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The Social Life of Logistics on the Moroccan Mediterranean Coast

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of

Philosophy in Anthropology

By

Janell Rothenberg

2015

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Social Life of Logistics on the Moroccan Mediterranean Coast

by

Janell Rothenberg

Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Suzanne Slyomovics, Chair

If Morocco is the historic crossroads between Africa and Europe, then Tangier is the informal capital of crossing. To be urban denizens of this city includes the everyday experience of seeing Spain and Gibraltar on the horizon, and of navigating between the winds that blow from the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. This dissertation follows the Tangier Med Port, a new infrastructure opened in 2007 at this intersection between lands and seas in order to transform Morocco into a major actor in the global logistics of trade. Merely nine miles from Europe, this port was built at one of the busiest bottlenecks in world shipping to serve as a platform for global commodity circulation. To be Moroccan actors in the industries of this emerging global hub includes the shared experience of seeing this bottleneck translated into the materials of work. While mega-ports are planned as infrastructures of commodity circulation, port actors translate plans into the everyday logistics of circulating commodities.

In the five chapters of this dissertation, I analyze both the aspirations of this global logistics hub as well as the everyday logistics of commodity circulation in the port region. In chapter one, I examine the global, national, and regional context of the Tangier Med Port through an analysis sensitive to the past, present and future. I show how the perspectives of Tangier inhabitants and port administrators reveal contrasting versions of global regionalism. In chapter two, I follow the regional social worlds of trailers and containers in order to illustrate how these objects of physical movement connect the Tangier Med Port to a larger region of socio-technical practice. In chapter three, I examine how the aspirational discourses at the port authority exclude concerns deemed too “Moroccan” in order to qualify the Tangier Med Port as a uniquely modern infrastructure. These discourses position the port as the ideal platform for transcending the perceived temporal incongruity between Morocco and the Global North. In chapter four, I propose the concept of “practical connectivity” to replace traditional metaphors of friction or flow for understanding how emerging port connections are mediated in particular projects of global logistics. In the final chapter, I contrast the shifting visibilities of labor and infrastructure during and after a major work stoppage at the port’s container terminals in 2011. Stoppages reveal how these terminals, designed primarily for moving transshipped goods between vessels, are reframed by dockworkers into innovative platforms of global solidarity.

My ethnographic study of the Tangier Med Port and its actors reveals multiple, planned and unplanned ways through which commodity movement is assembled in a particular context. I intend this dissertation to advance the ethnography of logistics as a discrete field of inquiry into the maritime infrastructures changing the shores of the Global South, creating new supply-chain subjectivities, and altering how commodities move in the world.

The dissertation of Janell Rothenberg is approved.

Akhil Gupta

Jessica Cattelino

Andrew Lakoff

Christopher Kelty

Suzanne Slyomovics, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

Research for this dissertation was conducted in English, French, Spanish, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and Moroccan Colloquial Arabic (also known as Moroccan *Darija*). Many interviews involved switching between European and Arabic languages, including in the same sentence. This is a common way of speaking in professional contexts in Morocco. All non-English words and phrases have been translated into English by the dissertation author. When useful to the reader, original or transcribed words are provided parenthetically in italics. For clarity, these non-English words are preceded by the following abbreviations: Fr. (French), Sp. (Spanish), Ar. (Moroccan Standard Arabic), and Mor. Ar. (Moroccan Colloquial Arabic). Both Modern Standard Arabic and Moroccan Colloquial Arabic words in the main text of the dissertation are transliterated according to the method of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES)*. This method has been modified by dropping the use of long vowel diacritics and relying on the English or French spellings of personal and place names. In the acknowledgements section, Moroccan Colloquial Arabic words are written in the more popular, *tchat* method of transcription found across Moroccan social media.

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of me even once we went our separate ways. Writing my dissertation would have been profoundly more confusing and isolating if not for my current and former peers at UCLA. Thank you all, but especially: Maya Boutaghou, Bonnie Richard, Meher Varma, Misa Dayson, Anoush Suni, Aditi Halbe, Jananie Kalyanaraman, Lilly Nguyen, Nir Shafir, Anat Mooreville, and Daniella Perry. Beyond UCLA, Robert Frey, Sofia Kalo, Claire Cox, and Shawn Samuel kept me going when the writing got hard. Finally, I would also like to extend a special thank you to my friend Timur Hammond for letting me feel like a geographer whenever I needed to, and for always being available for feedback and support.

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Re:Work International Research Center at Humboldt University, the Moroccan American Commission for Education and Cultural Exchange (MACECE) and the Tangier American Legation Institute for Moroccan Studies (TALIM).

In Morocco, I would like nothing more than to thank everyone that participated in my research for their generous support. However, my research in the Moroccan private sector required me to guarantee anonymity to my participants. As a result, I have used pseudonyms for almost all of the individuals and businesses that accepted me in their midst between 2008 and 2012. My main exception to this is in referring to the Tangier Med Port and its constituent areas. In the text, the use of pseudonyms or real names is clearly indicated. To all those who gave me their time, I am eternally grateful to you for facilitating my research by allowing me to interview and conduct participant observation. Many of you also introduced me to other potential participants, which allowed me to form a network that I could not have created without your references. My hope is that my dissertation is an adequate reflection of your experiences and perspectives.

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This dissertation received support from the UCLA Department of Anthropology, the UCLA Graduate Division, and external funding sources. The American Institute for Maghrib Studies provided me a short-term research grant for my pre-dissertation research in Morocco in summer 2009. From 2011 to 2012, my dissertation research in Morocco was funded by both a fellowship from the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Abroad Program and Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant #SES-10277666 from the National Science Foundation’s Program in Science, Technology, and Society.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Before attending the University of California, Los Angeles, Janell Rothenberg earned degrees at Hampshire College and New York University. At Hampshire College, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in a self-designed concentration in Jewish studies and was a recipient of the J. M. Kaplan Fellowship in 1997. Her undergraduate academic studies also included coursework at Bard College at Simon's Rock from 1996 to 1997 and completion of the intensive Arabic summer program at Middlebury College in 2002. From 2001 to 2003, she was the recipient of a MacCracken Fellowship from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at New York University. She received a Master of Arts in Near Eastern Studies from this institution in 2003.

While at the University of California, Los Angeles, Janell was the recipient of Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships in Arabic from 2008 to 2010. She worked for five quarters as a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Anthropology, Interdepartmental Program in International Development Studies, and the Institute for Society and Genetics. She also designed and taught a seminar as a Teaching Associate for the undergraduate cluster program on the History of Modern Thought. While in Southern California, she completed the Global Logistics Specialist program at the Center for International Trade and Transportation at California State University, Long Beach.

Janell is the 2015-2016 Postdoctoral Fellow in Middle East Studies at the George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs in Washington, D. C.

INTRODUCTION

The Social Life of Logistics on the Moroccan Mediterranean Coast

This dissertation follows the emergence of new logistics infrastructures and forms of work on Morocco's Mediterranean coast in order to understand (1) how local logistics actors shape global commodity circulation and (2) how an historic port region is reshaped by logistics. At the center of this economic development is the Tangier Med Port, opened in 2007 in order to transform Morocco's historic crossroads on the Strait of Gibraltar into a global logistics hub. This port infrastructure is designed to mediate goods movement between multiple vessels, cargoes, and destinations. I used ethnographic methods to follow the development of this port and its logistics region during its first five years of operations (2007-2012). I observed the multiple, planned and unplanned ways through which commodity movement is assembled by the everyday logistics of a particular, infrastructural context. In this introduction, I trace my research trajectory from first becoming interested in Tangier in July 2006 to concluding fieldwork in June 2012. Figure 1 is a map of the Strait of Gibraltar between Morocco and Spain in which I illustrate the physical trajectory of my fieldwork in Morocco between three key places: (A) the city of Tangier, (B) the Tangier Med Port, and (C) the Tangier Free Zone. I describe my initial encounters with these three sites and how each prompted me to ask different but related questions about globalization, infrastructure, and circulation.



Figure 1: Map of Fieldwork in Morocco. (A) = Tangier, (B) = The Tangier Med Port, (C) = Tangier Free Zone. Also indicated on this map is the nine-mile distance between Tangier Med and Spain, the narrowest span between Africa and Europe. *Google Maps*. Map data ©2015 Google, Inst. Geogr. Nacional

Figure 2 (inset): Map of Tangier in the Mediterranean. *Google Maps*. Map Data ©2015 GeoBasis-DE/BKG (©2009), Google, Inst. Geogr. Nacional, ORION-ME

My first encounter with the city of Tangier was during a trip in 2006. I found this city between the continents of Africa and Europe and the waters of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean to be an ideal place to think about the intersection of globalization and place. My visit also raised questions for me about the particular lineage of contemporary, global Morocco in Tangier, the country's long-neglected, former international capital. I returned to these questions in 2008 during pre-dissertation research in Tangier in the summer after I began my

doctoral studies. Pursuing questions about the once and future global city of Tangier led me to my first encounter with the Tangier Med Port. With support from contacts I made at the Tangier Med Port Authority in 2008, I returned in summer 2009 to Tangier for further pre-dissertation research into the national and global aspirations of this port in order to contribute to the then emerging anthropology of infrastructure. When I subsequently returned to Tangier in 2011 for fifteen months of fieldwork, I was invited to follow the particular ways of using the Tangier Med Port and moving goods across the Tangier region by a leading export-oriented factory in the Tangier Free Zone. This invitation allowed me to expand my research into questions of circulation by studying the work sites of everyday trucking and shipping logistics in the Tangier Med region.

During each period of fieldwork in the Tangier region, I conducted research in several different languages. The choice in language, particularly for ethnographic interviews, was made in response to the preference and educational background of the research participant. For instance, while I spoke with the mainly foreign-educated, Moroccan port officials in English or French, I usually interacted with Moroccans truckers and freight forwarders in Moroccan Colloquial Arabic (*Darija*). In other contexts, such as with the cargo flow coordinators I describe in chapter four, we spoke in the common form of code-switching found in professional offices in Morocco, in which specialized terms are drawn from European languages while most other words are spoken in Moroccan Colloquial Arabic. I indicate which research language or languages were used when introducing research participants and quotes. I clearly indicate which personal and business names in the text are pseudonyms and which are real names. Finally, I largely forgo dating interview quotes from pseudonymous sources in order to maintain anonymity for my research participants.

Encountering the City of Tangier

In July 2006, I had my first encounter with the city of Tangier (see Figure 1, point A). I had traveled north by train from the Moroccan capital of Rabat, where I had been teaching English for the previous four months. I was drawn to the city's uniquely international location and history. From its position on the Strait of Gibraltar, Tangier juts out into the narrow divide between the continents of Africa and Europe and the seas of the Atlantic and Mediterranean (see Figure 2). Once I arrived, I could see familiar lines from world maps made manifest in the urban landscape of this historic port city. I also found myself more at home in Tangier than I imagined I would due in part to the fact that I did not stand out as a foreigner in the ways I had in Rabat and Fez. When walking in the old, walled section of Tangier, a woman told her daughter in Moroccan Arabic, while smiling at me, "Look at the Northerner!" (Mor. Ar. *Shufi, ash-shamaliyya!*). I could tell from her accent that she came from outside the northern region of Morocco. She had mistakenly identified me as a northern Moroccan woman because my light eyes and hair resemble common features found amongst the Riffian Berbers, the ethnic group historically inhabiting the Rif Mountains of northern Morocco. This was the first of what would be many instances of passing in Tangier as a local during my repeated returns to the city over the course of doctoral research. In 2006, the summer before I applied to doctoral programs in anthropology, my experience in Tangier merely confirmed that this was a city where I wanted to return.

I first went to Morocco in November 2005 in order to study Moroccan Arabic intensively in Fez. I had previously studied Modern Standard Arabic for my undergraduate and master's degrees in Middle Eastern Studies. During that time, I had been a student of the early twentieth century international history of British imperialism in the Middle East. My research had not

required me to speak colloquial Arabic. However, my scholarly interests in the region began to shift in response to events occurring while pursuing my master's degree at New York University between September 2001 and September 2003. In the wake of September 11th and the United States' invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, I became less interested in international history and increasingly concerned with the everyday stories of contemporary life that lay outside of United States headlines and policies regarding the Middle East and North Africa. By the time I went to Morocco in November 2005, I envisioned my enrollment in an intensive Moroccan Colloquial Arabic program in Fez as initial preparation for doctoral studies on contemporary life in the Middle East and North Africa. When I returned to Morocco in March 2006, I spent several months in the capital, Rabat, teaching English, living with Moroccan families, and completing intermediate level studies in Moroccan Colloquial Arabic.

After my experiences of living in Fez and Rabat in 2005 and 2006, I found Tangier's location to have shaped a very different Moroccan city. Figure 3 is a map that illustrates the location of Tangier in relation to other Moroccan cities and the wider region. Unlike in Fez and Rabat, I met in Tangier urban natives that boasted about how international (Ar. *dawli*) they have always been. This was a contemporary reminder that Tangier was under international administration while the rest of Morocco was ruled France and Spain from 1912 to 1956. While Morocco had been partitioned into French and Spanish protectorates in 1912, the future Tangier remained a source of disagreement between several countries. As a solution, the neutral, demilitarized Tangier International Zone was established in 1923, which placed the city under joint foreign administration until Moroccan independence in 1956. Governed first by France, Spain and Britain, the administration of the International Zone would eventually be joined by representatives from Portugal, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States.

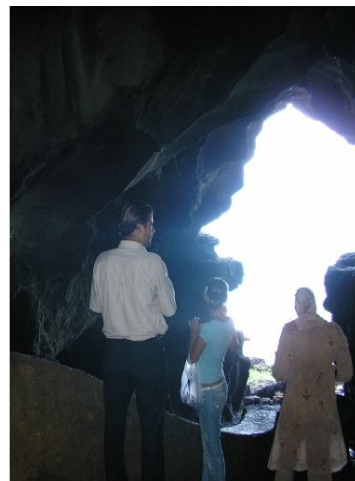


Figure 3 (above): Map of Morocco. *Google Maps*. Map Data ©2015 Google, INEGI

Figure 4 (above right): Image of Tangier with the Bay of Tangier the background. Janell Rothenberg, 2008.

Figure 5 (below right): Image of the Cave of Hercules, where the Atlantic and Mediterranean meet. Janell Rothenberg, 2008.

I was captivated not only by this vibrant past of international intermixture but also its reflection in the urban landscape. Figure 4 is a photo of how the Mediterranean appears in spaces between the buildings of central Tangier. This photo features the Tangier Inn, where I stayed in 2006 and during subsequent, pre-dissertation research trips. Figure 5 is a photo of the Cave of Hercules, a site on the outskirts of Tangier. This cave is where, according to Greek myth, Hercules stayed before separating the continents of Africa and Europe. Tourists and locals alike enjoy photos taken in front of the Africa-shaped opening in the cave, which looks out over the meeting point of the Atlantic and Mediterranean. These images and maps evoke Tangier’s

location at the intersection of the North-South divide of continents and the East-West meeting point of seas.

In 2006, I encountered the city of Tangier as an ideal site for reflecting on the past, present, and future of global circulation. Once I started my doctoral studies in anthropology in September 2007, my academic interest in Tangier was bolstered by the significant gap I found in the otherwise extensive anthropological literature on Morocco. Even though Morocco has hosted generations of foreign anthropologists, I found that with few exceptions most ethnographic work in English on Morocco has taken place outside of Tangier and the Northern region. It was as if there was an assumption that the “real” Morocco was in the interior of the country rather than in Tangier and the North. However, there is also a practical reason for this gap. The French language skills of many American scholars of North Africa have led them to study the formerly French parts of Morocco, about which much secondary literature is in French. Northern Morocco, on the other hand, has a large secondary literature in Spanish. In Morocco, the French focus of much social science scholarship as well as the fact that all major universities are located outside of the northern region has also contributed to the lack of studies. Additionally, there are political reasons for this scholarly gap. The previous King of Morocco, Hassan II, who died in 1999, saw the politically restive North as a threat to his rule. As he supported a policy of isolating the region, studying it became politically difficult during those years. Thus, not only was northern Morocco isolated from the state, the region was also isolated from social science.

Despite this political and scholarly isolation, Tangier and the northern Moroccan coast more generally have a long and rich history of connection. They offer ideal sites for studying cross-cultural connection and transnational circulation. To study such places builds on my earlier interest in going beyond the presumptions of nation-state based inquiry in area studies. Global

and comparative area studies became an interest of mine during my undergraduate education. My senior thesis on the first partition plan for Palestine in 1937 analyzed partition comparatively as a colonial tool of managing populations. This study emphasized the need to trace the trans-regional intersections of colonial history and legacy that tied British experiments in governance in the Middle East with those in Ireland and India. I continued pursuing a comparative and global approach to area studies for my master's thesis, in which I examined Ottoman and British discourses of imperial sovereignty in the Middle East. Building on my commitment to new directions in area studies, I see research in Tangier and its region as a way to study Morocco differently. Since Tangier has been shaped by a long history of connections past, present, and future, this city and its coast are ideal places for understanding Morocco beyond narrow nationalist or colonial frames. Between my first visit to Tangier in 2006 and my subsequent one in 2008, the Tangier Med Port would open. This large, coastal infrastructure promised to create new forms of connection in this region and beyond.

Encountering the Tangier Med Port

In August 2008, I had my first encounter with the Tangier Med Port (see Figure 1, point B). While the port had only opened in 2007, it had by 2008 already become one of the most prominent symbols of the current Moroccan regime and its project to transform the national economy through the development of logistics expertise and infrastructure. After completing an advanced language program in Moroccan Arabic in Fez in June and July 2008, I returned to Tangier for initial, pre-dissertation research in the past and future of this global city. In designing this research, I planned to include the topic of the Tangier Med Port since I was curious about how this new port infrastructure was understood and experienced by urban denizens of Tangier.

These interviews led to the offer from one of my participants to arrange a meeting for me at the Tangier Med Port with one of its Moroccan directors, Monsieur Benjelloun (pseudonym). During our 2008 meeting, Benjelloun not only recognized the importance of the port for my interest in the past and future of Tangier, he also observed a fortuitous overlap between the timelines of both the port and my studies. While speaking in his portside office in English, he asked me when I would finish my doctorate. When I responded that I planned to finish in 2014, he observed that, “you will finish your PhD when Tangier Med 2 [the final port section] will come online.” Benjelloun went on to introduce me to the other technocrats at the helm of the Tangier Med Port, and through subsequent research in 2009, 2010, and 2011, I studied their aspirations for a new logistics infrastructure. My research included conducting interviews at the administration’s offices at the port, in Tangier and Casablanca, as well as attending key events sponsored by the administration. Although I was first interested in what the port could reveal about the city, Benjelloun’s facilitation of my research offered me the chance to follow the global port from within to understand globalization in Morocco.

