Without Stopping* (1992), Bowles admits that North Africa is the magical mysterious

area that provides wisdom and ecstasy (p.125), many critics such as Fernando Gomes criticize him for his racist attitudes towards the Muslims and their culture. Gomes thinks that Bowles holds the same previous orientalist discourse by considering Muslims as “predatory people” (2012: 59) and their culture as “essentially barbarous.” (Ibid.). In “Tea on the Mountain”, for instance, he explores the “motif of North African alterity and the impossibility of true contact with the other.” (Ibid.). That is to say, the Orient is still marginalized in his writings. Zoubida Hamdaoui also considers the settings of Bowles’s short fiction as the main tools through which he shows the clash between the East and the West. While colonized societies, in his stories, are more related to nature, the First World carries its way to civilization and education. The development gap between the East and the West is well-revealed in Bowles’s “The Scorpion”. Though space is pure, it is not safe due to dangerous insects such as scorpions, the thing that makes the old woman (main nameless character) dream of another space. (Hamdaoui, 2013: 119).

Other critics such as Greg Mullins argue that North Africa is eroticized in Bowles’s short fiction, and the theme of sexual desire between the natives and strangers is stressed, mainly in “Tea on the Mountain”. (2005: 122). Similarly, Leslie Fielder considers Bowles as “pornographer of terror” (Qtd in Spindler, 2014: 38) whose fiction constitutes a catalogue of scandalous issues such as seduction, rape, violence and sexual slavery in the Arab world. (Ibid.). So, this second class of criticism regards space as an element that widens the gap between the West and the East and which reinforces the colonial discourse. Thus, while the first category of criticism focuses on a real space that fascinates Bowles, the second stresses only the author’s mental perception to that space. Nevertheless, neither of these critics has ventured to combine the author’s real

perception to Morocco with his own imagination to show his search for a third space in the stories.

This article aims to introduce another type of space in the selected short stories which is built upon both reality and imagination. It is a space of in-between-ness characterized by peace, tolerance and inclusion though it is slightly tainted with some orientalist beliefs. It is produced by a harmonious interaction between African and western characters. In his short stories, the main characters are natives and their consciousness, culture and spaces are the means through which Bowles situates his place in the country where he had chosen to live. Making an instrumental use of native characters helps him overcome the exotic views held by westerners over North African cultures and landscapes. Therefore, these characters reflect both the native mindset and the author's quest for a third space.

2- The Theorization of Space by Edward Soja and Gaston Bachelard

Edward Soja considers space as an “open-ended set of defining moment” (1996 : 260). He invites us to “think differently about the meaning and significance of space and those related concepts that compose and comprise the inherent spatiality of human life: place, location, locality, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory and geography.” (Ibid., p. 1). He develops a “third existential dimension” (Ibid., p. 3) by combining the material and the mental in order to construct a strategy of spatiality that he labels “thirding as othering” (Ibid., p.5), described as a journey to what he calls “the real-and-imagined” places (Ibid., p. 11).

Soja terms ‘*first space*’ the real material world where much importance is given to history and society to the detriment of space which is neglected. This space is ‘perceived’ since it is related to what is sensed and concrete. He coins

'*second space*' all what is related to the imaginary, the imaginative and the symbolic way of representing, defining and ordering the material reality of the first space. In other words, it is the way reality is 'conceived'. The 'Thirdspace', however, overcomes both the first and the second and fuses them to a 'third' type which is 'open' for more interpretations and considerations. It is a space of inclusion rather than exclusion. It is the 'lived' space of all the 'Othered' categories including race, gender and class. And since it is built upon the 'material' and the 'mental', it is simultaneously real and imagined:

Everything comes in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history. Anything which fragments thirdspace separate specialized knowleges or exclusive domains-even on the pretext of handling its infinite complexity-destroys its meaning and openness (Soja, 1996: 56,7)

These 'thirdspaces' also promote struggle, emancipation and liberation (Ibid., p. 68). That is why they constitute spaces that are both 'lived' and 'ignored'. Living in a certain space means being in harmony with its political and ideological principles, and rejecting it is colliding with them.

In his dealing with space, Gaston Bachelard makes a phenomenological exploration of intimate places such as houses and drawers that preoccupy poetry. He introduces the notion of the house which he considers as "our first universe" or the 'non I' that protects the 'I' (1958: 4) and explains how this space constitutes "one of the greatest powers of integration for thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind" (Ibid., p. 6). He associates 'housing' not only with the fact of having a physical location where to settle but also with the feeling of safety and protection. It is a sort of 'material milieu' which is linked to both 'soul' and 'body' (Ibid., p.7).

Bachelard studies the psychology of houses and considers small objects and acts like keys and knotting as means to convey or show the intimacy of these domiciles. Moreover, housing, for him, triumphs the material meaning (physical space) to the unconscious that may be housed wherever self satisfaction is found: “it should be added that it is well and happily housed, in the space of its happiness.” (Ibid., p. 10). So houses are much more spaces of intimacy where “the psychic weight is dominant” (Ibid., p. 12). They are the embodiment of our dreams (Ibid., p. 15), and dreams are more powerful than thoughts. (Ibid., p. 16). Like Edward Soja, Bachelard thinks that “everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate.” (Ibid., p. 39). He thinks that contradictions are not always in opposition, but they may give birth to something new as a result of mixture: “at whatever dialectical pole the dreamer stands, whether in the house or in the universe, the dialects become dynamic.” (Ibid., p. 43).

Though their spatial terminology differs, the two theorists have nearly the same views on space: both their spaces are ‘open’ and ‘welcoming,’ and both reinforce inclusion rather than exclusion. For instance, Soja’s ‘lived space’, which is the combination of the ‘perceived’ and the ‘conceived’, is the equivalent of Bachelard’s ‘housing’ which goes beyond the material meaning to the unconscious. Their theories also share the aspect of searching for self satisfaction and happiness. Focusing on the principles of ‘Thirling’ and ‘Housing’, this article tries to explain how Bowles’s Moroccan and western characters interact with one another to create a thirdspace where tolerance and reconciliation are adopted instead of clash and rejection.

3- The Making of Thirdspace in Paul Bowles’s “By the Water” (1946)

“By the Water” is an atmospheric story which is set in Tangier. It is about the young man Amar, a worker in a shop who decides to flee his town and join the city of his cousins due to his feeling of alienation from the rest of the world. Surprisingly, the city he joins is very cold and dark, and its people are uncommunicative. In spite of this, Amar has finally succeeded to create a bolthole (Third space) thanks to his peaceful resistance. This space is marked through Bowles’s oscillation between the reality of Tangier and its magic. The latter is represented through the metamorphosed character Lazreg who possesses supernatural power to transform humans to other creatures like birds.

Bowles’s protagonist Amar moves from a ‘Firstspace’ which is his real domicile to a ‘Secondspace’ which is imagined, and the fusion of these two spaces within the same story leads to the production of a ‘Thirdspace’. Firstspace is briefly introduced at the opening of the story with much focus on daily life routines that characterize Amar’s town: “People hurried through the little streets that always smelled of frying fish [...]. The small gramophones scraped day and night behind the walls of the shop where young Amar worked and lived.” (1946: 1). Routines are also stressed by Edward Soja who considers them as important aspects that contribute to the construction of real spaces. ‘Firstspace’ for the native Moroccan boy Amar is also the shop where he works and earns his living. The shop for him represents what Gaston Bachelard considers the ‘Non I’ that protects the ‘I’. It is his refuge because it identifies him, yet, since it shelters him only physically and financially, he does not feel that he is housed.