During my first encounter with the port there seemed to be more dust than defined structures. I had taken a shared taxi from Tangier to reach the Tangier Med Port, located only nine miles from Spain but many more miles from the city (see Figure 1). Figure 6 is a map that illustrates the route I took. Between Tangier (point A) and the Tangier Med Port (point B), the taxi followed the winding coastal road that offers spectacular views of the Mediterranean, Spain and Gibraltar. While the road was a familiar one for taxi drivers, the port was not yet a familiar destination. At the time, there were almost no signs for the port on the route, so neither the taxi driver nor I were sure where I should be dropped off. He chose a security post that turned out to be midway between both ends of the port zone. By the time the two security guards saw me, the

taxi was gone, and I learned I would need another taxi to take me to the port administration at the eastern end of the zone. While looking for another taxi, the winds picked up and blew the dust into clouds covering the zone. The guards hurried me into their post, while they waited with their hats over their faces outside. Once the winds died down, they hailed me another taxi to take me the rest of the way. During my subsequent research trips, taxi drivers increasingly learned about the various sections of the port zone: which space was for boats (Mor. Ar. *batawiyat*), and which for the administration (Ar. *al-idara*). However, in August 2008, the lack of taxi driver familiarity reflected the newness of the port.

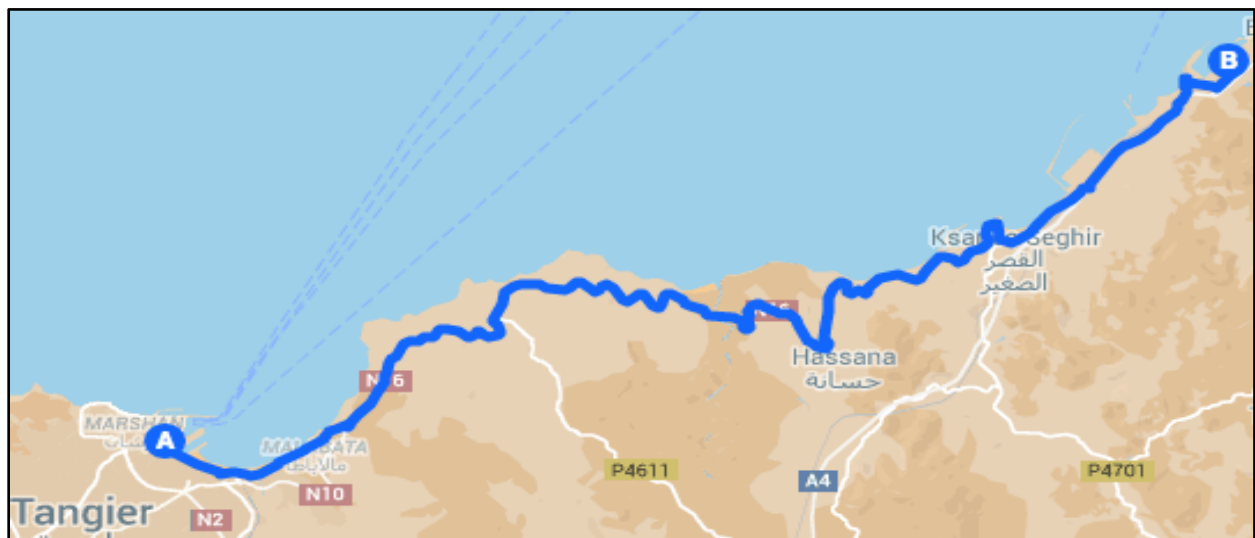


Figure 6: Map of the Route from Tangier to the Tangier Med Port. *Google Maps*. Map data ©2015 Google, Inst. Geogr. Nacional



Figure 7: Image of the Tangier Med Terminals.
Janell Rothenberg, 2008



Figure 8: Image of the Strait of Gibraltar
Janell Rothenberg, 2011

Once by the port administration building, I had a view of both the container terminals and the Strait of Gibraltar as illustrated in the above two photos. Figure 7 is an image I photographed of one of Tangier Med’s two “Global Network Terminals” (GNTs). GNTs are container infrastructures owned and operated by a few multinational companies. These structures have the capacity and connectivity to receive the largest vessels in the world. At Tangier Med, such terminals are the first of their kind in Morocco. Figure 8 is an image of my view when I turned ninety degrees to the right of the terminals. This photo features the coastline of Spain clearly visible on the horizon, and at least a ship or two in the distance. During our meeting, Benjelloun gestured to this view visible from his office window while saying, in English, “God didn’t give us oil for a reason.” The terminals and Benjelloun’s quote helped clarify the global and national aspirations of the new port. I realized that the port offered a way to study how global aspirations are shaped by a national context. I learned that the massive container terminals at Tangier Med

were not built not only to process imports and exports but also the transshipment of cargo between vessels coming from and going to other ports. The presence of these terminals indicates that Tangier Med is not only connected to Morocco but also a global network of container terminals located at ports around the world. Additionally, by saying that “God didn’t give us oil for a reason,” Benjelloun portrayed the port as important in understanding the changing economies of the Middle East and North Africa. His phrase captures the idea that a proximate coast, like Morocco’s territory on the Strait of Gibraltar, could be an object of development for the Moroccan economy. The coast and its proximity is framed here as a resource like oil. While other Arab countries have deep oil reserves, Morocco has lengthy and strategic coasts.

In preparing to make the port a central site in my dissertation research, I found that infrastructure had only recently become an explicit, anthropological object of study. I decided to frame my proposed research on the port as a contribution to this emergent anthropology of infrastructure. Specifically, I was interested in examining both local engagements with infrastructure and the larger political-economy infrastructure makes manifest. At the time, I followed anthropological work that expanded on the scholarship of sociologists and historians in Science and Technology Studies (STS). I was particularly interested in studies of how infrastructure is embedded in forms of meaning making and political economy in particular times and places. This includes Brenda Chalfin’s pioneering efforts to make ports and other sites of customs regime practice into key objects for the anthropology of the state (e.g.: Chalfin 2006, 2007, 2010). At the Tangier Med Port, I aimed to follow infrastructure in relation to both expertise and globalization. In terms of expertise, I began to study the social contexts and circulation of changing modes of technical expertise through interviews with members of the port authority. I was also curious about what the port could reveal about the relationship between

globalization and infrastructure. During my pre-dissertation fieldwork, I envisioned my research project as responding to the emerging interest in infrastructure studies by examining the social and cultural configurations of one particular logistics infrastructure. However, I came to realize that the perspectives on logistics expertise and infrastructure from members of the port authority tended to obscure the wider implications of Tangier Med for the transformation of work in the port's region. Upon my return to the field in 2011-2012, I expanded my research from the port authority and into the larger port region of everyday logistics.

Encountering the Tangier Free Zone

In April 2011, I had my first encounter with the Tangier Free Zone (see Figure 1, point C). One of my contacts from my pre-dissertation research in Tangier introduced me to Nouredine (pseudonym), the logistics director at one of the export-processing factories located in the Tangier Free Zone. Nouredine was interested in speaking to me because he had a lot of professional experience with using the Tangier Med Port. Indeed, his company, Eurotrans (pseudonym), was one of the first to export a container through this port infrastructure. He sent a car to pick me up in Tangier and take me to the far periphery of the city. First opened in 1999, Tangier's expanding, special economic zone for export-only production and assembly is located in the peri-urban district of Boukhalef. As I traveled out from Tangier on the road to this district, nine miles southwest from the city center, the organization and density of city yielded to the mushrooming of new apartment buildings on former farmland. Cranes building them and billboards marketing them dotted the landscape. Finally, at the zone, I passed over the wide boulevards, built to accommodate both trucks and worker transport. French and other mostly, European-headquartered factories are built in neighboring lots on a scale that proved very difficult to navigate on foot, as I would attempt subsequently. Once I was dropped off at the

factory, I was introduced to Nourredine. He expressed interest in my research on Tangier Med and the social life of logistics in the region, telling me that, “we would be very interested in what we could learn from you.” Through meetings with the logistics workers at this factory and further research with their transportation providers, I began to study the port through the regional practices of everyday logistics.

Before returning to Tangier in 2011, I had decided to learn more about logistics as a trade and way of understanding commodity circulation. I enrolled in a professional certificate program in logistics offered by the Center for International Trade and Transportation at California State University, Long Beach. The program faculty is drawn from professionals in the logistics and transportation trades in Southern California, home of the United States largest port complex. This complex is comprised of the adjacent ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, which have long been the gateway for United States imports from East Asia. Alongside current and aspiring employees in the region’s logistics industry, I followed the program both online and in Long Beach between 2009 and 2010. I benefitted from discussions with center’s former director of research and current executive director, Thomas O’Brien (real name). By chance, he had spent extensive time in Morocco, and was able to help me contextualize my research interests in Tangier within both national and international trends in the industry. My completion of this program resulted in being designated a “Global Logistics Specialist.” I also participated in other activities sponsored by the program’s center, including presenting my Tangier Med research at the International Urban Freight Conference in Long Beach in 2013. These experiences not only taught me the language of logistics but also how to talk about my qualitative logistics research with people in the data-driven logistics industry.

When I returned to Tangier in March 2011, I was able to parlay my experiences in

logistics in Southern California into an array of new connections in the field to actors and companies in the Tangier Med Port's wider logistics region. Figure 9 is a map of the main sites during my phase of dissertation fieldwork lasting from March 2011 to June 2012. While I had conducted research previously on the discourses of logistics at the Tangier Med Port, my subsequent research followed practices of everyday logistics between the port and its larger region. My access to this phase of research began at the Euroauto factory, as mentioned above, in the Tangier Free Zone. The Euroauto logistics department arranged meetings for me with three of its main transportation contractors. The latter mediate this factory's use of the Tangier Med Port to ship things in and out of Morocco. These three companies consisted of a customs brokerage, an international road transporter, and a multinational shipping line. I began to study these companies at their Tangier-based agencies, and through them, interacted and conducted research with other related companies. This included the logistics warehouse at the Tangier Med Port operated by a partner of the trucking agency. At the free zone factory, I learned how to request and organize an export shipment. At the customs brokerage, I learned how to translate exports into the language of codes, taxes and duties in the Moroccan customs database. At the shipping agency, I worked in the customer service department, answering inquiries and calculating fees for delayed container movements. Finally, at the trucking agency, I learned how cargo, tractors, and trailers are assembled and disassembled in the process of transportation between depot, port, and final destination.

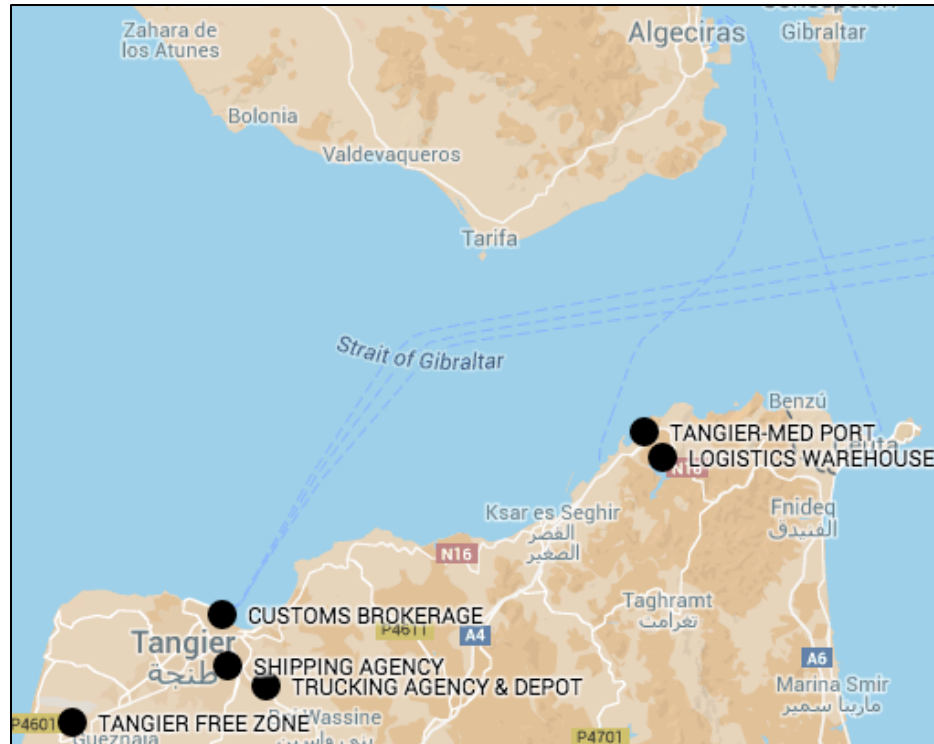


Figure 9: Map of Everyday Logistics Sites in the Tangier Region. *Google Maps*. Map Data © Google, Inst. Geogr. Nacional.

My research activities during this phase of fieldwork did not end at offices in Tangier. In addition, I followed these companies from their agencies in Tangier to their work at the Tangier Med Port. This helped me to see the port in a very different way: as both a zone of multiple forms of work and part of a regional network of circulation. Through the everyday logistics of these companies, I returned to the port in very different capacities than when I was studying the aspirational discourses of the port authority. Figure 10 illustrates the main zones of work at the Tangier Med Port. Prior to my research in 2011-2012, my time at the port had mainly been spent with the port administration and supervised visits with these administrators of other port facilities. Through my new sites of everyday logistics, I moved around the port in new ways. I arrived at Tangier Med on trucks, followed the processing of customs paperwork at the Special Administrative Zone, boarded a vessel at dock at the container terminals, and watched the process of filling up a warehouse at Logistics Free Zone. I also began to follow the emerging

conflict between dockworkers and container terminal management. These activities allowed me to move from the aspirations of the port authority offices to the terrain of port work.

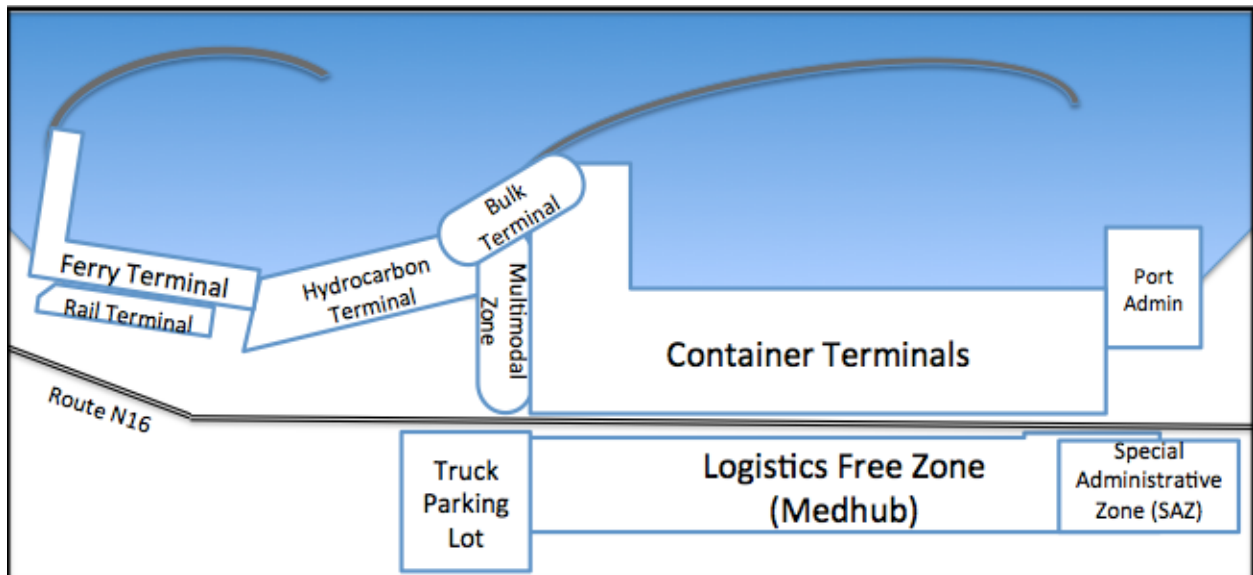


Figure 10: Diagram of the Tangier Med Port. Janell Rothenberg, 2015.

Before commencing this period of fieldwork in 2011, I had become curious about what my previous research on the aspirations of the port authority had obscured. I needed to know what the port was like both as a place of work and as the infrastructure of a region oriented around moving things. The port administration's aspirations and claims felt less and less relevant to understand the port as place of actual circulation and as a terrain of practice. This was all the more relevant in 2011, once the port had fully exited what was called its "project phase" and entered its fully "operational phase." In response, I decided to shift my attention to study the port operationally through its users and workers. I wanted to see if, through these actors and their experience with the port, I could reveal the contours of everyday logistics and contribute to the anthropology of circulation. At the time, logistics at just emerged as an object of critical political and economic analysis in geography thanks largely to the efforts of Deborah Cowen (e.g.: 2010, 2014). However, logistics continues to be largely absent from economic anthropology, despite

being such a key part of contemporary practices of circulation. My research access provided a unique opportunity to contribute to the anthropological concern with circulation by examining circulation's logistics instead of the traditional focus in economic anthropology on the social life of production, consumption and/or exchange. Logistics became a way for me to understand the various forms of infrastructural connectivity that exist beyond the port authority's promises. These forms included the changing practices of exportation, transshipment, and dock work organization. This phase of research built on my previous encounters with the global city of Tangier and the emerging infrastructure of the Tangier Med Port. In 2006, I had been interested in Tangier as a past and future global city. In 2008 and 2009, I had studied in the impact of the port on the city and the aspirations of the port for changing the world. From 2011 to 2012, I focused on the social life of logistics, a topic I often described in the field in French as "the social-economy of logistics in the Tangier Med region" (Fr. *la socio-économie de la logistique dans la région du Port de Tanger-Med*). In the words of one of my participants, my research during this period examined the port in terms of "practice and not just theory" (Fr./Mor. Ar. *la pratique u mashi ghrayr la théorie*)

Chapter Overview and Organization

The organization of my dissertation reflects the trajectory of my research. My chapters are divided into three parts focusing on (1) the regions, (2) development aspirations, and (2) worker connectivities of logistics at the emerging infrastructure of the Tangier Med Port. The first two chapters elaborate the regional context of this logistics infrastructure. In chapter one, I analyze the contested urban, national, and global meanings of the port region. Through an analysis sensitive to the past, present and future of these meanings, I show how the perspectives

of local, Tangier inhabitants and state-affiliated port administrators reveal contrasting regional imaginaries of logistics. In chapter two, I examine the port region through the social worlds of trailers and containers. I show how these objects of physical movement connect the port to a larger region of socio-technical practice. In the third chapter I turn from the regional context of this logistics infrastructure to the national aspirations of its administrators. In the offices of the port authority, actors use articulations of port responsibility and logistics expertise to qualify the port as both a modern infrastructure and a vehicle for modernizing Morocco. Beyond their offices, however, I show how these expert articulations exclude those concerns deemed too “Moroccan.”