Since Amar is bored by solitude in his ‘Firstspace,’ he wants to explore a ‘Secondspace’ where his cousins reside. ‘Second’ here stands for the second vision that is constructed about the other space in his imaginary, and which

he certainly considers better than the first. It is his feeling of loneliness that makes him construct an image about the “non I” as being a warmer and a more affectionate space than the “I” which is his native town. However, when he reaches the other city, everything seems dark for him. Darkness is perceived in his ‘unconscious state’ since it contradicts the whiteness of the snow that is “deeper in the streets” (Bowles, 1946: 1). The fusion of whiteness and darkness throughout the story creates a third picture in the mind. This also reflects what Soja terms ‘real-imagined space’: while reality is related to the snow as a real natural phenomenon, darkness resides in the protagonist’s unconscious or imaginary.

Bowles describes the second space as an “unfriendly town” (Ibid., p. 2) for his main character who has a feeling of unfamiliarity “immediately” after his arrival there. That is why Amar is proud of his belonging to a “better and larger city” (Bowles, 1946: 2). The protagonist’s pride echoes Bachelard’s thought that the better space is the one we were born in. i.e. the house in which we had our first contact with the world. At this stage, Amar (the self) is still jammed between two spaces (his native town and the new one), and neither is ‘inhabited’ since self satisfaction has not yet been achieved. Being in an unfamiliar place annoys him, so he is “forced to wrap his burnous closely about him as he left the bus station” (Ibid.) in order to remain unnoticed. The burnous is a means through which Amar shows a sense of belonging to another space since this dress unifies all the inhabitants of North Africa (Ibid.). According to Lacoste Dujardin, “The accession [of a boy] to adulthood earns him the right to wear a burnous and to carry a gun, to mark his virility and to sit in the assembly of men.” (2005: 328 Trans mine). The burnous in Berber culture symbolises a rite of passage from infancy to maturity, and here it stands for Amar’s manhood and courage to explore a third space.

The story is not devoid of some autobiographical elements since Amar's strangeness in the new city equals Bowles's incongruity in Tangier that he visited for the first time in 1931. Both the writer and his protagonist are outsiders in alien spaces as a result of their feelings of confusion in their homelands. Both of them look for a new life where the self may have a rest far from the boring environments that have tired them. Bowles's and Amar's journeys are symbolic explorations of other spaces that are both real and imagined. Before the trips take place, both the author and his main character have constructed ideas in their minds; some are real and others illusory.

Since Amar has not yet involved in the everyday life of the new town, he still feels some strangeness which is due to difference between the new way of living and his own mode of life. Edward Soja considers partaking in others' daily routines as the most important step to decode their spaces (1996: 66). Though Amar has not yet thrown himself in the new space, he is so conscious about the necessity of respecting others' rules and the risks of transgressing their ethics. For instance, instead of undressing publicly to take a bath, he "went to the direction of the dark corner (Bowles, 1946: 3) because he does not want to "be embroiled immediately in a quarrel which could end badly for him." (Ibid.). Even in the "large dimly lit room" (Ibid.), Amar remains vigilant and he "slowly approached" (Ibid.) the other men "taking care not to step on the sleepers." (Ibid.). This carefulness has relation with humans' 'spatial awareness', which is a self recognition of the position of someone's body in a given space in relation to either an object or other people (Thera Kids: 2013). Amar has a high 'spatial consciousness' since he is able to recognise his location in another space, and most of all he keeps out of mischief there. By being so cautious, Amar is seeking integration.

The narrative technique in the story oscillates between the reflection of reality and the creation of imagined scenes, and this is what results in the making of third space. In order to add some fancy to the story, Bowles incorporates an extraordinary character who is a little nameless boy that guides Amar in the new space. The kid is described rather as a “midget than a child” (Ibid.), a pejorative depiction for a person of unusually short stature. Authors use the conception of ‘miniature’, which means anything of much smaller than normal size, to add fantasy to their tales. (Bachelard, 1958: 148). Making use of this notion in the story adds magic to the narrative, thus it highlights ‘secondspace’ since it has relation with the author’s imagination.

Since the native boy belongs to a very poor entourage, he thinks that all foreigners are wealthy: “You are a stranger. You have much money.” (Bowles, 1946: 3). Here, the reality of ‘Firstspace’, which is poverty, and the belief the little kid holds on the ‘Secondspace’, which is wealth, are mingled in Amar’s reply to him: “you will get your coins when you come to wake me in the morning not tonight” (Ibid.). His answer creates a sense of balance between the two spaces and lets the reader decode the status of Amar as a person who is neither poor nor rich. His response locates him in an in-between space as an ordinary man who has enough money to pay for his stay without being prodigal.

Amar encounters some incidents that have increased his feeling of alienation; he even wishes “he had not left his own town” (Ibid., p. 6). Since he is a stranger, he is not allowed to act without having permission, and he is strongly rejected by a nameless man:

“Who are you?”

“Who gave you permission?”

“Get out. I don’t know you.” (Ibid., p. 4).

At this level, Bowles's protagonist undergoes a harsh rejection that he should overcome pacifically. Peaceful resistance is viewed by Soja as an important step for individuals who wish to reach thirdspaces. Amar, who is not at ease in the new space, looks back if there is no danger even when he gets away with the boy. (Ibid., p. 5). He is terrified by the cruel man in the same way the little boy is haunted by his master Lazreg. The poor boy is horrified by his master and he is persuaded that the latter has an extraordinary power to "change them into birds" (Ibid., pp. 6, 7). He keeps reiterating this expression to convince Amar about the supernatural power that monstrous creature possesses. The little boy stands for the Arabs who are paralysed by both superstitious beliefs and blind loyalty to their rulers. Here again the self (Amar) witnesses a sort of dilemma between two contrasting spaces: the original familiar environment and the reached place where rules should not be transgressed.

Instead of returning to his firstspace, Amar contributes to the creation of another space by being an active actor instead of remaining a passive observer. He decides to move from the "unfriendly town" (Ibid., p. 6) to another region, within the same space, where the self may have some rest. Amar and the boy have left that closed space and reached an "open country" (Ibid.). At last, self liberation is achieved when they have succeeded to run away to another space where they may enjoy their freedom: "when daylight came, they were in another part of the land" (Ibid., p. 7). The "open country" (Ibid., p. 6) stands for North Africa that was open for many tourists and emigrants, mainly Americans and Europeans, after the two world wars. Self liberation is also what Bowles was seeking when he fled America looking for a new mode of life different from his mechanized environment.

Bachelard's belief that immense spaces like seas and forests are best intimate spaces for daydreamers is well-illustrated in the story. It is until Amar and the little boy have moved to the sea that they have finally sensed inner happiness, and it is in the aquatic large space that they find peace again. Even though the boy is still haunted by his master Lazreg, Amar tries to welcome him to the undisturbed space by pretending that it is thanks to his help that he has been saved from the monstrous Lazreg. (Ibid., p. 8).

Bowles's "By the Water" illustrates the characters' quest for thirdspace and echoes both Soja's and Bachelard's views to reach it. It highlights the struggle of the self to reach peace through integration in another space. However, self satisfaction is not attainable without the amalgamation of some contrasting factors to create a hybrid space for different individuals who look for deliverance. Amar has overcome his feeling of alienation in a second space thanks to the native boy's help. Nonetheless, without the former's courage and self determination, the little child would never leave his violent traumatic space to be finally freed from the enslavement of his cruel master. Thus, 'Thirdspace' or 'Housing' is constructed where happiness is found after a pacific process of resistance and mutual interaction.

4-'Thirling as Othering' in Paul Bowles's "The Scorpion" (1948)

Bowles's "The Scorpion" is an animal- human tale. It is about a nameless old woman who lives alone in a cave after the departure of her sons. Like "By the Water," this story is also built upon both the real and the imaginary since, in addition to some realistic aspects, Bowles integrates surrealism within it. The incorporation of insects and animals within his narratives reflects

Bowles's fascination with the magical and the mysterious side of North Africa in general and Morocco in particular.