The final two chapters examine the global context of the port’s connections with cargo and labor. In chapter four, I interrogate the promised connections of Tangier Med as a transshipment hub. I propose the concept of “practical connectivity” to make sense of how these connections are mediated through the everyday work practices of local projects of global logistics. In the final chapter, I contrast the shifting visibilities of labor and infrastructure during and after a major work stoppage at the port’s container terminals in 2011. This stoppage reveals how these terminals, designed as a platform for moving cargo, are reframed by Moroccan dockworkers as a platform for solidarities with the global labor movement. In these five chapters, I analyze both the aspirations of a global logistics hub as well as the everyday logistics of commodity circulation. I intend my research to advance the ethnography of logistics as a discrete field of inquiry into the new infrastructures changing the shores of the Global South, creating new supply-chain subjectivities, and altering how commodities move in the world.

CHAPTER ONE

Locating the Tangier Med Port: Coordinates of Life and Logistics on the Moroccan Mediterranean Coast

I. Introduction

From the sea, the Tangier Med Port on the Moroccan Mediterranean coast contains all the usual components of shipping logistics infrastructure. Fences project a promise of security and safety. Containers are stamped with the names of various shipping companies and stacked on docked vessels at the edge of the terminals or the concrete yards ashore. Standing tall are the ship-to-shore gantry cranes that move containers between sea and land. Shorter and more mobile are the rubber-tired gantry cranes that move containers from stack to stack or onto the trucks that carry them to and from the dock. Perhaps longshoremen or seafarers are visible locking a container into place aboard a vessel, although the docks of contemporary container terminals are more notable for the seeming lack of men at work. In these ways, the Tangier Med Port looks at first glance like it could be a container port located anywhere on the global routes of commodities.

On second glance, looking at the Tangier Med Port now within its wider landscape, the specificities of a particular place emerge. To the left, is Jebel Tala, a small but steep mountain that serves as a natural boundary between the fences of the port zone and the fishing hamlet of Dalia. Written onto the side of Jebel Tala, is the official Moroccan motto of “God, King, Nation” (Ar. *Allah, Malek, Watan*). Visible from land, sea and sky, the phrase literally sets in stone an official political claim on the port from the Moroccan state (Ar. *makhzen*). Not immediately visible from the port is Tangier, the city from which Tangier Med takes its name. While the port

is located in a rural, provincial area of open land and few homes, its name evokes the cosmopolitan city of Tangier and its unique past of free trade and joint foreign administration. While Tangier's past is related to its proximity to Europe, Tangier Med is even closer. On the dockside edge of Tangier Med's container terminals, facing north, is the surprising narrowness of the Strait of Gibraltar and the mere nine miles separating the continents of Africa and Europe.

In this chapter, I examine the regional context of the Tangier Med Port in terms of these three areas rich in proximities: the city of Tangier, the Moroccan North, and the Strait of Gibraltar. I consider the different ways in which these areas are incorporated in both official justifications of the port's location and regional ways of life before and beyond the port. I draw on interviews and participant observation with two, key groups of port stakeholders: native-born residents of the former commercial port city of Tangier and technocratic officials from the Tangier Med Port Authority. In the three, main sections of this chapter, I explore how these groups provide very different perspectives onto the past, present and future of Tangier, the Moroccan North, and the Strait.

In the first section of this chapter, I describe how port officials use "Tangier" to both brand and locate the port and its associated projects. I examine the commercial and international port city past of Tangier that this brand invokes in order to move the city's port present far outside of its urban area. In the second section of this chapter, I describe how the Moroccan North is both a source of oppositional identity for regional inhabitants and an object of development for port officials seeking to use the port to anchor a "new economic hub" for the national economy. Finally, in the last section of this chapter, I describe how the proximities shaped by Morocco's location on the Strait of Gibraltar are both embedded in the lives and lore of the region while also bestowing on the Tangier Med Port its prized "zero maritime deviation"

from major shipping lines. In the rest of this chapter introduction, I provide background on the port and its history and describe the chapter theoretical framework.

Chapter Background

Since opening in 2007, the port has become one of the most symbolic projects of King Mohammed VI's monarchy and its technocratic development agenda. The nearly 5.5 miles long coast of the Tangier Med zone is composed primarily of three distinct port areas. The first is Tangier Med I, which opened to container traffic in 2007. The second is Tangier Med Passengers, which opened to ferry traffic in 2010. The third is Tangier Med II, which opened to container traffic in 2014. Tangier Med I and II have a combined capacity of more than eight million twenty-foot containers (TEUs, or twenty-foot-equivalent units, the standard measure of a port's container capacity). Tangier Med Passengers has a capacity to handle seven million passengers and seven hundred trucks. The port has a massive oil terminal with the capacity of five million tons of oil products, proving an infrastructure for ship refueling, known as bunkering, as well as the importation and transshipment of refined hydrocarbon products. The port provides a platform for the imports and exports related to manufacturing at the Tangier Free Zone (TFZ), a 1236-acre exportation zone located on the Atlantic coast south of Tangier. The port includes an onsite, 371-acre customs-free logistics zone called MedHub with warehouse space rented to third party logistics providers and global distributors. The port also has a separate terminal for automotive shipments, built to support the activities of the recently opened Tangier Automotive City, a massive, 2470-acre free exportation zone dedicated to car manufacturing and located halfway along the A4 Autoroute that links the TFZ and the Tangier Med Port. It is here

where the French car manufacturer Renault has built one of the largest auto manufacturing installations in the world.

The container and hydrocarbon terminals were developed through long-term leases, otherwise known as concession agreements, with international port operators. The port authority and associated zones, on the other hand, are under the auspices of the Tangier Med Special Authority, a private holding company invested with the power of the makhzen and answering directly to King Mohammed VI rather than a state ministry. The King first publicly described this new public-private port in the speech he gave in 2002 on the third anniversary of his coronation. In this speech, the King made clear that this port would not be run like other ports in the Kingdom. He argued that in order to provide this complex with wide-ranging authorities to coordinate the many public and private actors that would need to participate in this project, a new governing authority would be created unlike any previous one and outside of the existing ministry structure. He stated that, "...we have decided to create a company under private law, with the prerogatives of a public authority, and benefitting from all the advantages it permits to manage in the best conditions all the operations related to realizing this mega-project" (King Mohammed 2002). As such, the port would be put under a public-private authority that kept it as close as possible to the King, leading one lawyer from Tangier to say to me that the port was a true "Royal Affair" (Fr. *affaire du prince*). This echoes the assertion of Pierre-Arnaud Barthel and Sabine Planel (2010) that this port should be seen as a "prestige project" of the Moroccan government: a high-profile development that operates outside of the typical parameters of public or private administration. The question of whether the Tangier Med Port was public or private would often depend on who I asked and why I were asking. In any case, the interests of the King

always loomed large in the offices, publications, and events I observed during research with port officials.

In King Mohammed VI's same 2002 speech, he described the port plan as a key part of ushering in the makhzen's new agenda of regional development. As such, the global port was described as a project with major regional benefits. After explaining the makhzen's interest in regional development, the King's said that it is

In this context, and parallel to our wish to make Tangier and its current port one of the largest ports and major seaside resorts in the Mediterranean, we have given our instructions for the study and realization of an important, large-scale commercial and industrial port complex on the coast of the Strait, to the East of Tangier. The international level of this project and its connection with free zones are of such a nature to enable us to realize our wish for the Northern provinces to end their isolation, realize their own internal development, and include themselves as actors and partners in global economic trade. (King Mohammed VI 2002).

By relating this major infrastructure project to the city of Tangier, the Strait, and the Moroccan North, the King's discourse located the future Tangier Med Port in ways I would find echoed in my interviews with port officials between 2008 and 2011. The participants in my research included the elite, Rabat-born and Paris-educated executive that I refer to as Monsieur Benjelloun (pseudonym), one of the top directors at the Tangier Med Port Authority. He insisted on speaking with me in English, despite French being the primary language of his elite upbringing, education and office. Benjelloun told me that he came north for "an offer he could not refuse" to join the executive of Tangier Med. He expressed excitement over this chance to participate in turning Morocco's coast on the Strait into a "driver" for regional development and Morocco's global logistics industry.

The perspectives of port officials like Benjelloun, working to realize the King's aspirations, are in contrast with the those of another key group of stakeholders in this port-region transformation: Port-city natives from Tangier. While port officials described Tangier Med as a

natural way to profit from Morocco's proximity to Europe and some of the busiest container shipping routes and bring development to a long-isolated region, port-city natives described the loss of their city's commercial port infrastructure and a dynamic regional culture under threat from encroaching, powerful outsiders. Tangier natives participating in my research included a taxi driver I call Amin (pseudonym). His cream-colored, vintage Mercedes was worn from decades serving the routes of European tourists around the region. This is how he became fluent in Spanish, and he likes to tune his taxi radio to a station broadcasting Spanish pop music from across the Strait. In the Tangier dialect of Moroccan Arabic, he described how, with the mix of religions and nationalities in Tangier, "everyday was as if a wedding," with so many holidays of so many faiths bringing everyone out into the streets. Now "those days are gone," he adds. He was critical of how Moroccans from the country's "interior" (Ar. *ad-dakhl*) are coming north to take over the coast.

Chapter Framework

In this chapter, I consider how the Tangier Med Port is located by port-city natives like Amin and port officials like Benjelloun in relation to the same proximate areas of Tangier, the Moroccan North, and the Strait. I then use these juxtapositions in order to explore the past and present of the port's larger landscape. I question the assumption that infrastructures of transportation and logistics like container ports are examples of what Marc Augé (1995) calls "non-places." Augé writes, "If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place" (1995: 78). In opposing "non-places" to "places," Augé's approach is similar to other binary frameworks for thinking about the difference between global and local

spaces. This includes the opposition Manuel Castells (1996) describes between “the space of flows” and “the spaces of places.” Anna Tsing (2000) has criticized these approaches for reinscribing the globalizing discourses of multinational corporations. Tsing (2005) instead proposes the metaphor of “friction” to describe what happens when universal, global aspirations encounter diverse, cultural differences in particular places.

Recently, anthropologists of global infrastructures have built on Tsing’s concept of friction to argue that large, socio-technical systems are not the dis-embedded, non-places they might appear as at first glance. This includes Ashley Carse’s (2012) research into the intersection of global shipping, water management, and farming life in the Panama Canal Zone and Hannah Appel’s (2012) research into the onshore relations of “offshore” oil extraction. This literature shows how global infrastructures are deeply implicated in proximate places. I build on this literature by considering how the proximities of a place shape not only how a globally-oriented infrastructure relates to a surrounding region but also how such a region relates to the world. In pursuing these questions, I draw the anthropology of global infrastructures into conversation with the critical, regional ethnography of Kathleen Stewart (1996), who aims at

the fabulation of a narrative ‘space on the side of the road’ that enacts the density, texture, and force a lived cultural poetics somewhere in the real and imagined hinterlands of ‘America’... a region that constitutes an ‘Other America’ not because it is somehow ‘outside’ or marginal to America's cultural landscape but because it has, through a long history of exploitation and occupation by an industry and an incessant narrativization of a cultural real, come to imagine its place within its spaces of desire (Stewart 1996: 3).

This description of Stewart’s approach raises several important questions for the regional study of cultural and economic landscapes far beyond her particular terrain. For instance, drawing on this approach, I ask how the narrative space of region can help make sense of the different and at times oppositional ways of understanding the regional space of global infrastructure. I transport

Stewart's attention to regional inquiry into the "Other Morocco" of the Moroccan North and its long-neglected, international capital of Tangier in order to make sense of the contrasting ways of locating the Tangier Med Port. I argue that this port on Europe's nearest African shore offers an ideal vantage point to consider questions of infrastructure, region and proximity. Following the ways Tangier port-city natives and Tangier Med port officials describe the location of the port not only brings us into the "real and imagined hinterlands" of Morocco but also opens up a narrative space on the side of the world, a place from which to consider the lived shape of global regionalism.

Thanks to its recent past, Tangier retains a great openness to foreign cultures and languages: the large part of city inhabitants, as well as those of Tetuan, speak Spanish, French or English.

Tangier Med Special Authority, N.d.

II. The City of Tangier

Tangier has long been Europe on the horizon, Spanish frequencies in the air, and kids at intersections figuring their bodies into the undercarriages of Europe-bound trucks and buses. When conducting research here and along the coast, transnational circulation can be followed as much in planned research activities as between them, through a glimpse over to the coast of Spain, or the ships crossing the Strait of Gibraltar. The city's location above the Strait is the subject of the Moroccan folk song, "Tangier, the Most High" (Ar. *Tanja l-'aliya*), popularized by the well-known singer, Houcine Slaoui. This is 'the city of two seas' (Mor. Ar. *l-medina d juj l-bhur*), the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This location long made Tangier and its port a key gateway for the international movement of people and things during many historical periods. This gateway role lives on in signs for all matter of shipping-related businesses on buildings around the city's main thoroughfares.

Starting in 2007, the port infrastructure that made possible so many material circulations in and out of the port city of Tangier began to be dismantled. During the years of my research, this urban port began to be turned to rubble, and in the place of the once constant transnational boat traffic, only a handful of overpriced day ferries. The traffic has been rerouted elsewhere, to the Tangier Med Port. Despite its name, Tangier is not the home of this "new port" (Mor. Ar. *l-marsa l-jdida*). Rather Tangier Med is located about twenty-five miles northeast of the city. This distance between Tangier and the Tangier Med Port took me by surprise the first time I traveled it by taxi in 2008 to interview my first contact at the port authority, a man I refer to as Monsieur Benjelloun. With this distance on my mind, I asked Benjelloun why the Tangier Med Port was

not named “Tetuan-Med” since the Moroccan city of Tetuan was much closer than Tangier. Benjelloun smiled, admitting that there were indeed people from Tetuan upset that it had not been named for their city. However, he explained that “Tangier is a commercial name. ‘Med’ refers to our the consumer focus on traffic in the Mediterranean.” In this section, I consider how, as a “commercial name,” “Tangier” is transformed into a brand that both interrupts and invokes the unique geographic and economic history of the actual port city of Tangier.

The Tangier Med Port brought to an end Tangier’s career as a commercial port city. Since 2007, when the first container terminal in the newly opened Tangier Med Port began to receive cargo ships, this new port has expanded in space and capacity until it was able to receive the largest ships in the world. In 2008, when I first visited Tangier Med, the second container terminal had recently become operational, and Benjelloun foresaw that I would finish my dissertation around the same time as the port zone’s planned completion in 2014. Over time, I have followed these developments at Tangier Med, while observing their related urban effects of dismantling the commercial port of Tangier. There is no surprise in this parallel port construction and deconstruction. Indeed, it was outlined in King Mohammed VI’s 2002 speech. As previously quoted in the introduction to this chapter, the King stated in this speech that, “. . .parallel to our wish to make Tangier and its current port one of the largest ports and major seaside resorts in the Mediterranean, we have given our instructions for the study and realization of an important, large-scale commercial and industrial port complex on the coast of the Strait, to the East of Tangier” (King Mohammed VI 2002). In this process, Tangier’s city port would necessarily be made into a very different kind of infrastructure: one supporting the “resort” activities of cruise ships and other forms of recreation and mass tourism.

In 2009, trucks waiting to pass through the port of Tangier were still a familiar sight in the city, often idling as they long had in the parking lot below the Hotel Continental. On December 15, 2010, Tangier's port was officially closed to commercial ships. By the summer of 2010, the parking lot was empty as all major ferries had been routed to Tangier Med in time for the season of return visits by Moroccans residing abroad. There was no longer a usable customs code for legally declaring commercial imports or exports via the city port. When I asked at the Hotel about how they saw the changes visible from their perch along the old city's walls, one of the employees taught me a Moroccan proverb: "time is like a sword: if you don't cut with it, it will cut you." This proverb means that one should go along with change because you will only lose out by going against the flow of time. The ferry routes to the city of Tangier remain, though, in a digital trace: On Google Maps, the ferry lines are still as of 2015 drawn as if vessels continue to arrive and depart where they once but not longer do. Over time the material of the port, including signs describing where to take the ferry to Genoa or Sète or Algeciras, were removed. In 2012, the entrance to the port (Mor. Ar. *bab al-marsa*) was gone: There one day and a pile of rubble the next.

The city's port and maritime-based industries are now part of its past. Planned to open in 2016 is a marina and tourism complex. Under the auspices of the Tangier Port Development Association (Fr. *Société d'Aménagement du Port de Tanger*, SAPT), the redevelopment of the port has involved both the deindustrializing of the port as well as the creation of new infrastructures aiming to, in the words of the Moroccan National Ports Authority (Fr. *Agence Nationale des Ports*, ANP), "give the port a new function oriented towards cruise tourism and yachting... allowing the city of Tangier to become a leading destination for tourism" (National Ports Authority 2012). According to the SAPT, the redevelopment also "constitutes a unique

occasion to re-establish the relations between city and port... assuring a perfect integration of the port with the new and old city [of Tangier]" (Tangier Port Development Association 2012).

The changing relations of Tangier and its ports are reflective of larger trends in port cities. In a recent report on "global port-cities" published by the Organization for Economic Development and Co-operation (OECD), author Olaf Merk introduces the report's main research question as follows: "Ports and cities are historically strongly linked, but the link between port and city growth has become weaker. Economic benefits often spill over to other regions, whereas negative impacts are localised in the port-city. How can ports become the drivers again of urban economic growth; and how can negative port impacts be mitigated?" (Merk 2013: 7). Rather than refer to an urban location, the global port-city has less in common with port cities of old, where people lived and worked in close proximity. Instead, the global port-city resembles the expansive, zoned industrial regions of today, in which people must travel to work, often at great financial and temporal costs. Rather than question this development, the OECD and other international agencies and consultants around the world accept and encourage ports and their associated logistics industries to be zoned to the margins of urban centers or much farther afield. These new distances rupture the social and spatial history of cities, like Tangier, that have long lived by their urban ports.

While port official Benjelloun indicated that the word "Tangier" in name of the new port is meant to refer to something other than the port's geographical location, Tangier itself was never merely a port city. Its unique location lent it particular possibilities of connection and, through its history, its port served as the infrastructure of realizing these possibilities. Historian Linda Colley refers to the locational and infrastructural significance of Tangier in the history of the British Empire. She writes that the city "offered proximity as well as seemingly limitless

potential.” She describing the strategic interests in Tangier during the 17th century, when the city was under English rule, as follows:

Its attractions for its English occupiers were profound and plural. At one level, Tangier offered a base from which they could look to make further commercial and colonial advances in the North African interior. At another, it supplied them with a naval stronghold from which to monitor the fleets of richer and more powerful European rivals, Spain, and above all France. At yet another level, Tangier guarded the entrance of what one contemporary called ‘the greatest thoroughfare of commerce in the world’... (Colley 2002: 25).