Any literary work whose setting is a cave jogs someone's memory about Plato's cave. Though the old woman's cave is not identical with Plato's, there are many similarities between the two. Both stand for people's self imprisonment in what they consider comfort zones without making efforts to discover the outside world. Like the persons who are locked in Plato's cave, the old woman prefers to stay in the cave when her sons decide to go outside it. Similar to these individuals who see only shadows from the wall, the old woman is literally blinded since she is unable to see the old man who is calling her from the outside world. Since the man symbolizes the reality of the outside world, the old woman thinks that following him will disturb her tranquility, thus she is satisfied by the shadow she has in mind about him. Unlike the individuals who refuse to flee their cave when the freed person tells them about the reality of the outside world, however, the old woman has finally accepted to join her sons to an outside unknown place. The end of the story reveals that Bowles is optimistic about the Orient's striving for independence; this is shown through the native characters' quest for freedom and change. The old woman's departure from the cave with her sons reminds us of Amar's running away with the little boy since both look for more comfortable spaces.

Even if the main setting of "The Scorpion" is closed, dark and primitive, it is an important space for the old woman since it is her "first universe," or the "non I" that protects the "I" (Bachelard, 1958: 4). Though the cavern stands for darkness and absence of colors and light, it also symbolizes protection and shelter. It reinforces Bachelard's idea that 'Housing' is not limited to the material milieu and all the necessary means for everyday life, but the meaning of the conception goes beyond this to reach the unconscious side where all

human desires and dreams dwell. So, wherever there is self satisfaction, there is housing. While the old woman prefers to maintain her peaceful life in the cave at the beginning of the story, her sons prefer moving to “the town where many people live” (Bowles, 1984: 48). It is the old woman’s desire to stay in the cave and her indifference about her sons’ choice of removal that confirms the feeling of ‘self satisfaction’ for both sides since everybody settles in his dreaming world.

The old woman’s reasoning accords with Edward Soja’s ‘Trialectical Thinking’ which is not a restrictive way of thinking, but an open spatial prospect that aims to accept differences. Instead of remaining inside the cave with the old woman, the sons choose an outside adventure, and it is this open-minded thinking that gives another perception to space in the story. Both tolerance and harmony reign among the members of this family. That is to say, each leads his own life in a free way, but they still constitute a united family. On the one hand, the old woman is satisfied because she finally has an independent life in the grotto:

There were many things about this life that the old woman liked. She was no longer obliged to argue and fight with her sons to make them carry wood to the charcoal oven. She was free to move about at night and look for food. She could eat everything she found without having to share it. And she owed no one any debt of thanks for the things she had in her life. (Bowles, 1948: 49)

On the other hand, her sons are also pleased by their removal to the town (Secondspace) where they have more life opportunities comparing to their ‘Firstspace’ in the hills: “In the town there are always many things to do, and they would be doing them, not caring to remember the time they had lived in the hills looking after the old woman.” (Ibid., p. 48). This reflects the sons’ complete adherence to another space with no nostalgic feelings to the old one. Both the old woman’s sons and Amar have the same dream of exploring new

places since all of them have constructed mental images about a better life in other grounds.

Open-mindedness is one of the most important characteristics of 'Thirdspace' since it allows individuals to choose their spaces without colliding with others. This non-judgmental attitude is the main principle on which Henri Lefebvre builds his "Tableau des Triades" (Qtd in Soja, 1996: 7). The 'Tableau' suggests a third alternative for all contrasting factors in life, and it constitutes a basic source for Edward Soja's 'Thirthing as Othering'. For instance, 'difference' or 'diversity' is the third option that is resulted from the opposing terms 'identity' and 'contradiction'. In "The Scorpion", though the sons have not an identical life with their mother, they have never reacted against her way of life; instead they have chosen a completely different lifestyle for themselves. Even in "By the Water", Bowles portrays his protagonist as open-minded and tolerant with the little native boy. In spite of the latter's poverty and dependence on his master, Amar collaborates with him to free themselves from danger and oppression.

Another factor that gives a third dimension to space in "The Scorpion" is the use of binary contrasting imagery such as 'light' and 'pink' in the description of the cave that is supposed to be 'dark'. The fusion of two opposing features creates a third spatial vision that is unusual: "Inside where she was, the light was pleasant and of a pink color from the clay of around." (Bowles, 1948: 48). In addition, Bowles fuses both the 'real' and the 'imaginary' within the same narrative. As a real matter, the cave is portrayed as a space that contains dangerous insects like scorpions and other "small wild bird or animal" that "strayed inside the entrance" (Ibid., p. 49). Surprisingly, the reader is set in an extraordinary space where dangerous creatures do not harm humans, thus, the old woman sometimes ignores them:

[...] the scorpion seized her finger with his pinchers, clinging there tightly although she waved her head widely about. Then she realized that he was not going to sting her. A great feeling of happiness went through her. She raised her finger to her lips to kiss the scorpion. (Ibid., pp. 51,2).

At this stage, the author does not remind the reader that the woman is asleep and suspense is kept as if it is a real scene. When tension reaches its peak, Bowles has finally explained that the old woman is dreaming: “she woke up and called out.” (Ibid., p. 52). The combination of realism and surrealism in this scene creates a third spatial vision. The dream that the old woman makes about the scorpion reflects her self-consciousness and realization that she is not doomed to remain in the cave forever while other comfortable spaces are accessible.

Though the old woman is satisfied in her ‘firstspace’ at the beginning of the story, she finally accepts to leave it when another sheltering environment is proposed to her. She has two other invitations to new spaces: the first is made by the old man who invites her to the valley which is an immense area where someone may reconcile with the self, whereas the second is an exploration of an unknown place with one of her sons. Her approval to discover another space with her son is confirmed when she tells him:

“Is it far?”

“Three days,” he said, looking at her legs. (Ibid.).

Thus, in spite of the old woman’s desire for freedom and her attachment to her humble life, she agrees to leave her firstspace, and unconsciously aspires to explore other spaces, mainly the colossal ones, since even in her reverie “she dreamed that the town was very large.” (Ibid., p. 51). The expansiveness of space that resides in the woman’s imaginary equals the openness of the country that Amar and his friend have explored in “By the Water”. In the story, ‘Thirling’ is consolidated by the woman’s accord to integrate in two

different spaces: the primitive closed cave and a new open ground. It is until the end of the story that Bowles distinguishes his setting from Plato's cave where the prisoners remain handicapped and unable to confront the exterior world like the old woman.

5- Space of Inclusion in Paul Bowles's "Tea on the Mountain" (1950)

"Tea on the Mountain" is one of the products of Bowles's encounters with North Africa. The story opens by introducing a nameless American lady who tries to integrate in an alien space by being in touch with some native boys. The setting is the International Zone which refers to Tangier, the main city in North Morocco before its integration with the whole country in 1956, the year of Moroccan Independence. (Michel Hynes, Britannica). In that zone, one can feel both lonesome and friendly due to the different races that settle there. Tourists, mainly western artists and writers, transformed this space to a melting pot.

In the story, Bowles depicts a space of in-betweenness based on both native and western features. On the one hand, the International Zone is portrayed as a rural space full of "Riffian mountains" (1950: 133) where life is still humble and inexpensive (Ibid., p.128). On the other hand, the city is dominated by westerners. The domination is revealed through the European names which are given to many places such as "Spanish post" (p.128), "Lycée Français" and "Café du Telegraph Anglais" (P.131). Then, while some natives are still loyal to their conventional way of life, others decline completely their traditional lifestyle. Full devotion to traditions is embodied by the Berber woman, who works in the farm, prepares native bread and takes care of her olive and an orange tree. Indifference to native customs is represented by Ghazi who rejects

the food offered by the woman, and prefers “a real European picnic” (Ibid., p. 133).