In attempting to realize the potential connections of this commercial location, the English began shortly after their invasion of Tangier in 1662 to construct a dock for the city. Colley writes that, “this was by far the most ambitious engineering work ever carried out up to this point by Englishmen working outside Europe... Its astonishing [dock] was the first of those ambitious constructions... which the British subsequently scattered over every part of their overseas empire” (Colley 2002: 32). However, the English were not only interested in facilitating trade via Tangier through infrastructure. They also did this administratively, by proclaiming Tangier a “free port” and therefore outside of the English tariff-regime. This was the first of many times in which Tangier would be made “free” by its ruling authorities.

Its port and history of exemption to tax and tariff were factors that led Tangier to become for a long time the most politically and economically international of Moroccan cities. Popular descriptions of Tangier tend to focus on the colonial era of this history, from the 1920s to 1950s during which the city was under international administration. However, the historian Susan Gilson Miller argues that Tangier, “offers a fine example of a Moroccan town that showed signs of a transition to a Western-style modern urbanity well before the era of colonization” (Miller 2013: 83). She writes that, “since the mid-nineteenth century, Tangier had grown exponentially as a commercial node because of its role as the country’s busiest port, with the best customs and

storage facilities, as well as easy access to the interior by road” (2013: 83). Tangier became Morocco’s diplomatic capital in the 1860s, due to its international transportation connections and distance from the interior where the makhzen was based.

Tangier’s international economic and political history made its rule a topic of great debate between the Great Powers. In the 1906 Treaty of Algeciras that divided Morocco into zones of French or Spanish influence, Tangier was exempted due to its “‘special’ character” (Miller 2013: 88). When the French and Spanish Protectorates were set up for Morocco in 1912, the question of Tangier was delayed. Miller writes that, “Britain wanted the city and its hinterland to become an international zone where no one foreign power would prevail, while France wanted Tangier to remain among the assets of its Protectorate” (2013: 88). Comparing the questions of Tangier and Shanghai, historian Graham Stuart wrote, “Here we find problems of an international character which by their very nature have induced systems of international control” (1931: viii). These “problems of an international character” included various infrastructures of international interest including the Cap Spartel Lighthouse, which was key to navigation for international shipping lines, and the city’s port, which was the country’s main maritime gateway for passengers and goods before the period of European rule.

After World War I, and much wrangling between the Great Powers, Tangier was given an international administration. The Tangier International Zone started in 1925 and lasted officially until the country’s independence in 1956, although the process of reintegrating Tangier into the central state took much longer. Brian Edwards (2005) finds the confusion and complexity of this era useful to think with in terms of the wider cultural context of the early cold war. Given that there were, what he calls, “multiple Tangiers in circulation” (2005: 123), Edwards chooses to refer in his study to the city with the nomenclature “Tangiers.” He explains “*Tangiers* as a

collective plural to refer to [the city] during its international days... since it suggests at once multiple populations who made the city their own” (2005: 124). As discussed by Stuart and other scholars of Tangier’s international period, however, the “internationalism” of the city manifested more in administrative division and an unregulated influx of foreigners than in cooperation or collaboration. The confused multiplicity of the International Zone, during which North Americans and Europeans from several nations competed over Tangier’s daily administration, can be seen as contributing to Tangier’s decline from its pre-colonial role as Morocco’s international political and economic capital to a fading symbol of international decadence. The geographer Mohammed Refass (1991) describes how the port of Tangier began to lose its position as the largest port in Morocco during this period of colonial competition over the everyday life of the city. At the same time, Casablanca was built up into the main port of the French Protectorate based in Rabat while Ceuta became the main port of the Spanish Protectorate based in Tetuan.

Upon Moroccan independence in 1956, the makhzen adopted the French economic and political capitals, Casablanca and Rabat respectively. Tangier’s international character, which led to it being administered apart from the Spanish and French Protectorates in Morocco, was now recognized in the post-independence period as requiring certain exceptional measures to integrate it into Morocco while maintaining its international economy. The Tangier Royal Decree signed on August 26, 1957, and sealed by King Mohammed V on August 28, 1957, included several articles that sought to maintain the duty-free and international nature of Tangier’s economy, including maintaining the city’s duty-free port. Abdelhafid Hariri Madini writes that this decree was meant to replace the International Statute of Tangier (2008: 38), which had been the legal basis for the Tangier International Zone. For instance, the first article of

the decree declared that, “The freedom of exchange currently in effect in Tangier is maintained” (Morocco 1957). However, other components to the Decree included both an interest in maintaining aspects of Tangier’s international economic past while asserting the political authority of the post-independence makhzen. For example, the second article declared that “The commerce of importation and exportation between Tangier and foreign countries is [duty-]free. No restriction will be applied to the entry or exit of merchandise, except those which should be proscribed for reasons related to the general interest of our kingdom” (Morocco 1957). The Decree also determined that Tangier would have an exceptional tax code, lower than many other parts of the Kingdom. The fourth article declared that, “There will be no attempt to modify the tax regime current in effect in Tangier except to the extent compatible with the necessities of economic development in the Province [of Tangier], and notably the functioning of the freedom of trade and currency” (Morocco 1957). The different tax situation of Tangier has continued into the present.

The Decree was repealed in October 1959 after, according to Hariri Madini, it was judged to not have had its desired positive effects on stopping the flight of international capital from the city (2008: 39). In its place was created a special economic regime for the city including the creation by royal decree in January 1962 of Morocco’s first, and until very recently only, free trade zone. Located at Tangier’s port, the zone was created to encourage investment in Tangier by offering a duty-free area for financial, industrial, and warehousing activities. Industrial activities in this zone were long dominated by textile factories producing for European department stores like Marks and Spencer in the UK and *El Corte Inglés* in Spain. As part of the deindustrialization of Tangier’s port, factories have been transferred to a new area on the margins of the city. This area is adjacent to Morocco’s second free trade zone, the Tangier Free

Zone, created by royal decree in November 1997 and opened a few years later. Located in the district of Boukhalef on the Atlantic coast, this zone was created principally for export-oriented production. Its inhabitants include many factories producing parts for European car manufacturers. While the first zone was long an easy place to come and go, the second zone requires more specialized forms of access in terms of badges and passes.

In 2009, I spoke to the European owner of a textile factory in the free zone at Tangier's port. He described moving to Morocco in the 1970s to set up the factory, and how over time, orders have decreased as the clothing labels have moved to cheaper labor markets in East and South Asia. He spoke with resentment about the end of the zone, and worried that he would have trouble getting his workers to come all the way to a new factory in Boukhalef as well as getting badges for them when so many do not have access to the right documentation. However, the project of deindustrializing the city port of Tangier does have some local advocates among the city's elites. These include Rachid Taferssiti (real name), director of a cultural heritage organization in Tangier, which co-sponsored a conference with the Tangier Med Port Authority that I attended in November 2011. Focused on the future of the city, the conference agenda addressed how, "Tangier is giving up its place to another Tangier, a metropolis of the third millennium" (Association Al-Boughaz 2011). The many presentations at this forum discussed how this change in port activities and location would support Tangier's transformation into a more "sustainable and ecological" port city. Taferssiti, a former banker and self-taught historian of Tangier, spoke in his opening remarks about how the deindustrialization of the port of Tangier would lead to "a new quality of life for Tangerines." He described how the port's terminals and warehouses had "walled off" the city from the sea. The removal of these commercial infrastructures, Taferssiti claimed, would "return water" to the city's landscape, and "open the

port to the city.” These claims echoed the discourse of the Tangier Port Development Association quoted above, which promoted the redevelopment of Tangier’s city port as a means of re-establishing the connection of city and port.

In an interview I conducted with one of the conference participants, I had asked what the effect the deindustrialization of the port of Tangier would have on the people whose livelihoods’ depend on it and who live adjacent to it in the old city. He replied that most of these people working in the port were not “real Tangerines.” However, through my research into Tangier’s logistics and transportation industries, I experienced how the time and costs of these new distances between city and port impact port users. Among the many Tangier Med Port users who live in Tangier are truckers like Ahmed (pseudonym) and freight forwarders like Amina (pseudonym). While living in Tangier was once convenient for their work at the city’s port, and they now must commute through various means to Tangier Med.

Ahmed was born in Tangier to parents from Casablanca. He makes 100 dirhams on a good day moving goods between factories on the city’s periphery and Tangier Med, a port run by what he called “thieves,” where a cup of coffee costs 20 dirhams, and there are no facilities where truckers can rest while waiting for the processing of their loads. On one day, I rode with him to Tangier Med. I followed the process of scanning and documenting the trailer he was pulling until the authorization was granted for him to unhitch this trailer from its tractor. With no trailer arriving on import for him to pull back to Tangier, he was stranded at the port, since he could not afford the shared taxis back to the city, nor would he have the money to pay for gas for his company’s tractor until the following day when their next import load would arrive on the ferry from Spain. He spent the next hour trying to find someone to give us a ride back to Tangier.

Amina was born and raised in Tangier, in the slum of Beni Mekada, where she still lives. Having quit school to support her family after the death of her father, she is now the fixer for her freight forwarding company. She is the one sent in when her male colleagues are unable to unblock shipments at customs. She likes getting out of the office, and that makes her unusual among the women I know in forwarding, who are mostly content to enter customs declarations from the safety of their Tangier-based agencies. Nonetheless Amina hates how the men of port space look at her, like she does not belong or worse. She remembers fondly when the port was in the city and getting away could be done on her own terms rather than depending on a ride from one of her sexually inappropriate male coworkers.

As these brief experiences of Ahmed and Amina demonstrate, the new distances between city and port have ramifications for the working lives of port users. While I opened this section with port official Benjelloun's description of the "Tangier" in Tangier Med being primarily a brand rather than place name, Ahmed and Amina's everyday routes between home and work tie together these two Tangiers. Like other port-city natives discussed in this chapter, Ahmed and Amina locate the Tangier Med Port in reference to previous experiences in the region. Like other port officials who recently came north, Benjelloun locates the Tangier Med Port in reference to future aspirations for the region and Morocco's place in the world of global logistics. In the next chapter, I will return to the experiences of port users like Ahmed and Amina, and their interactions with the things and infrastructures of everyday logistics in the Tangier Med region. Like the narratives of port-city natives considered in the subsequent sections in this current chapter, the everyday logistics of port users opens up "space on the side of the road" of Tangier Med and its promises. In the next section of this chapter, I shift from Tangier to the Moroccan North in order to understand the national politics of global regionalism.

[The] Tangier Mediterranean project represents a strategic priority for the economic and social development of the northern region of Morocco. The project has undeniable key success factors and management principles.

Tangier Med Special Authority, 2007

III. The Moroccan North

Taking the train north to Tangier from Casablanca, the rails hem close to the Atlantic for a while as stops are made in Morocco's most industrialized region, or "economic hub" (Fr. *pôle économique*) in the language of Moroccan technocrats. Visible through the train car windows are the spatial outlines of the core of Morocco's political-economy, centralized on the Atlantic coast under the French Protectorate (1912-1956) and retained by the makhzen, the Moroccan ruling elite connected to the King, after independence in 1956 and into the present day. In about one and a half hours, the train chugs past the country's teeming commercial capital of Casablanca, its subdued political capital of Rabat, and up to Kenitra (the French Protectorate's former Port Lyautey). Things start to change on the outskirts of Kenitra, as factories yield to farmland, and Morocco's urban, industrial center is left behind. The countryside looks so unnoticeable along this length of track that, without a guide to the landscape, there is no obvious point at which the train is no longer *heading* north but actually *in* "The North" (Ar. *ash-shamal*).

I was on a train like this, sitting next to an older man heading back from Rabat to his native city of Tangier. He used the word "north" (Ar. *shamal*) to describe where he was going, and "interior" (Ar. *dakhl*) to describe where he was coming from, but he went on to complain about people from "the interior" (Ar. *ad-dakhl*): that they do not know how to speak Arabic, are too close to the makhzen, and are crowding Tangier and the wider region. Then he stopped and pointed out the car window to a place that looked no different than any other. He turned to me and said, "Look, there's the border post!" (Mor. Ar. *Shufi! Ha hiya ad-diwana*). I did not see

anything, but he saw a memory: the location of the opposing border posts of the colonial administration of Morocco: The Spanish Protectorate from here north, and of the larger French Protectorate from here south. As I spent more and more time with port-city natives in Tangier and port officials at Tangier Med, I learned that this internal border remains salient not only for politics and culture, but also for how the port is simultaneously located *in* Morocco's "north" and *of* its "interior." In this section, I explore meanings of "north" and "interior" as vernacular terms that evoke territorial spaces, political histories, and regional ways of being.

Before starting my research, I knew that the Tangier Med Port was at the kinds of murky public-private intersections that are part of much infrastructure investment around the world. I also knew that the port was a key project of the King, and the ruling elites that make up the *makhzen*. I was aware as well that the port was designed and managed by people from Casablanca and Rabat, people with elite foreign educations and coming from families that trace their origins back to Fez. What I did not know, until I myself went to the North and began talking to port-city natives about Tangier Med, was that there was a particular way of referring to the people who came north for this project and continued to run it. This term, "of the interior," was used by port-city natives to refer not only to where the port officials were coming from, but also derisively to several other things: their different relationship with the King and *makhzen*, their cultural and linguistic differences, and in general their position as outsiders in the North.

In interviews with Tangier Med port officials, I often heard reference to the North as a potential new economic pole for Morocco. I had heard the term "hub" first used by the man I call Monsieur Benali (pseudonym), a Sorbonne-trained economist in the research and development department of the Tangier Med Port Authority. He, like other port officials, used the French term "pôle" whether or not he was speaking in French, although it is a false cognate in English. In an

office decorated with planning maps and aerial photos of the port under construction, Benali explained the idea behind the port was not only to profit from Morocco's location on the Strait of Gibraltar. The port was also central to the King's plan to create a "new economic hub" for the country in its severely underdeveloped northern region. The two parts of the King's agenda underlying the port's creation were, on the one hand, related to role of logistics development in Morocco's *Plan Emergence*, designed in consultation with the McKinsey Consulting Group, to modernize the country's infrastructure and services by increasing their orientation towards the global economy. On the other hand, the port's creation spoke to the King's specific interests in Northern Morocco, a region widely considered to have been neglected and isolated under the economic and political policies of his father, King Hassan II. While his father had avoided the region, King Mohammed VI made the monarchy's northern palaces in Tangier and Tetuan a regular stop for extended visits. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, King Mohammed VI spoke on the third anniversary of his coronation about his interest in promoting a model of regional development. In terms of the North, this model would be centered on a major project of infrastructural development, at the core of which would be a new port (King Mohammed VI 2002).

The hope that the Tangier Med Port would become a hub not only for logistics and the national economy, but also for regional economic development, was not only present in royal discourse. I came across it at several points of research with port officials. Benjelloun, for instance, spoke of a time that "the children and the children's children of regional inhabitants would be employed by the port complex." A French consultant to the port authority, who drew on a range of experience in port operations around the world, told me that the regional development objectives of this port made it "stand apart" from all other transshipment ports he

had been involved with. In arguing for how the port would not only become a player in global shipping, but would also bring new-found economic development to the Moroccan North, the King and port officials seemed to embrace a particular vision of the place of ports in regional development.

In a review of the literature on ports and regional development, transport geographer César Ducruet writes that these works generally take one of two possible approaches: “The optimistic approach sees the port as an engine for local and regional economic growth, while for the pessimistic approach, ports simply respond to demand through the physical transfer of freight flows” (Ducruet 2009: 44). In taking the optimistic approach, port officials publicly promote their roles as bringing development to the Moroccan North. However, this vision coexists with a less public and deep-seated sense of profound regional, cultural differences between port officials and inhabitants of the North. The port official Benali knew the region well, he told me, since he was born and lived in Tangier and until going to France to study at the age of eighteen. His family had left Fez in the 1960s, with some migrating to Casablanca and a few to Tangier, for the business opportunities left by the departures of Europeans as well as Moroccan Jews following independence in 1956. He told me that even though he was born in Tangier, he was never considered a native of the city because of his family’s roots in Fez. So-called “real Tangerines” (Fr. *les vrai tangerois*) still referred to him as “from the interior.” Benali explained that this is because “they are racist against us.”

What might make “the interior” seem like a curious vernacular term to distinguish the origins of Moroccans from outside of the northern region is that this word comes from the same Arabic root as “inside.” From the perspective of a non-Moroccan speaker of Standard Arabic, the word’s meaning might appear to be “an insider.” Additionally, “interior” might seem a strange

way to describe Moroccans from the Atlantic cities, since those are coastal rather than located in the interior. However, the use of this term is not to distinguish between two communities living in proximate locations, but rather between Moroccans from different and distinct geographical regions. Interior has come to mean “interior of the country,” which for those in the North meant outsiders. It was first used to describe outsiders who came to the North from Fez, the interior of Morocco and the capital of the makhzen during the era preceding colonial rule. Although Moroccans come from places other than Fez now, the term still holds. This is in part due to the Fez (Ar. *fassi*) origins of the Casablanca and Rabat elites running the port and other large-scale infrastructure projects as well as the Moroccans from less elite roots coming north to work for these elites.

“Interior” is not only a word for a region: it is one region’s word for its other. It is the kind of word that only enters one’s vocabulary if they are from the North or desire to get closer to people from this region. Learning when, how and with whom to use “interior” in conversations about Tangier Med thus was one of the linguistic lessons of my fieldwork. These lessons were many, despite the fact that my preparation for fieldwork included becoming conversant in Moroccan Arabic (Ar. *ad-darija al-maghrebiya*) through courses in Rabat and Fez and countless homestays between 2005 and 2008. However, it was not until I began to conduct research in the North in 2008, that I realized how much the language I had learned was based on a particular, politically-dominant version of Moroccan Arabic found in Morocco’s so-called capital cities of Fez, Rabat and Casablanca. It is this version of Moroccan Arabic found most commonly in mainstream Moroccan media, including the television, music and films that are distributed broadly inside and outside of Morocco. In addition, it is this version of Moroccan Arabic promoted by the main language schools and language learning materials for foreign

speakers, with the notable exception of work of Moroccan Arabic linguists from Spain who are attentive to regional differences in pronunciation and vocabulary (e.g. Moscoso García et al 2013; Herrero Muñoz-Cobo 2003).

As part of my process of first learning Moroccan Arabic in Fez and Rabat, I struggled to stop pronouncing the Arabic letter *qaf* as a guttural “q” sound in the back of the throat, as I had learned to pronounce it when studying Modern Standard Arabic in the United States. My Moroccan Arabic teachers and friends in Fez and Rabat urged me to pronounce this letter like the English letter “g” in order to sound more correct in Moroccan Arabic. Once in the North for pre-dissertation fieldwork in August 2008, I started to notice that regional natives pronounced the letter *qaf* with the guttural “q” as in Standard or Classical Arabic, and much more occasionally with the glottal stop of the “hamza.” In order to acclimate to the North, I therefore struggled to return to this pronunciation that I had lost through my language training. The pronunciation of the letter *qaf* is one of the easiest ways to identify a person’s regional origins. I also got used to hearing regional residents in the North describe jokingly or derisively those Moroccans who pronounce this letter with the “g” sound as “provincial” (Mor. Ar. *'aroubi*, lit. of the countryside, with connotations of being uncultured).

During fieldwork, I did not stop speaking Moroccan Arabic as I had learned it in Fez and Rabat. Rather, I learned to speak with regionalisms based on the person I was talking with. My linguistic lessons from the field included many issues of vocabulary. When speaking with someone in the North, I would replace “*i-sewwel*” (“to ask” outside of the North) with “*i-saqsi*” (“to ask” in the North), and instead of asking “*ki dayr?*” (“how are you?” outside of the North), I would ask its Tangier equivalent of “*kif ntina?*” or its Tetuan equivalent of “*kif nta?*” “Ntina,” as the diminutive form of you (Mor. Ar. *nta*; Ar. *inta*) follows a pattern of regularly using

diminutives in Tangier that some claim is a result of Spanish influence. Every cat (Ar. *qitt/a*) becomes a little cat (Mor. Ar. *qtit/a*), while every dog (Ar. *kelb*) becomes a little dog (Mor. Ar. *klib/kliba*). I learned that a common way for a man to refer to a female love in Tangier is “little liver” (Mor. Ar. *kbida*, diminutive of Ar. *kebda*). I also learned to remove the many Moroccanized French words so common in everyday speech in Rabat, Casablanca and Fez and other cities of the former French Protectorate. In order to be more widely understood in the North, I replaced these words with their Arabic or Moroccanized Spanish equivalents. I learned that in a place where so many people know Spanish better than French, relying on the constant code-switching between Moroccan Arabic and French that I used with my friends in Rabat would not make me any friends in the North. In addition, it would immediately mark me as from the Moroccan interior.

My Arabic tutor, Annafs (real name), a graduate student Arab historiography and NGO worker, explained to me the various meanings of “interior” for natives of the North. Son of a Tetuani family and raised in Tangier, he knew well the traditions of the north and was fiercely protective of them. He described the first vernacular meaning of interior as “geographical interior.” He said that this use comes from how the man of the north sees: so close to Europe, with Spain in front of him and everything behind him is the interior of the country. He is proud of his location, and looks down on those Moroccans from outsider and below his region in the interior of country. He is northern (Ar. *shamali*) as opposed to of the interior (Ar. *dakhli*). As described to me by another port-city native, a cultural heritage worker named Hanan (pseudonym), the geographic distinction goes deeper, into the soil: “Even their earth is different from ours. It’s redder.” She told me how when he was at university in Rabat, students from the North would refer amongst themselves to students from the interior as “red-footed.”

Annafs explained that the second meaning in which interior is used in local dialect is to signify “social intruder” (Ar. *dakhil, dkhla*): the foreigner, the stranger who comes from elsewhere and enters or tries to enter a society that he wasn't born into and may not respect. It was in this usage that another friend in Tangier described her feelings towards the Moroccans coming north with the story of a recent taxi ride. She was appalled that the taxi driver, who spoke with a heavy Casablanca accent, could not understand the directions she gave him. “He didn’t even know Hassan II!” she explained, referring to the name one of the most important streets in Tangier that is also home to the tomb of the city's saint, *Sidi Bouaraqiyya*. This sense of foreignness works both ways though, and particularly through language. This was evoked by Hanan’s experience studying for a year in Rabat at the central university. She never forgot the way Moroccans claimed they could not understand when she spoke Arabic or would make fun of her when she spoke French. I had personally experienced something similar once when speaking in Moroccan Arabic in Tangier with a man visiting from Rabat. He asked me at one point if I knew French and I told him I did. He said that was good, because he knows a lot of people from the North do not speak French. My friends overhearing the conversation laughed as we realized he had assumed I was a Moroccan woman from the North because of my speech, despite the fact that anyone who knew the true sound of the regional dialects would have known that my accent is only a rough approximation. For this man from Rabat, however, my accent was foreign enough to him that I must have been from the North.

Annafs explained that the other meanings of interior in local vernacular are more political, referencing a sense of the very different regional relations with state power. People from the north commonly assume that anyone arriving from the interior is “connected to the makhzen.” Annafs and others I spoke with claimed that historically people from the interior used

real or purported relations with the Moroccan Ministry of the Interior (Ar. *al-wizarat ad-dakhliya*) to get what they wanted from people from the North. This meaning is connected with Morocco's Years of Lead (Fr. *Les années de plomb*, Ar. *sanawat ar-ruṣaṣ*) between the 1960s and the 1980s. As with similar timeframes in countries like Argentina and Brazil, this period involved massive state violence against all citizens seen, however speciously, as political threats to the ruling power. During this period, the Moroccan Ministry of the Interior was the strongest of the ministries. It was under its auspices that much of the repression and atrocity of the period was carried out. Annafs mentioned two popular proverbs associated with that time: "use the *mim* and rest easily" and "the walls have ears." The former refers to the negative participle "ma" that starts with the Arabic letter *mim*, and implies that if you are asked if you know something, or saw or heard anything, the best reply is that you did not. As for the second proverb, Annafs explained that, "People coming to the North during that time would exploit this situation and demand things from people here by claiming an association with the Interior Ministry. Out of fear, people in the North would comply. One was never sure who was and who was not an informer for the Ministry."

The assumption that people coming from the interior are closely connected to the *makhzen* persists in the minds of many people from the North. This sense of the *makhzen* as apart and looking to exploit the people of the North underlies this suspicion. For port officials, this is a result of how long regional inhabitants submitted to the authority of "the mafia," referring specifically to the organization behind the regional hashish industry. For instance, Benali (pseudonym), considering himself an expert on the problem given his childhood in Tangier, explained that, "we are competing with the mafia for the interests of people in the north, who have only known the mafia system for so long." Port engineer, Fouad (pseudonym),

explained how difficult it has been to hire people from the region of the port since “they only want to work in security, so they can get a say in what and who goes through.”

In the house of another port-city native, a local tailor named Mahmoud (real name), his elderly mother spoke at length about what the makhzen was doing to the North: burning the hashish farms, taking over land, and so on. Mahmoud had asked me previously if I could explain to him, “the difference between the mafia and the makhzen.” Hearing versions of this perspective from several of my regional research participants, I raised the question of mafia and makhzen during an interview off the record with a prominent Moroccan social commentator in Rabat. Even though he was not from the northern region, he understood the suspicions of regional natives towards the Tangier Med Port and its officials. Framing the port within the makhzen’s larger project of what he called, in French, “growth without development” (Fr. *croissance sans développement*) he asked me facetiously, “Which is the real mafia?” Distinctions and similarities, both real and imagined, between mafia and makhzen also seemed to invoke an earlier distinction French colonial theorists made between the “Lands of the Makhzen” (Ar. *bilad al-makhzen*) and “Lands of the Unsubdued” (Ar. *bilad as-siba*). The former referred to the lands submitting to the authority of the makhzen, including paying the appropriate taxes. The latter referred to the lands not submitting to the authority of the makhzen, refusing to pay taxes, and regularly launching attacks on the makhzen’s armies. The North was long considered part of the *blad as-siba* from the perspective of the makhzen.

Benali explained the history of the North as a disadvantaged region, and the policy of the government to isolate it because of the coups that had been planned by people from the North against Hassan II. But, he said, “that is in the past now.” Benali and others said that now they are “bringing development to the region,” but that people in the region are still stuck in how they

were treated in the past. In a conversation with a top financial officer out of the port's business office in Casablanca, he echoed this frustration at people from the North who refused "get over the past," and asked me what I would do to convince people of what the future has to offer them. In both being close to the hashish mafia and "stuck in the past," port officials described the residents of the North as having different mindsets (Fr. *mentalités*). In a published interview, the former director of the Tangier Med Port Authority's department of research and development went further. After claiming that the new port of Tangier Med is going to cause "an earthquake in the economic geography of Morocco," this port official was asked by the interviewer if "differences in mindset are an obstacle for the [port's] creation" (Zabbal 2008: 38). The port official responded, "What is the meaning of cultural difference when human beings spend at least five hours in front of their television across the entire planet? What will remain of people's cultural specificity in twenty-five or thirty years? Already, a common source of reference extends over the large part of humanity, at least in its urban constituency" (Zabbal 2008: 38).

Reading this interview dismissing the significance of differences between regional inhabitants and the developers from Rabat and Casablanca, I thought of a conversation I had with a former Moroccan consultant to the Tangier Med Port Authority, when the port was still a project. He had been hired to supervise the process of payments to regional inhabitants who had been expropriated to clear land for the future port. His refrain throughout the interview was that these people had been "poorly compensated" (Fr. *mal indemnisé*) and that many did not even have the documents to prove their land rights. While the port plans were developed in other offices, he received what he described as "very poor, mostly illiterate people who had nothing and wanted him to solve everything." He was, for them, the face of this project, and yet he had no authority.

For both port officials and regional inhabitants, I found a tendency to describe Tangier Med as existing within the political and cultural space of Rabat and Casablanca even while being physically located in the northern region of Morocco. While they made recourse to different ways of describing the other, with the residents of the North referring to Rabat and Casablanca as part of the interior, they nonetheless overlapped in seeing a fundamental difference between the port and its pre-existing region. For port officials, the goal was to use the port to create a new economic hub in the north, capitalizing on the physical proximity of the coast. For natives of the region, the port was taking away the coast from its inhabitants by intruders from the makhzen. For port-city natives and other regional inhabitants, the coast was not something separate from the specificities of northern regional culture. For port officials, the coast had to be separated from this mafia-dominated, past-oriented regional culture in order to be made what Timothy Mitchell (2002:210) would call an “object of development,” a convention used by development discourse to present itself apart from the place and people it describes. In juxtaposing these different, regional geographies, I showed how the coordinates that locate the port regionally are part of an historic struggle over the relationship between this region and the Moroccan state. In the final section of this chapter, I describe this development in a third way: as a contest over the future of Morocco’s most global coast.

Ideally located at the shortest distance between Africa and Europe (less than 10 miles), Tangier Med provides direct and zero deviation access to major East/West seaways and confers the benefit of capturing service to Africa and South America as it marks the point where the Atlantic and Mediterranean meet.

Tangier Med Port Authority, 2009

IV. The Strait of Gibraltar

On any world map, the Strait of Gibraltar is so narrow that at first, brief glance, Europe appears to meet Africa not far from Tangier. By ship, the Strait seems just as narrow, whether one is crossing in a ferry between the coasts of Spain and Morocco, or passing on a vessel carrying containers, oil, cars, or some other cargo combination. In the office of the port official I call Monsieur Benjelloun (pseudonym) at the Tangier Med Port Authority, I saw this narrowness again through the frame of one of his windows. This view afforded a look onto the opposite Spanish coast including the faint outlines of the cranes of the Port of Algeciras and the steepness of the United Kingdom's rock of Gibraltar. In and out of this frame would appear a passing ship on the Mediterranean waters. Benjelloun was explaining to me the significance of the Tangier Med Port's location: at just about nine miles from Europe, its location on the Strait puts it nearly on the course of all the major shipping lines that cross the Strait. Benjelloun gestured to this view through his window and said to me in English, with emphasis, that, "God didn't give us oil for a reason."

In this section, I draw on descriptions of the significance of Tangier Med's location at the edge of the nine-miles-narrow Strait of Gibraltar. I start with Benjelloun's articulation of the port authority's perspective on this aspect of the port's location. I contrast his port authority perspective with other ways in which this nine-mile proximity is significant for life in this region past and present. This includes the ongoing salience of the myth of Hercules, the persistence of

Spanish territorial claims, the trajectories of migrants, and other real and imagined phenomena that make this proximity matter for regional experience, economic and otherwise.

Benjelloun clarified that this coastal location, so close to Europe and some of the busiest global shipping lines, was a great potential asset for the Moroccan economy. By building a major port infrastructure at this point along the Strait of Gibraltar, Morocco was able to bank on not only the proximity to Europe but also the port's location at zero deviation from the major shipping lines already passing through the Strait. Repeated in many of my interviews with port officials, "zero deviation" was a particular indicator of the port's potential. Maritime deviation is defined as "the additional distance away from the main shipping routes it takes to service a specific port. The higher the deviation the more reluctant maritime shipping companies will be to use this port along their major pendulum routes" (Rodrigue 2013). While low deviation includes ports up to a hundred nautical miles from a shipping route (Rodrigue 2013), Tangier Med is even more ideally located at zero deviation from many shipping routes. In other words, building this port in this location afforded it an already existing market: the ships were already almost right there. It was up to the port to sell itself on expanded capacity and decreased labor costs when compared to competing European ports.

With deep water and zero deviation, the Tangier Med Port can welcome ships far larger than those previously able to call in Morocco. These are the ships that the port was primarily built to receive: ships too big and costly to dock at most of the ports of destination for the containerized goods they carry. By unloading at ports like Tangier Med, transshipped cargo from these ships wait temporarily in the port's container yards for smaller, feeder vessels to continue onward to their destinations. While this transshipped cargo is technically on the physical territory of Morocco, it does not enter Moroccan customs territory since it remains in the duty-free zone

of the port's container terminals. The attraction of these shipping lines to the Tangier Med Port also increases import and export possibilities for the expanding offshoring sector of the region. Finally, the nine miles provides a closer connection for ferry services that bring trucks and passenger vehicles between the Strait. By saying that "God didn't give us oil for a reason," Benjelloun evoked the possibilities of proximity as a resource to be exploited through the creation of new forms of infrastructure and the expansion of offshoring services. Built at the most proximate point on this most proximate coast, Tangier Med is framed by port officials like Benjelloun as simply the most natural way to profit from this "God-given" resource.

Nine miles is not only significant for port development and shipping. To make sense of this narrowness, port-city natives refer to Greek myth. The Strait was made by the man-god Hercules, rather than the mere mortals who dug the canals of Suez and Panama. According to myth, it was in this area of the Strait that Hercules broke the continents of Africa and Europe apart by smashing through the Atlas Mountain and splitting it into what are known as the Pillars of Hercules. He thereby connected the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, creating the Strait. I was asked where exactly this event occurred by Amin, the Tangier-born taxi driver who took me to interview Benjelloun. Driving along the road that hugs the Moroccan coast, we spoke together in Moroccan Arabic about my research and the region in general. Approaching the Tangier Med Port, the driver turned to me and said, "You know a lot of things, professor. Tell me, we say Hercules divided the continents at Jebel Musa, but the Spanish say it was at Ceuta. Which is it?" He was referring to the dispute over the southern Pillar of Hercules. While the northern Pillar is widely accepted as being the British territory of Gibraltar on the Spanish coast, the southern Pillar is disputed between Morocco and Spain. Spain claims that the southern Pillar was at Monte Hacho in the Spanish territory of Ceuta located northeast of Tangier Med on the Moroccan coast.

Morocco claims that the southern Pillar was at Jebel Musa, located in Moroccan territory past Tangier Med on the road to Ceuta. Hercules remains a significant figure in regional life, and as the name of one of Tangier's soccer teams, ends up spray-painted on walls around the city. People joke about being as strong as Hercules and everyone goes at some point to take photos or picnic at the Cave of Hercules. Located nine miles to the west of the Tangier city center on the Atlantic Coast, this is where legend has it that Hercules slept between conducting his Ten Labors.

I told Amin that I could not give him a definite answer, that we do not know for sure the location. His question prompted me to think back to July 2006, the first time I had visited Tangier before I began my doctoral studies. The Cave of Hercules and Ceuta were two of those "must-see" sites I had visited during that trip. At the Cave of Hercules, to the west of Tangier, I too had the customary tourist shot taken of me in front of the cave's Africa-shaped opening onto the point where the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea meet. Indeed, it was not far from the Cave, down along the Atlantic coast of Tangier, that the first idea for a large, globally oriented container port was located. This was the idea of one of the advisors of King Mohammed's VI's father, King Hassan II. The envisioned project was to be called "Tangier-Atlantic Port," and while the port was not developed, some port-city natives recall billboards announcing the project around Tangier in the late 1990s. It was shortly after Hassan II's death in 1999, and the accession to the throne of his son Mohammed VI, that the plan for Tangier-Atlantic was discarded. In its stead, the Tangier Med Port was proposed as part of the new king's interest in the strategic potential of Morocco's Mediterranean coast.

In July 2006, I had also visited the autonomous Spanish municipality of Ceuta to the northeast of Tangier, where I too had visited the kitschy statue of Hercules standing over the

city's port. One of the last European territories in Africa, Ceuta is one of two “autonomous Spanish municipalities” in Morocco. Formerly called “places of sovereignty” (Sp. *plazas de soberanía*), these municipalities have been under Spanish rule for hundreds of years. Ceuta has been ruled by Spain since the 16th century, and Melilla on the border of the Moroccan city of Nador has been under Spanish sovereignty since the 15th century. While both Ceuta and Melilla offer direct ferry services to Spain, there is no legal way to import goods from these duty-free territories into Morocco. This has led to a vibrant grey market for Ceuta and Melilla-bought goods in the markets of Northern Morocco, including in Tangier and Tetuan. Moroccans from Tetuan need no visa to enter Ceuta, and the same is true for Moroccans from Nador in Melilla. This grey economy of cross-border trade moves quite literally on the backs of Moroccan women. These women, referred to locally by the Spanish word, *porteadoras*, walk loads wrapped across their backs between the Spanish municipalities and adjacent Moroccan territory, a human transport in sharp contrast to the movement of things by trucks and ships at Tangier Med.

From the Cave of Hercules to Ceuta, the coastal road is full of reminders that this proximate place is one of transnational crossings desired, enacted, and interrupted. Radio and television signals cross, picked up so easily on radio and television that many port-city natives long had no need for satellite dishes that dot the roofs of the rest of Morocco. The winds cross too, and are observable turning the recently constructed turbines lining the Moroccan and Spanish coasts. The winds are also blamed for all matter of illness in the region. This is particular true of the warm “Eastern wind” (Ar. *Sharqi*, Mor. Ar. *Shergi*) that blows up through the Sahara to the Mediterranean. Called *Leveche* in Spain and *Sirocco* elsewhere, it also blows north from Tangier and into the Spanish town of Tarifa and the busy port of Algeciras. Like the winds, another thing that crosses is hashish. I had heard that the proximity of the Strait was one

of the reasons that the hashish industry rose in the 1970s. The hashish industry filled an economic vacuum in the region created through several historical processes including the departure of foreign capital from Tangier and elsewhere after Moroccan independence in 1956 and the emigration of so many regional natives in search of opportunity in Europe. In addition, the Moroccan makhzen pursued a policy of isolating the restive, northern region during the greater part of King Hassan II's rule from 1961-1999. In the taxi with driver Amin, he tacitly evoked the economic legacy of this history when he told me he would show me one of the places hashish used to be regularly loaded onto motorized boats to cross to the opposite shore. Amin drove past Tangier Med to the small fishing hamlet of Dalia on the other side of the port complex. Pointing out the post where the border police watch the shoreline, Amin explained that these officers' meager state salaries meant they could always be bought off to turn a blind eye away from the boats carrying drug or human cargo towards Europe.