The contact between an American woman novelist (living in Morocco) and two Moroccan boys led to the creation of a thirdspace. It is through discovering others’ real life facts, customs and beliefs that the characters get access to spaces which are utterly different from theirs. The American lady feels need for some friends and “admits that she sometimes feels lonely” (Ibid., p. 128), and the Moroccan Driss “had been Europeanized to the point of insisting on aperitifs before his meals” (Ibid., p.129). That is to say, each of these characters is ready to explore another unfamiliar space as a result of being in touch with the other. Loneliness is the main reason that urges both the female protagonist of this story and the male protagonist of “By the Water” to look for more sociable and warm spaces. Even the old woman in “The Scorpion” suffers from solitude in her cave; that is why she is finally convinced that leaving her cold confined space is the best decision. In the three stories, Bowles represents characters that look for new spaces because they are bored by their Firstspaces.

After being introduced to the students of the Lycée Français by Driss, the American lady has been warmly welcomed, mainly by the two Moroccan boys Mjid and Ghazi, with whom she develops friendship. The assemblage of both native and western characters puts them in a hybrid position qualified by Soja as ‘Thirdspace’, which is also a space of inclusion. The American lady is tenderly invited to Ghazi’s house: “I have a very beautiful house indeed,” Ghazi said, “Would you like to come and live in it?” (Ibid.). Even Mjid who is unable to receive her in his house, due to a sickness in his family, suggests a picnic to welcome her in Morocco. The picnic is the contact zone where the indigenes and the outsiders try to discern the secret world of each other. Most

of all, Mjid ventures to drink wine with her though he is conscious of the problems that this may cause with his father.

In “Tea on the Mountain,” the American lady is well-housed and she is very satisfied by the native’s welcoming: “I thank you a thousand of times. You are too kind,” she tells the boys (Ibid.). The way she is treated reinforces Bachelard conception of ‘Housing’, which is not limited to material grounding, but also requires shelter and security. These are the main aspects of houses that lead to happiness and self satisfaction: “it is well and happily housed in the space of its happiness.” (Bachelard, 1958: 10). The lady is pleased by the natives’ carefulness in the same way Amar is delighted by the native boy’s assistance. In both stories, the cohabitation between native and western characters situates them in a Thirdspace of inclusion.

Like Amar, the protagonist of “By the Water”, the American lady often feels hostility due to the intolerable beliefs hold on strangers by some Moroccan natives. She is deeply angered when “some of the bearded men in the café looked over at the table with open disapproval in their faces. She saw that they regarded her as a symbol of corruption.” (Bowles, 1950: 132). Thus, she feels nostalgic to her ‘Firstspace’ for a while because of these men’s behaviors that irritate her. However, the two boys Mjid and Ghazi keep an eye on her in order to make her happy and comfortable again. When Ghazi offers her a gift she says:

“But you are too nice. What can I give you?”

“The pleasure of having a true European friend,” said Mjid gravely.

“But I’m American,” she objected.

“All the better.” (Ibid., p. 133).

In spite of religious fundamentalism that is still reigning in the Arab world, in the story, Morocco is portrayed as a space of inclusion where all contradictions may reconcile. Very often the native characters themselves

express their disgust and disagreement with some exaggerated beliefs: “But I hate our severe conventions” (Ibid.), Mjid says. Through these words the latter makes a request for a space of autonomy. In fact, freedom is also the dream of the old woman’s sons who fled the cave of their mother in “The Scorpion”.

Mjid, who claims self-liberation, denies any friendship with one of the Negro boys, and this is what makes the lady react strongly: “Don’t you consider Negroes as good as you?” (Ibid., p.134). In this scene, it is the lady who invites Mjid to an in-between space of tolerance where both the whites and the blacks should be united. Her fight against racism strengthens Soja’s thought that in ‘Thirdspace’ all issues including race, class and gender should be resolved. Individuals should not search only for self freedom but also for of union and integration.

American Transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson associate Man’s happiness with nature which is the source of the sublime. Many years later, their ideas are reinforced by modernist theorists like Bachelard who considers immense and open spaces such as forests like places where humans go “deeper and deeper into a limitless world” (Bachelard, 1958: 185). It is there that peace is found since they are ‘inner states’ where someone may transcend the social moral codes (Ibid.). In Bowles’s “Tea on the Mountain,” union and reconciliation between natives and foreigners are established in nature, and this is shown through Mjid and the English lady who belong to two different spaces: “Don’t be afraid, said Mjid, although she had given no sign of fear. You are my sister.” (Bowles, 1950: 134). This echoes Emerson’s thoughts included in his essay “Nature”: “In the woods, we return to reason and faith [...] all mean egotism vanishes” (1836: 02). It is in the woods that the racist beliefs of Mjid are eliminated and his humanity is restored. Mjid himself confirms this when he tells the lady: “When one is far away from the town, in one’s own

garden, far from everyone, sitting where it is quit, one always thinks.” (Bowles, 1950: 135). By overcoming his racist beliefs in nature, Mjid succeeds to situate himself in a third space of tolerance and inclusion. Even in “By the Water”, it is nature that cures the boy who accompanies Amar from his trauma which is resulted by his masters’ daily threats. Nature has a positive effect on the psychology of the characters in Bowles’s short fiction.

One of the most important factors that adds intimacy to open spaces is silence. Gaston Bachelar thinks that “there is nothing like silence to suggest a sense of unlimited space [...] the absence of sounds leaves it quite pure, and in the silence, we are seized with the sensation of something vast, deep and boundless.” (1958: 43). In the story, it is the shared picnic in a pure nature, where silence also reigns that lets the characters transcend their inner selves to recognize and reconcile with each other. This reinforces again Emerson’s belief that “In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.” (1836: 3).

The lady has another intimate invitation for tea by Mjid who welcomes her affectionately in his house. It is another opportunity for them to be more in touch with each other morally and spiritually. The warm welcome matches Bachelard’s definition of the notion of ‘Housing’ which is not only a physical space for the body but also a moral refuge for the soul. Even the decoration of the house reflects the inner side of Mjid whose invitation is much more symbolic than funny: “You find yourself here in this beautiful room. You are my guest. You should be happy with me...” (Bowles, 1950: 134). Here he induces the lady to live the moment and to discover the hidden secrets of his domicile. In a word, he wants her to explore the intimacy of his ‘inhabited space’. While in “Tea on the Mountain” and “By the Water” invitations are made to specific third spaces, in “The Scorpion” the old woman is invited to

an unknown locality. Even though it is an indefinite place that is not qualified by the author, the reader expects it to be better than the dark closed cave, therefore a space of happiness and freedom.

Space in Bowles's "Tea on the Mountain" is open and inclusive. It is a space where both the native characters and the western lady interact in harmony and agreement with one another in spite of their cultural differences. Mjid dreams to visit America to discover more about her country: "Perhaps someday I shall go to America, and then you can invite me to your house for tea." (Ibid., p. 138). In fact, drinking tea with friends is a sharing tradition between the Arabs and the Westerners. The title of this story itself is an invitation to 'Thirdspace' where all contradictions and oppositions reconcile and give birth to a third alternative space. Thus, while some are traumatized by the fear of difference, others think that "everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate." (Bachelard, 1985: 39).

6- Conclusion:

The depiction of space in Bowles's short fiction is less destructive comparing to his novels in which the end is fatal. While in *The Sheltering Sky*, Port Moresby dies in the desert and in *Let it Come down*, Dyar kills his friend Thami, tolerance and union triumph in the selected stories. The shift from the use of western protagonists that characterize his long fiction to much focus on native characters in his stories has marked a spatial turn in his narratives. In his novels, space has a harsh impact on the characters that are unable to cope with it; therefore, they either die or become mad. In his short stories, however, most of the characters manage to keep their heads above water in alien spaces.

In his short fiction, Bowles portrays a space of invitation rather than exclusion. It is an open space in which differences are not only tolerated but also mingled to produce something different and new. It is also an extraordinary space based on both the 'real' and the 'imaginary'. In all of "By the Water" (1946), "The Scorpion" (1948) and "Tea on the Mountain" (1950), he emphasizes on native characters that interact with westerners to create an in-between space where the two sides are included. Bowles's oscillation between reality and imagination makes his narrative discourse ambivalent; therefore, considering him an orientalist or an occidentalist remains debatable.

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