In terms of human cargo, the narrowness of the Strait has made this coast the place of many migrations past and present. This can be traced back into the landscape itself through the brother rock formations of Musa and Tarek. Jebel Musa (the Rock of Musa) is just past the Tangier Med Port and faces Jebel Tarek (the Rock of Tarek, Anglicized as "Gibraltar") across the Strait. From here Al-Andalus was launched, as Berbers and Arabs invaded Spain and reigned for centuries until the Conquistadores sent them in the opposite direction. Jews and Muslims of Al-Andalus fled back south to where their ancestors had come. In the present, new migrations are drawn south to Tangier. With the ongoing economic crisis in Spain, young, unemployed Spaniards are coming to Morocco hoping to find opportunities that no longer exist in Spain. However, most of the migrants drawn here to the Strait are heading in the opposite direction as men, women, and children from all over Africa make their way north to Europe. Continuing

around Jebel Musa, the road passes by migrants hoping for a ride to Ceuta. There are many others living and waiting in the adjacent forest at *Taotiet el Bioute* that extends to the Ceuta border. Waiting in this forest, along the roads, in unrated pensions, cheap housing on the outskirts of Tangier or at Chez Kebe's Senegalese restaurant in Tangier, African migrants come to cross this nine miles by whatever means necessary. It is a sea of many deaths, a watery passage seemingly so quick and yet so long without the documents and finances of licit crossing. Migrants wait for passage by small vessel, commonly a handmade, wooden boat called a *patera*. At other times, they wait for the faster and more mobile inflatable *zodiak*, or they try their luck in ferry-bound trucks. As shadows around port space at Tangier Med, and formerly at Tangier's city port, aspiring African migrants cross paths with Moroccan "burners" (Mor. Ar. *Harraga*, "the ones who burn [their papers]"). These include the young Moroccan kids sent by their families from places deep in the Moroccan interior like Beni Mellal and Khouribga to head north for better opportunities. The young *harraga*, often ranging usually from 12 to 18 years of age, place their hopes on getting to the Spanish camps (Sp. *campos*) for "unaccompanied minors" and the training and housing they promise. Brinks, the US-based, international private security company, lost their contract for providing security services at the Tangier Med Port once it was discovered that a group of their locally hired employees were accepting bribes to facilitate the crossing of migrants by truck through the port and onto the ferries heading to Europe.

Not all crossings of the Strait are illicit. Indeed, plenty of licit things are moving through the Tangier Med Port, although official statistics give no indication of the ways in which licit and illicit traffics in things and people overlap over the course of the year. Indeed, in searching for "Tangier Med traffic" in Moroccan news aggregators, one is as likely to come up articles about seizures of smuggled cargos as licitly trafficked people and things. An official press release from

the Tangier Med Port Authority in February 2014 noted a “net growth in all of its activities in 2013” (Tangier Med Port Authority 2014). This growth is described in relation to Tangier Med’s commercial traffic including that of containers, vehicles, and international truck transport. Container traffic reached 2,500,000 twenty-foot-equivalent units (TEUs) (Tangier Med Port Authority 2014). 181,500 vehicles were handled at Tangier Med, including 93,700 new cars from the nearby Tangier Automotive City, where the French car manufacturer Renault has established a large plant for the production primarily of its Logan budget line (Tangier Med Port Authority 2014). In terms of international truck transport, 198,000 trucks passed through Tangier Med, an 11% growth from the previous year (Tangier Med Port Authority 2014).

Tangier Med is not merely located on the Moroccan coast of the Strait of Gibraltar, along the narrow continental division made by Hercules. For port officials, Tangier Med is also bringing Morocco closer to Europe. According to a published interview with one former port director, Tangier Med “clearly marks Morocco’s return to the Mediterranean... a return into a world of expanding North-South and East-West trade” (Zabbal 2008: 38). By making the container terminals a duty-free area and making the Euro the standard currency for paying port fees, Tangier Med’s officials aspired to a new kind of space *in* Morocco but not *of* Morocco. From the port authority perspective, Tangier Med is a uniquely “global” contribution to the region, while port-city natives have a limited, “local” horizon. And yet, for Moroccans long accustomed to the particular proximities of life along this coast, there is nothing new about such aspirations. While port officials might seek to use the port to bring Morocco closer to Europe, inhabitants of this region have identified themselves as at odds with the port’s version of Morocco based in the distant power centers of Casablanca and Rabat. Long drawing on the experience of living in this edge place along the Mediterranean, and facing the European coast,

port-city natives have proud attachments to their place of proximity. My approach to studying port location provides a way of conceiving logistics infrastructure as embedded in multiple, discontinuous forms of regional connectedness. By opening up a narrative space on the side of the world, this approach situates infrastructure within both already existing and aspirational forms of global regionalism.

CHAPTER TWO

Trailers, Containers, and the Social Worlds of Port Use in the Tangier Med Hinterlands

I. Introduction

In the open spaces of the Tangier Med Port, materials overwhelmingly out-number people. By far the most plentiful and visible objects in these spaces are trailers and containers, the standardized boxes of global commodity movement. Within their respective terminals, containers are stacked high and trailers are parked wide, waiting temporarily before continuing on their journeys in or out of Morocco. Lacking the personal decorations and over-stuffed loads of much cargo transport on Moroccan roads, the trailers and containers at the port are standard in ways that locate them within a particular geography of logistics. Trailers are no larger than what is permitted on the majority of European roadways. Forty-foot long or less, these trailers look small in comparison to the massive, fifty-four-footers that are so common on North American highways. Although containers have the same twenty-, forty- and forty-five-foot lengths standard to containerized shipping around the world, most are stamped along the length of their sides with the names and logos of only European shipping lines. As mentioned in the previous chapter, port officials promote Tangier Med to serve both the Euro-Mediterranean international road routes that carry trailers via ferry between Morocco and Europe, and the European shipping lines that carry containers far beyond the Mediterranean. At this platform for goods movement, Europe is not only present on the Spanish horizon but also in orienting the port's activities.

While the visible features of trailers and containers may reveal a relationship to Europe and European capital, it is by following the movement of these boxes from the port into its hinterlands that we can find the regional, Moroccan social worlds of port use that these materials

inhabit. This is the view revealed when I rode with the Moroccan short-haul truck driver I refer to as Ahmed (pseudonym). Looking out on the fenced-in ferry and container terminals and the Spanish horizon beyond, we waited for permission to enter the Special Administrative Zone (SAZ, pronounced “*saz*” in French) of the port with our load. The SAZ functions as Morocco’s customs border at the port, where licit cargoes are to be separated from illicit ones. For a driver like Ahmed, the SAZ is always a place of stopping and waiting. On our day together, he was hauling a trailer filled with automotive parts made in the Tangier Free Zone (TFZ) on Tangier’s Atlantic Coast and destined for European assembly plants in France and Germany. He makes a hundred dirhams on a good day hauling trailers and containers between factories in Tangier’s free zones and the Tangier Med Port. Ahmed complains that the port is run by what he called “thieves” (Mor. Ar. *shifara*), where a cup of coffee costs twenty dirhams, and there are no facilities where truckers can rest while waiting for the processing of their loads.

Riding with Ahmed and the trailer he hauls, we traveled from the load pickup at a export-oriented factory in the Tangier Free Zone in the district of Boukhalef outside Tangier, through the zone’s border with Moroccan customs territory, and along the roads that tie the zone, port, and their hinterlands. At each stop Ahmed makes, and the ones that enable his movements from behind the scenes, the trailer interacts with a range of actors I refer to in this chapter as *port users*. Trailers, like the one Ahmed pulls this day, and containers require a constellation of such actors to tie the port to its hinterlands. Port users work in separate but interlinked sites that include haulage companies, like Ahmed’s, responsible for transporting containers and trailers by road; international road transport agencies, which manage trailer space and routes; shipping line agencies, which do the same for containers; freight forwarding companies, which collect and circulate documents for the boxes and their cargoes; customs brokerages, which declare cargo to

customs authorities; and factory logisticians, who contract with these various companies to import or export cargo via the Tangier Med Port.

While the previous chapter located the Tangier Med Port between port officials' aspirations and port-city inhabitants' nostalgia, this chapter turns to the actors who use the port as a platform for the circulation of export-oriented manufacturing from Morocco to Europe. Following this introduction, the first main section of this chapter focuses on the everyday work and workspace of the Moroccan logistics manager I call Nouredine (pseudonym). He is in charge of transportation logistics for Euroauto (pseudonym), an export-oriented, automotive parts factory in the Tangier Free Zone. The second section introduces the social world of trailer logistics and the international road transport agency I call MarocTrans (pseudonym), which provides trailer transport services for Nouredine's export logistics. The third section introduces the social world of container logistics and the global shipping line agency I refer to as SeaShip (pseudonym), which provides container transport services for Euroauto.

Theoretical Framework

By following trailers and containers into the sites of port users, this chapter situates the port within its hinterland of transportation and logistics work. Port-hinterland relations, as revealed in the work of moving boxes between Tangier Med, the Tangier Free Zone, and regional agencies for transportation and logistics, is a context I return to throughout the rest of this dissertation. While much multi-sited fieldwork on globalization is designed to include geographically distant sites, my research was motivated by the desire to trace the global in the geographically proximate relations of port and hinterland. Transportation researcher César Ducruet, describes the term "port region" as a "multifaceted concept" that "includes the

economic area around a port (i.e. the port region *stricto sensu*), the logistics area connecting the port (i.e. the hinterland), and the area in which inter-port relations take place (i.e. façade, range or system of ports)...” (2009: 42-43). I argue that the trailer and container are ideal objects for studying the port-hinterland relationship since the hinterland, as Ducruet writes, “is only defined by a group of locations connected to the port through related goods flows” (2009: 43). The concept of port region is a useful organizing concept for the anthropology of logistics since it provides a way to situate global platforms like the Tangier Med Port in the everyday activities of a region. While each contemporary container port looks at first glance like it could be located anywhere, studying a port’s hinterland reveals how each particular port is emplaced in the practices of regional, logistics actors. The hinterland thus provides a way to rethink the cultural and spatial category of region in terms of logistics.

By identifying how the social and technical dimensions of logistics sites are co-constituted, I aim to go beyond distinctions between so-called “physical” infrastructures on the one hand and “social” or “human” ones on the other. In recent research on infrastructure and social life in cities in the Global South, scholars like AbdouMaliq Simone (2004) and Julia Elyachar (2010) have identified how people act *as-if* physical, technical infrastructures. These scholars use metaphors of physical infrastructure to ground arguments about the role of social relations in the reproduction of urban life. Elyachar writes that, “in Cairo, ‘phatic labor’ creates a social infrastructure of communicative channels that are as essential to economy as roads, bridges, or telephone lines” (2010: 452). She positions “phatic labor,” or the work of creating enduring social ties of communication between different social actors, as something *like* physical infrastructure, or potentially using physical infrastructure, but nonetheless distinct. Simone likewise wants to go beyond infrastructure as “commonly understood in physical terms, as

reticulated systems of highways, pipes, wires, or cables... modes of provisioning and articulation [that] are viewed as making the city productive, reproducing it, and positioning its residents, territories and resources in specific ensembles where the energies of individuals can be most efficiently deployed and accounted for” (2004: 407). Critiquing this idea of infrastructure as implicitly valuing the physical over the human, Simone aims to reverse the equation. He explains that the collaborative interactions of inhabitants in African cities “have depended on the ability of residents to engage complex combinations of objects, spaces, persons, and practices. These conjunctions become an infrastructure—a platform providing for and reproducing life in the city” (Simone: 408). Simone’s concept of “people as infrastructure,” like Elyachar’s “phatic labor,” posits unique forms of social relations as the basis for economically productive activity. While useful in contributing to our understanding of the social life of informal economic relations, this work risks reinforcing concepts of infrastructure as either physical *or* social instead of understanding these as overlapping dimensions of infrastructure in practice.

Inspired by approaches in science and technology studies (Star 1999, Star and Griesemer 1989, and Bell and Dourish 2007), I ask how even physical infrastructures as overwhelmingly material as a contemporary mega-port are embedded in the practices and experiences of human actors. As Susan Star argues, “infrastructure is a fundamentally relational concept, becoming real infrastructure in relation to organized practices... as part of human organization, and as problematic as any other” (1999: 380). In this chapter, I consider the Tangier Med Port in relation to key communities of its users. Paul Dourish and Genevieve Bell demonstrate how a user-orientation allows for “an experiential reading of infrastructure, which focuses not so much on the ways in which infrastructures reflect institutional relationships and more on how they shape individual actions and experience” (2007: 417). In order to understand how the diverse,

heterogeneous communities of port users experience the port, its hinterlands and each other, this chapter follows the material objects that mediate regional relations of logistics: trailers and containers. Instead of seeing trailers and containers as merely things that must be physically moved, I argue that these are ideal objects for entering the different social worlds of port use. Trailers and containers can be seen as examples of “boundary objects,” what Susan Star and James Griesemer describe as:

Objects which both inhabit several intersecting social worlds... *and* satisfy the informational requirements of each of them. Boundary objects are objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common use, and become strongly structured in individual-site use. These objects may be abstract or concrete. They have different meanings in different social worlds but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable, a means of translation. The creation and management of boundary objects is a key process in developing and maintaining coherence across intersecting social worlds” (1989: 393)

At the port, parked trailers and stacked containers may appear too uniform to function as boundary objects. How can such standard materials “have different meanings in different social worlds”? How can such symbols of globalization “adapt to local needs”? Trailers and containers in their terminals look too boring and plain to contain stories and social relations, let alone specifically Moroccan ones. These global black boxes look like any other, containing anything, going anywhere, and moved by anyone. While the last chapter drew on Kathleen Stewart’s concept of region to locate the Tangier Med Port in its cultural and political context, this chapter locates the port in the particular logistics region created out of the intersections of trailers, containers and the social worlds of port use.

II. Export Logistics at Euroauto, the Tangier Free Zone Factory

At the Tangier Free Zone (TFZ) in Boukhalef, adjacent to Tangier's International Airport, containers and trailers wait at the border that divides Moroccan customs and customs-free territories. Due to this border, I can only enter by showing my passport and being invited by a zone factory. Containers and trailers arriving from the Tangier Med Port can be approved for entry if their contents are confirmed as being the temporary imports for manufacturing export-bound products as required by zone law. It is here that I met the man I refer to as Nouredine (pseudonym), Moroccan logistics director at Euroauto. One of the first and most prominent factories in the TFZ, Euroauto is a car parts manufacturer for European automotive companies. They specialize in producing molded plastics and mirrors. Nouredine explained that Euroauto was one of the first factories to benefit from the tax-free, duty-free, and locational incentives of the zone. Although most of its exports go by trailers ferried to the roads of Europe, Euroauto was also one of the first to export a container through the Tangier Med Port not long after its first container terminal became operational in 2007.

I had contacted Nouredine on the suggestion of a mutual acquaintance in the Tangier logistics industry. Nouredine had started in the textile industry in the nineteen-nineties, when Tangier's offshoring work was primarily geared towards producing for Spanish department stores. He moved into the auto parts industry in the early 2000s, when the creation of the TFZ helped to incentivize this form of export manufacturing in the region. After describing to him my interest in how port users experience the port, Nouredine helped facilitate my access to Euroauto's transportation subcontractors so I could see the actual routing between the zone and Tangier Med. In this rest of this section, I describe the site and work of Nouredine's export

logistics through which he plans and coordinates the transportation of Euroauto parts by container and trailer from the Euroauto’s loading docks to the docks of the Tangier Med Port.

Euroauto is located in the Tangier Free Zone (TFZ). This is a key area in Tangier Med’s hinterland, the “group of locations connected to the port through related goods flows” (Ducruet 2009: 43). While I arrived at the TFZ by way of taxi from Tangier for my first meeting at Euroauto, containers and trailers arrive here by other means and routes. After being unloaded from their vessels, they are transported from the terminals to the port’s Special Administrative Zone (SAZ), where customs and security inspections are made, allowing these boxes to move from the space of the sea and the duty-free areas of the terminals into Moroccan customs territory. If documents and contents are in order, and permission is granted for the boxes to be picked up by area hauling services, most of the boxes hit a very specific road: the Moroccan A4 Autoroute. Opened in March 2008, a year after the port began to receive container vessels, this toll route was created to connect Tangier Med to the TFZ and other exportation, logistics and offshoring zones. Designed in this way, the A4 was a key infrastructure for bringing the port’s hinterland into being. Figure 11 is a map that shows the route’s start (point A) just outside the Tangier Med Port as well as the route’s end (point B) near the TFZ.

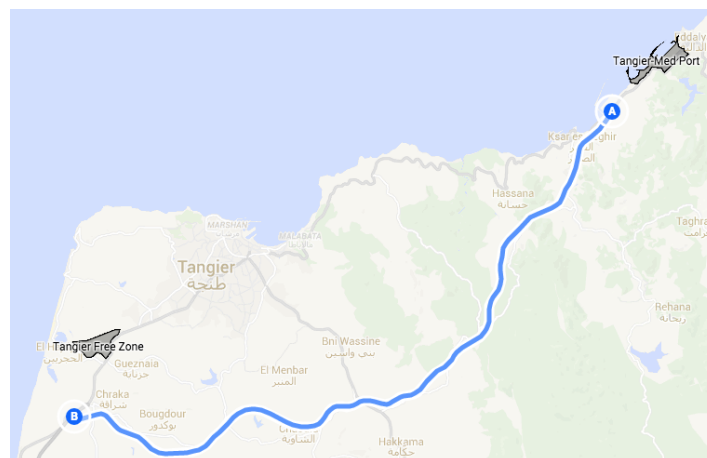


Figure 11: Map of the A4 Autoroute
Google Maps Map data ©2015 Google, Inst. Geogr. Nacional

The A4 starts at the western perimeter of the port complex (see Figure 11). The route heads past the small beach town of Ksar es-Seghir, and then inland towards Melloussa where the “Tangier Automotive City” is located. This free zone for car assembly, operational since 2012, is largely focused on producing Renault’s Logan budget car line. Continuing further on the A4, and exiting near the southeastern perimeter of Tangier, brings containers and trailers to the “Route Tetuan” and the some of the city’s industrial zones. Several road transportation agencies, lots and depots are located in this area, as well as factories for textiles and other light industry. This is where MarocTrans is located, the Euroauto’s primary contractor for international road transport services. Back on the A4, it is possible to avoid the city of Tangier entirely on the way to the TFZ and beyond. This is a major change from the days in which trailers and trucks going to and from the city’s port would crowd along its thoroughfares, and truck drivers with international loads were a regular part of urban life.

At the end of the A4 we reach the Rabat-Tangier autoroute. From here, it is just a short drive north to the TFZ. Established in 1999, the TFZ was the first economic space created in the Tangier region following the 1995 Barcelona Declaration. This agreement helped to create the basis for a Euro-Med Free Trade Zone, a Mediterranean equivalent to the North American Free Trade Agreement signed a couple years earlier. It agreed to establish “strengthened political dialogue on a regular basis, the development of economic and financial cooperation and greater emphasis on the social, cultural and human dimension, these being the three aspects of the Euro Mediterranean partnership” (Barcelona Declaration 1995). The economic aspect of this agreement was based on “the progressive establishment of a free-trade area; the implementation of appropriate economic cooperation and concerted action in the relevant areas; [and] a substantial increase in the European Union’s financial assistance to its partners” (Barcelona

Declaration 1995). Companies on the Mediterranean's northern shore were incentivized through subsequent European Union programs to exploit economic opportunities to on the Mediterranean's southern shore.

While free zones had existed in Tangier previously, as mentioned in chapter one of this dissertation, the scale of the TFZ and the Euro-Med economic climate it appealed to were distinctive. Once the Tangier Med Special Agency was created to develop the Tangier Med Port, the TFZ was put under the agency's auspices and became the launch pad for its larger territorial development strategy. As the first component of the "Tangier Med Large Industrial Platform" (Fr. *la Grande Plateforme Industrielle Tanger Med*), the TFZ would ultimately become one of a series of export-oriented industrial and service locations totaling nearly 12,355 acres. The qualities, growth, and success of the TFZ in attracting foreign direct investment was recognized in 2012 by fDiIntelligence, a subsidiary of the Financial Times. On its annual list of "Global Free Zone of the Future," the TFZ was number six overall, and number one for the category of "Best Port Zones" (Fingar 2012).

Factories in the TFZ have thirteen different national origins and produce a diverse array of industrial and service products. The TFZ has been particularly successful in attracting industries based on just-in-time manufacturing. In his history of standardized containers and trailers, Marc Levinson explains that

Just-in-time, a concept originated by Toyota Motor Company in Japan, involves raising quality and efficiency by eliminating large inventories. Rather than making most of its own components, as competitors did, Toyota signed long-term contracts with outside suppliers... The suppliers agreed to make their goods in small batches, as required for Toyota's assembly lines, and to deliver them within very narrow time windows for immediate use—hence the name, just-in-time. (2007: 265).

Subsequently, just-in-time expanded to become a dominant form of industrial organization in the automotive industry as well as other complex industrial chains around the world. This form of manufacturing, with low inventories, requires a great deal of investment in logistics management, what Levinson describes as “the task of scheduling production, storage, transportation, and delivery” (2007: 266). At Euroauto in the TFZ, Nouredine explained that logistics really came to Morocco with the automotive industry. Previously, manufacturing in northern Morocco was dominated by the textiles industry, which had a different relationship with arrival and transport time. Nouredine continued in French by saying that

Before, there was not, normally, for people working in business, a sense of this notion of logistics... Working in textiles, if it arrives tomorrow, or after tomorrow, or after a week, it's not a big deal... people don't care as much about time. But, the new actors in the automotive industry, [logistics] is a part of the [business] philosophy... just-in-time, zero stock, all of that therefore was something new here in Morocco.

Having worked in logistics for Euroauto over the past several years, Nouredine has observed that “there is a progression, there is an evolution” in the sensibility of transportation providers about the on-time logistics needs of just-in-time manufacturing, so that “currently, one can find transportation providers who have by now upgraded.”

The contents of the containers and trailers that Nouredine and other logistics managers in the TFZ work with are neither raw materials nor consumer products. They are parts of much longer supply chains that characterize contemporary global manufacturing. As a result, while some containers imported through gateway ports like Tangier Med carry consumer goods, most are “links in global supply chains, carrying what economists call ‘intermediate goods,’ factory inputs that have been partially processed in one place and will be processed further someplace else” (Levinson 2007: 268). Nouredine’s imported and exported boxes of auto parts and their

components are part of a similar “supply-chain capitalism” (Tsing 2009) comprised of complex, geographically distributed chains of production.

Materials and practices in the TFZ have a specific and legally enforced temporality and directionality. This is because nothing that is brought in or made at the TFZ can stay there or anywhere else in Morocco. The duty and tax free privileges of operating a factory in the zone are dependent on treating everything brought into the zone as a temporary import that must be eventually re-exported for further processing and consumption. This particular customs regime, like that of other export-oriented free zones around the world, requires the constant availability and reliability of transportation infrastructures and services. Infrastructures like the TFZ and the Tangier Med Port are potential platforms for participating in global supply chains. However, it is Nouredine’s export logistics, the transportation agencies that he contracts with, and the trailers and containers they use that allow these platforms to be materially connected to others around the world. Since Nouredine’s exports are mainly parts for European manufacturers, his export procedures evokes the specific needs of moving things from his factory, to the Tangier Med Port, across the Strait of Gibraltar, to Southern European ports, and then onto European roads for delivery to factories located in these ports’ hinterlands. This work involves multiple modalities (i.e. “multimodal transportation”) and border crossings in order to circulate goods between Euroauto and factories in the hinterlands Europe. As a result, following Nouredine’s export logistics shows how the narrow distance between Morocco and Europe becomes much wider and longer through the complex work of transnational commodity circulation.

Nouredine’s job title is Transport Logistics Manager (Fr. *Responsable Logistique Transport*). His immediate supervisor at Euroauto, Farid (pseudonym), has the position of Supply Chain Manager, a title that exists only in English despite French being the main language

of the Euroauto workplace. Farid oversees “the entire chain” (Fr. *toute la chaine*) of how Euroauto supplies their clients’ demands: from the procurement of primary materials to their transformation into the desired secondary materials to the delivery of these materials. Nouredine, on the other hand, coordinates the movement of those materials to and from the factory, ensuring that they arrive at the time and place desired. In order to help me understand his work, Nouredine hands me a diagram of Euroauto’s export procedure (recreated in Figure 12). This black and white copy puts his steps, described in French, into boxes connected by arrows. The result is that his work flattened into a flow of integrated practices. Each box brings us into the physical and informational work of preparing for the transportation of exports from factory to port and beyond. The boxes in this way tie together the physical boxes of containers and trailers, as well as the port and hinterland.

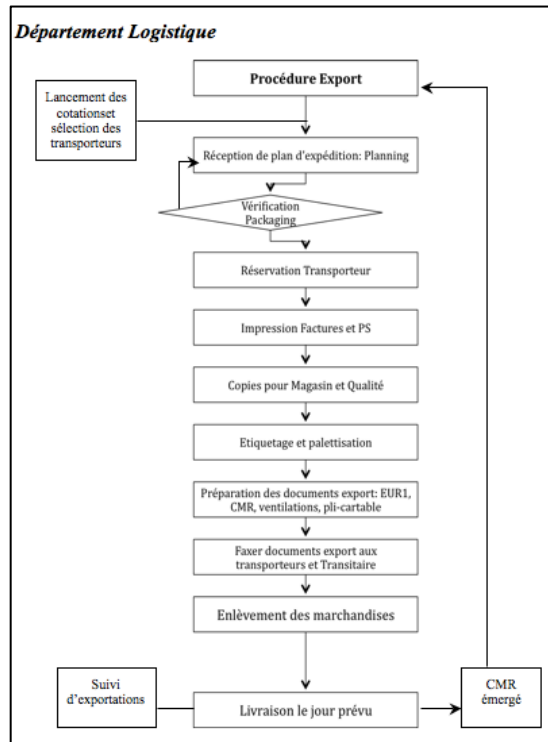


Figure 12: Diagram of the Export Logistics Process at Euroauto (Janell Rothenberg, 2014)

While Nouredine works within an office at the Euroauto factory, his procedures extend far beyond its walls. This extension starts with the first box in the diagram of the Nouredine's export procedure: getting quotes and selecting transporters (Fr. *lancement des cotations et sélection des transporteurs*). At this point, Nouredine knows who the client is who will be receiving the shipment, what the ordered shipment consists of, and the place and time of desired delivery. He reaches for a binder next to his computer, and opens it to reveal sheets holding business cards for local, mostly Moroccan representatives of international transportation providers. These transporters (Fr. *transporteurs*) include both road and maritime service providers. Once he knows if the export is going by trailer or container, he will call for quotes and time estimates from those transporters he knows serve the client's destination. From the information he gathers, he creates a short-list of possible transporters for the particular shipment.

He pulls out two business cards for Euroauto's most used transporters, and explains to me that these are the first companies he will introduce me to for my research. The first company is MarocTrans (pseudonym), a large international road transportation company that exclusively offers services for the Morocco-Europe market. The second company is SeaShip (pseudonym), a multinational shipping line that started in the early years of containerized shipping in the 1970s. Now after many buy-outs and mergers, SeaShip has become one of the largest in the world with headquarters distributed across several European capitals.

Before actually reserving the transportation services, Nouredine's next step is to plan and verify the export with other departments at Euroauto. Planning puts him into contact with the commercial department at Euroauto, which confirms the destination so Nouredine can plan the route that the shipment should take. Planning also puts him into contact with Farid, the Supply Chain Manager, in order to verify the packaging of the export. This will determine how much

container or trailer space they will need to transport the shipment. Full containers and trailers are called “*complet*” in French while “*groupage*” refers to consolidated shipments in which there are more than one shipment and possibly more than one shipper using a sole container or trailer. Occasionally, very small and expensive Euroauto shipments will go by airplane. Since this is the most expensive of transportation services, and most of his shipments are too large to make this cost effective to use, Nouredine only uses air transport on exceptional occasions.

Once packaging and routes are confirmed within Euroauto, Nouredine moves on to the step of reserving the transporters (Fr. *réservation transporteur*) and printing invoices (Fr. *impression facteurs*). Those transporters, like MarocTrans and SeaShip mentioned above, then commence their own processes of planning out the fulfillment of these transport services contracted by their client, Euroauto. As is often the case, this may involve subcontracting, particularly for the short-haul tractor services that pull containers and trailers between the zone and the port. However, this does not enter into Nouredine’s direct work. He subsequently switches his focus back from the transporters outside to the factory’s other departments. He generates copies of the transport invoices for the Quality Department, which assures that Euroauto maintains its International Standards Organization (ISO) certification for quality of services (known as ISO 9001). Euroauto’s “ISO 9001 Version 2008” certification is referred to in all their publicity materials as well as other documents, business cards and the like.

Nouredine then generates copies of the invoices for the company’s downstairs warehouse department, from where the order will ultimately be transported. Mohcine (pseudonym) manages the warehouse and leads a small team of employees to physically prepare, load and unload shipments. The warehouse is furnished with metal-framed shelves, known as stacks, where boxes wait after arriving or before departing Euroauto. In order to be physically

prepared for transport, Nouredine supervises the “labeling and palletizing” (Fr. *labellisation et paletisation*) of the export. This happens in the warehouse, where Mohcine places the export by using the warehouse forklift into a staging area near the loading docks. Each specific carton containing the parts ordered is labeled, and then stacked and secured with plastic edging and wrap on wooden pallets. Mohcine lifts these loaded pallets by forklift to an intermediate area where the materials wait for pick-up.

Nouredine’s work now brings him back upstairs to his office, where he starts “preparing the export documents” (Fr. *préparation des documents export*). These include customs, transport, and financial documents. Since most of Euroauto’s exports go to Europe, the main customs-related documents that Nouredine must prepare in order for shipments to be able to enter European customs space are the “EUR1” and “CMR.” The EUR1, or “movement certificate,” is what “enables importers in certain countries to import goods at a reduced or nil rate of import duty under trade agreements between the EU and beneficiary countries” (Chamber International N.d.). For permitted international transportation by road, Nouredine must prepare a document referred to as a “CMR,” Contract for the International Transport of Merchandise by Road (Fr. *Contrat de Transport International de Marchandise par Route*). This document is a component of the International Road Transport (Fr. *Transport International Routière*, TIR) Convention, which “permits the international carriage of goods by road from one customs office of departure in one country to a customs office in another country through as many countries as necessary without any intermediate frontier check of the goods carried” (UNECE N.d.). Other documents Nouredine prepares at this step are a cost breakdown for the shipment and the accompanying documents envelope (Fr. *pli-cartable*).

Before the physical export itself can be transported, Nouredine must fax the export documents to the transporters and freight forwarder (Fr. *transitaire*), who can now continue with their own preparations. While the transporter will ensure the physical movement of the export, the freight forwarder ensures the informational movement of the export by declaring and coordinating moves between customs territories with the Moroccan Customs Authority. Nouredine picks up the same binder with transporters' business cards and leafs through it until he reaches the section with contact information for freight forwarding agencies. He pulls out a business card for Tangier based company that fulfills the majority of Euroauto's freight forwarding needs. He lets me know that in addition to introducing me to their main transporters, he will also arrange for me to meet with this freight forwarding company in order to follow their work at Tangier Med and in its hinterlands.

The next step in Nouredine's export procedure is "merchandise pick-up" (Fr. *enlèvement des marchandises*). This step brings him downstairs again, to the warehouse, where Euroauto's physical merchandise meets the vehicle that will carry it from the hinterland to the port. Mohcine and his staff meet the container or trailer, and the driver (Fr. *chauffeur*) who is hauling it, at one of Euroauto's loading docks. The labeled and palletized merchandise is then loaded into the container or trailer. Originals of the documents are given to the driver to be placed in the plastic pouch that he will deliver with the shipment to the port. Once the container or trailer doors are closed and sealed, the driver starts his engine and begins the process of moving Euroauto's shipment from this loading dock at the edge of the factory towards the port dock at the edge of Morocco.

Nouredine returns to his office from where his process switches temporally, from planning a future export's transportation to following an existing one in movement. Nouredine

commences the step of “following-up on exports” (Fr. *suivi d’exportations*). This is the second-to-last step before the export process ends, ideally, with the final box in Nouredine’s diagram: “delivery as scheduled” (Fr. *livraison le jour prévu*). As he starts a “*suivi*,” as he calls the process of follow-up, he sets up initial meetings for me with MarocTrans and SeaShip. It is through these introductions, and the larger network I build from this access, that I begin to follow exports in a way that Nouredine in his office cannot: by physically following the containers, trailers and their accompanying documents into the social worlds of transportation that tie the hinterland and its factories to the port and its terminals. These port-hinterland relations are both made through goods movement and comprise the socio-technical infrastructure necessary for the emerging export-oriented economy of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

III. The “TIR” Trailer at MarocTrans, the International Road Transporter

When I entered the field for initial research in 2008, standardized “TIR” trailers were an ubiquitous presence on the roads in and out of Tangier. The city’s port was still Morocco’s international road transport hub, where ferries carried trailers over the brief expanse of Mediterranean water that separates Moroccan roads from European ones. At this time, I saw these trailers, marked with the French acronym for “International Road Transport” (Fr. *Transport International Routière*, TIR), as just another part of the city’s landscape of circulation. In addition to displaying stickers containing the TIR acronym on white background within a red circle, I noticed that these trailers were less crudely decorated, idiosyncratically sized or massively overstuffed than so many other commercial conveyances on Moroccan roads. Their license plates were often multiple: one for Morocco and another for a European Union country like Spain, France, Germany or Italy. I also noticed I was not the only one observing these

differences: young Moroccan men at traffic lights on the margins of the city also had their eyes on these trailers, as they tried to hang on their back doors or climb up beneath their chassis. This form of improvised, passenger travel by TIR trailer is a regular way of attempting to migrate clandestinely from the Tangier region to Southern Europe, as well as other borderlands of the European Union.

By 2010, these trailers and the tractors that haul them had largely disappeared from Tangier. This was when the Port of Tangier was closed to TIR traffic, which was transferred from that point onward to the newly opened ferry terminal at the Tangier Med Port. Meeting with the man I call Fouad (pseudonym), one of the top engineers at the Tangier Med Port Authority, he took me on a tour of the newly opened terminal. While he drove me around the massive parking lots filled with the trailers that had once been such a familiar site in Tangier, Fouad explained to me how Tangier Med would expand Morocco's annual TIR traffic. While the Tangier saw 85% of all Moroccan TIR traffic in 2009 (Moujahid 2011), Fouad pointed out that this market still had a great deal of potential for expansion. Indeed, this still represented only 10 percent of the overall international transport market for Moroccan imports and for exports (Moujahid 2011). The development of the sector had long suffered from a range of issues, including drug and human smuggling (see *L'Économiste* 2008). In reference to another issue in the sector, one Moroccan business journalist described the trucking industry as "very atomized" with most Moroccan companies owning only a couple vehicles (Moujahid 2011). He went on to say that since the country's TIR activity is "still limited to hauling foreign-owned trailers... It is therefore the European transport companies which essentially control the market" (Moujahid 2011).

One leading company in the Moroccan TIR sector is MarocTrans. At the MarocTrans

Tangier agency, I meet Mounira (pseudonym), the commercial manager. As she explained her work in Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, she used French words for specific objects like truck (Fr. *camion*), trailer (Fr. *remorque*), and tractor (Fr. *tracteur*). While I had already learned to identify a TIR trailer in Tangier, I had assumed that these trailers were all going to and from Europe with tractors as entire units. Seeing my confusion, Mounira picked up a model tractor-trailer, a marketing gift from one of their suppliers. She took it apart while explaining to me that the majority of trailers that go by ferry are brought to the port by tractor and picked up at the destination port by tractor. However, they do not go on the ferry attached to a tractor. This is because it is much cheaper for MarocTrans to have their trailers hauled by a Moroccan subcontractor within Morocco and use MarocTrans tractors in Europe. Therefore, at Tangier Med, MarocTrans trailers are unhitched from Moroccan tractors after passing through customs and border security in the port's Special Administrative Zone. The internal transportation contractor at the port then picked up the trailers to deliver them to the waiting ferries. A similar process happens once the trailers arrive at their destination ports. As a result, the boundary object that moves between these different Moroccan and European social worlds of road transport, tying the Moroccan hinterland, Tangier Med, and the roads of Europe, is not a tractor or truck but rather just the TIR trailer itself.

In this rest of this section, I consider some of the history and present of TIR trailers in Morocco. Much more than just a physical trailer, TIR evokes a form of work, a direction of routes, and a system of standards. It is also a way of using the Tangier Med Port. While the port is promoted on the global stage primarily as a container transshipment hub, it is also a major platform for connecting Moroccan and European roads. The significance of TIR outside of its official practices and objects is evidenced in the ways it circulates on non-TIR trailers on which

it is hand-painted among other decorations and international logos, like the Nike swoosh and the Mercedes circle. For those Moroccans involved in national road transport, TIR becomes an aspiration for better pay and longer routes. However, as an official traffic through the port, TIR is part of a particular social world and transnational geography, which ties the roads of the Tangier Med hinterland to roads and hinterlands in Europe. It is this view of TIR that makes it possible to see the Strait as not merely a maritime barrier between Africa and Europe. With ferries making a mobile bridge across this narrow crossing, the Strait is part of routes that are much more land than sea.

The current TIR System was constructed out of a series of international conventions that began as part of the UN Economic Commission for Europe's post-World War II efforts to reconstruct European trade routes. The first TIR agreement in 1949 aimed to allow for an easier system of transporting merchandise by road between multiple countries. The convention was open for signature from 1976 to 1977 at which point its first participating countries were European with the notable exception of Morocco and Tunisia. This recognized the latter's important ferry connections via the Mediterranean. The International Road Transport Union (IRU), founded in 1948, administers the system. There are currently 68 participating countries located on four different continents (UNECE N.d.). In order to be permitted for travel between Morocco and Europe under the requirements of the TIR system, the transport company owning the trailer must be a member of an IRU's affiliate. In Morocco, trailers permitted to arrive or depart internationally must have permission in the form of a TIR carnet granted from the Moroccan Association for International Road Transport (Fr. *l'Association Marocaine du Transport Routier International*, AMTRI).

The standardized trailers used for TIR have their origin in a history that overlaps with the history of the shipping container I discuss in the next section of this chapter. Levinson, in his history of the container, writes about how containership transport can be traced back to early experiments with trailer-ships. The latter were the predecessors to the roll-on-roll-off ferries like those now routed to the Tangier Med terminal. Looking to find a more efficient way to truck cargo to port and dock, the transport magnate Malcolm McLean tried first in the early 1950s, to innovate on the form of truck trailers. Levinson writes that McLean was inspired by

truck trailer *bodies*—trailers detached from their steel beds, axles, and wheels. Subtracting the frames and wheels would reduce the space occupied by each trailer by one-third. Even better, the trailer bodies could be stacked, whereas trailers with wheels could not be. As McLean envisioned it, a truck would pull the trailer alongside the ship, where the trailer body, filled with twenty tons of freight, would be detached from its steel chassis and lifted aboard ship. At the other end of the voyage, the trailer body would be lowered onto an empty chassis and hauled to its destination (2007: 47-48).

Levinson describes how McLean's box-shipping experiments led to a key moment in the transformation of the goods movement industry from one focused on moving vessels to one focused on moving cargo: "On April 26, 1956, a crane lifted fifty-eight aluminum truck bodies aboard an aging tanker ship moored in Newark, New Jersey. Five days later, the *Ideal-X* sailed into Houston, where fifty-eight trucks waited to take on the metal boxes and haul them to their destinations. Such was the beginning of a revolution" (2007: 2). These and subsequent early containers were designed in a diverse number of sizes related to the needs of international road transport. For instance, "The first carrier with fully containerized ships, Pan-Atlantic, used containers that were 35 feet long, because that was the maximum allowed on the highways leading to its home base in New Jersey" (2007: 129). Other lines produced containers designed for other roads: "Grace Line, which was planning service to Venezuela, worried about South America's mountain roads and opted for shorter, 17-foot containers" (2007: 130).

The permitted lengths of trailers and entire tractor-trailer units are now much more standardized not only within particular countries but also among regions of road transport. For instance, European Union roads have standard maximum lengths for trailers, tractors, and tractor-trailer units. While Morocco permits a more extended variety of lengths and sizes, only those meeting European Union limits are allowed for use in TIR. As a result, TIR trailers stand out among the diversity of commercial conveyances on Moroccan roads. Ahmed, the driver mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, describes himself as particularly fond of one non-TIR truck: the large, tan, hulking vehicle produced by the French-company Berchet until the 1960s, and referred to as a “camel” (Ar. *jamal*) because of its color and endurance. Many hand-decorated trucks of various sizes take the road painted with phrases like “safe trip” (Mor. Ar. *tariqa salama*) and logos like that of Mercedes and, commonly, “TIR” as well. Also found on Moroccan roads are the modern donkey carts: the *camionnettes* consisting of a small trailer pulled by a motorcycle and driven by a *tripporteur*. These diverse conveyances circulate on Moroccan social media in photos and videos of giant or unusual loads. This diversity of cargo conveyances however common on many urban and non-urban routes is nonetheless missing on Morocco autoroutes like the A4, described earlier in this chapter. The autoroutes strictly limit the kinds of permitted vehicles in such a way as to end up more closely resembling vehicles on European roads.

In order to understand more about the TIR world in Morocco, I went to the MarocTrans agency and depot on the periphery of Tangier. Due to the lack of transport to their offices, located just past the border of Tangier’s zone for intra-urban taxi travel, the MarocTrans agency director, Samir (pseudonym), picked me up in the city. On my subsequent trips I would take employee transport with his office staff. Samir had moved to Tangier to run the MarocTrans

agency a decade after spending many years at the Moroccan headquarters of MarocTrans in Casablanca. Since Euroauto is one of MarocTrans' major clients in Tangier, Samir wanted me to know that I would be welcome to explore their work as I wished, telling me in English that, "our company is your company." MarocTrans thus became a key stop for me in following the movement of goods between Tangier Med and its hinterlands.

At MarocTrans, trailers and tractors enter and exit the company depot all day long. Tractors line up outside the depot gate waiting for the consolidated trailers and smaller trucks for direct deliveries. Because property is so difficult to come by in Tangier, Samir says, MarocTrans has not yet been able to find land to build its own building on. As a result, the MarocTrans agency and depot are still located in a temporary site, a former factory in one of the industrial zones in Tangier. The building's non-standard loading docks are too high for the TIR trailers that MarocTrans serves, making loading and unloading by forklift an ongoing challenge. The location, on the margins of the city, poses problems in other ways too. There are no places to eat here but the location is also too far from the homes of most of the employees for them to be able to go home for lunch. Thus lunch is normally shared between small groups of either male or female employees in a small room next to the bathroom. The depot manager, who I refer to as Si Mohammed (pseudonym), sometimes makes the traditional Tangier pea soup called *bisarra* to share with the men downstairs for lunch. They also take turns in the small prayer room that only fits one person at a time.

Samir has separated the agency upstairs and the depot downstairs not only spatially but also in other ways as well. Upstairs is the informational dimension of TIR, where "the girls" (Ar. *al-binat*) handle the phones and documentation for exports and imports. They speak with clients on the phones, organize the documents for each trailer, and ensure that each import or export has

a ferry spot reserved and port fees paid. Downstairs at MarocTrans is the physical dimension of TIR, where Si Mohammed interacts with their hauling subcontractors and drivers. He also supervises the bonded warehouse, where partial trailer loads of goods are brought for consolidation (Fr. *groupage*) before heading to the port. Since the warehouse is bonded, it is under the supervision of a full-time inspector from the Moroccan Customs Authority. This means that MarocTrans consolidated shipments do not need to be inspected additionally by customs officers at Tangier Med's Special Administrative Zone. Nouredine's exports, on the other hand, are largely full container loads. They therefore move directly between the Euroauto factory and the port without having to stop first at the MarocTrans depot.

To haul its trailers in the Tangier Med hinterland, MarocTrans depends on several small haulage companies, the largest being the company I refer to as BoughazDirect (pseudonym). "Boughaz" means "strait" in Arabic, and *al-Boughaz* is the local way of referring specifically to the Strait of Gibraltar. This word is a common part of business names in Tangier. The owner, Hamid, tells me in *Darija* that, "without BoughazDirect, MarocTrans would go out of business." Hamid's company, although primarily serving only the short-haul routes of the Tangier Med hinterland, shows how the TIR work of a company like MarocTrans is not simply international. Rather, the routes of TIR consist of other, more intermediate, proximate distances that add up to an international route. In addition, from the hinterland to the port, TIR is not automatic flow. MarocTrans freight forwarders must work on-site at the port as well to mind the trailers and make sure they pass through the port's Special Administrative Zone and other access points. The composite nature of cargo flow is a prominent feature in the movement of boundary objects like TIR trailers as well as the containers I consider in the following section.

IV. The “TEU” Container at SeaShip, the Global Shipping Line

The standardized shipping container entered my research during one of my first interviews, in 2008, with port official Benjelloun. Telling me in English about Tangier Med’s projected capacity, he explained it in terms of thousands of TEUs. “Do you know what a TEU is?” he asked me. He explained that “TEU” stands for “twenty-foot equivalent unit.” During my research, I would find TEUs also referred to, usually in writing, by their French translation, “EVP” or “équivalent vingts pieds,” and in the everyday speech of maritime transportation as “conteneur,” French for container. The TEU is both the minimum standard shipping container size and, since 1968, the standard unit for reporting container traffic and capacity. By projecting the capacity of the Tangier Med Port in TEUs, Benjelloun’s expression of the port authority’s aspirations is made commensurable with the wider world of global container shipping lines and ports. Pointing my attention to the map behind his desk, Benjelloun explained to me that it was a map of the largest container ports in the world. “It is our wish to join this map,” he told me.

The container is of course not only a measure of capacity, but also a material of port use. This is the container as it emerges in discussion with Nouredine about how he and Euroauto use the port. He tells me that his factory was one of the first to use the Tangier Med Port to export a container, a single TEU. This was shortly after the inauguration of the port’s first container terminal in 2007. Prior to that, containers were rarely used in international cargo transportation between Tangier’s former city port, hinterlands, and sites in Europe and beyond. Nouredine’s factory and others in the region relied almost exclusively on trailers transported by ferry, as discussed in the previous section. The container was, before 2007, more associated with the port-hinterland relations of Morocco’s economic capital, Casablanca, than anywhere else in the country. Currently most common in its 20- and 40-foot long sizes, the standard shipping

container entered the country for the first time through the Port of Casablanca in 1972. This was when the Casablanca port's first container terminal, the "Tarek," was inaugurated. The ability to move things by container for Nouredine is a benefit for the just-in-time manufacturing world of his factory and others in the automotive-parts industry. This is particularly true about imports and exports that outside of the Spain-France-Germany corridor, otherwise most easily and quickly accessible from Morocco by ferry and road. The containerships that now arrive at Tangier Med offer Nouredine's department more transportation options. This is the case for importing primary materials from East and South Asia, as Tangier Med allows the company to avoid having to first use the Port of Casablanca and then move materials by train or truck to the TFZ.

In order to use a container for exports and imports, Nouredine and his logistics department must contract with a container shipping line. To explore this dimension of the container, Nouredine introduced me to the local agency of SeaShip, the international container shipping line he uses to import and export by container. Through research at this site, I learned another dimension of the port-hinterland relationship as mediated by the boxes of goods movement. I observed the interactions between SeaShip's two types of container traffic through the Tangier Med Port: (1) the "local" traffic of imported and exported containers and (2) the "world-world" or transshipment traffic of containers, which stop temporarily at this port before being put on other vessels towards their final destinations. These traffics both come together in the work of the agency, the shipping line it represents, and the Tangier Med container terminals where both kinds of container routes must pass. The employees of the SeaShip agency also represent three different types of container experience in Morocco: Those in the Import/Export Department, like the woman I call Yasmine (pseudonym), who experienced containers first in

the more small-scale world of shipping in Tangier before the dramatic increase in container traffic that accompanied the creation of Tangier Med; those in the Operations Department, like Hamadi (pseudonym), who are veterans of Morocco's main container terminals in Casablanca; and those in the Transshipment Department, like Noura (pseudonym), who had little to no maritime experience before they were trained to coordinate the transshipment traffic brought to Tangier Med on SeaShip's large-capacity containerships. In the rest of this section, I use the TEU to introduce the shipping agency, one of my key sites into research on port users in Tangier Med's hinterland. I consider the standard container as the object of shipping agency work as well as another boundary object, like the TIR trailer, which allows access into the social world of shipping and the links that tie the agency, port and hinterland.

Containerships were visible on Tangier's horizon long before containers became a key object of goods movement in the region. Although very small in comparison to today's mega ships, these vessels began to pass through the Strait of Gibraltar shortly after international container shipping services were established in the mid-1960s. Decades before the TEU became the standard for these boxes, Moroccan ports scholar, Najib Cherfaoui (2011), notes that shipping containers arrived on Morocco's Atlantic Coast to supply the US military's Operation Torch starting on November 8, 1942. However, the appearance of military shipping containers happened years before containers became a central way in which cargo arrived or left Morocco's shores. Abdelmoughit Bouayad (1977) writes that it was not until 1972 that Morocco started to receive containerized cargo at the Port of Casablanca, and not until the following year, in 1973, that a container terminal was established. It was not until the creation of the Tangier Med Port that containers could become a major part of cargo transportation into and out of the Tangier region. Between the container's first appearance in Morocco in 1942 and the inauguration of the

Tangier Med Port, the larger world had witnessed what transport historian Levinson calls “a container revolution” (2007: 8) through which “the container made shipping cheap, and by doing so changed the shape of the world economy” (2007: 2).

Before the standardization of the shipping container into TEUs in the 1960s, there were many other experiments in shipping by box. The interest in the development of this form of goods movement was in order to provide an alternative to the existing problems in shipping. Levinson summarizes how the increasing interest in such an alternative after World War II crossed a range of actors:

Shippers wanted cheaper transport, less pilferage, less damage, and lower insurance rates. Ship owners wanted to build bigger vessels, but only if they could spend more time at sea, earning revenue, and less time in port. Truckers wanted to be able to deliver to and pick up from the docks without hour upon hour of waiting. Business interests in port cities were praying for almost anything that would boost traffic through their harbors (2007: 35).

Experiments in finding alternatives included “the first modern shipping container,” a 30-foot stackable box built in 1949 out of aluminum and transportable by barge or truck (2007: 49). Also in the 1940s, the U.S. military were using small, steel “Conex” boxes in transportation (2007: 31). Besides steel and aluminum common in the development of early US containers, European containers were often made out of reinforced wood. Levinson writes that these were all modest efforts towards containerization, since their diversity made efforts to develop shared services and infrastructures difficult. He notes that although, for instance, 154,907 shipping containers were found to be in use in Europe in 1955, “fully 52 percent of them were smaller than 106 cubic feet, less than the volume of a box 5 feet on a side” (2007: 31). In the United States, a survey of privately owned shipping containers in 1959 found that of 58,000 boxes, “43,000 were 8 feet square or less at the base, while a mere 15,000, mainly those owned by Sea-Land and Matson [Shipping Lines], were more than 8 feet long” (2007: 128).

The search for a system of standardization for containers began in the late 1950s and continued for several years. The search involved several different standards-setting bodies including the United States Maritime Administration, the International Standards Organization, the American Standards Association, and the National Defense Transportation Association. The TEU made its first appearance through discussions of the American Standards Association's Materials Handling Section Committee. Levinson writes the chair of this committee, Herbert Hall, "knew little about the economics of using containers, but he was fascinated by the concept of an arithmetic relationship—preferred numbers, as he called it—among sizes. He believed that making containers in 10-, 20-, 30-, and 40-foot lengths would create flexibility" (2007: 134). These ended up becoming the standard sizes for containers in 1961. Other discussions around this time, often dominated by the US government's interests, led to standards for container height (8.5 or less), corner fittings (for attaching containers), and weights. Over time, the 10- and 30-foot sizes were dropped, since they were little used, and by 1968, "the US Maritime Administration began to report container traffic in standardized 20-foot-equivalent units, or TEUs" (Levinson 2006: 213). While 40-foot containers are ubiquitous on today's containerships, the TEU remains the standard way to discuss container capacity.

The agreements on standardized container sizes opened up the possibility for international container service to start in earnest in 1967. That year, according to Levinson, there were 60 companies offering such services, up from only three the year before. While container shipping had previously relied on the refurbishing of existing ships, 1968 was the year of introducing a new generation of containerships (2007: 166). Due to Casablanca's role as Morocco's economic capital and early investment in the port's ability to handle containers, the city and its port became Morocco's center for containerized cargo handling starting soon after

the appearance of international container shipping services. This began in 1972, with the creation of Morocco's first container terminal at the Port of Casablanca, the "Tarek," which allowed international container services to begin to call on the port. From that point onward, containerized cargo steadily increased in percentage of overall cargo tonnage treated by the port. From 1972 and 1976, the number of containers per year at the port increased from 12,598 to 37,005, reaching a total of 10% of total cargo tonnage by 1976 (Bouayad 1976). The port's second container terminal, the "East," was opened in 1996. The building of a third container terminal commenced in 2008, and will begin operations in 2015.

Despite its proximity to Europe, and passing containerships, the Port of Tangier lacked a comparable history of containerization. In 1993, an advisor to the then-King Hassan II conceived of the idea for another major Moroccan container port in the Tangier region. The anticipated location for this project was down Tangier's Atlantic coast near the town of Asilah. The project was ultimately dropped in 1999, due to a lack of official commitment, investment and the death of the Hassan II. The port was projected to be unlike Casablanca's port, which was focused on merely serving the existing national market. Rather, the "Tangier-Atlantic Port," according to César Duceret et al, was planned "with the idea of catching transit traffic in addition to domestic needs... a transshipment hub port" (Duceret et al 2011). This idea was reconsidered and relocated in 2002 as part of King Mohammed VI's interest in developing Morocco's Mediterranean Coast. Tangier-Atlantic ultimately became Tangier Med, a port built primarily as a global container transshipment hub and secondarily to serve as the regional transportation hub for the expansion of free trade zones oriented towards European offshoring.

Lacking a container terminal, therefore, the former Port of Tangier could receive only occasional, small containerships unloading no more than a couple of containers. There were so

few containers annually that they are not mentioned on the Moroccan National Ports Authority figures for yearly cargo traffic at the Port of Tangier (National Ports Authority 2012). One of the pioneer shipping lines to offer container services via the Casablanca port, SeaShip, was also one of the first to make these early, occasional stops at the Port of Tangier. Yasmine (pseudonym), a clerk in the Import/Export Department of today's much larger SeaShip agency for Tangier Med, was once one of only two clerks at the line's Port of Tangier agency. Without an actual container terminal at Tangier, containers had to be moved by the port's ill-equipped cranes. Yasmine remembers SeaShip in its earlier days in Tangier and recalls that those cranes "were always breaking down." The current agency includes other people from the pre-Tangier Med days, including employees from former lines that have since been bought up by SeaShip. This leads Yasmine to describe her group of old-timers as a "panaché" (French for a drink made out of several different kinds of fruits) of the former lines.

The SeaShip counter, where Yasmine works, is a microcosm of the local cultures of international container shipping, a place to observe interactions between different actors in the world of port users. Yasmine does not always answer the phone, particularly when she is busy preparing a manifest for the containers being exported or imported on a particular SeaShip vessel scheduled to arrive at Tangier Med. Clients are always calling though, asking for quotes for container services or following up on containers in transit. This is where Nouredine calls when he wants to know the location and estimated arrival of one of his containers. Besides logisticians like Nouredine working for European manufacturers and distributors in the region's free zones, other actors that call or grace the counter are freight forwarders and short-haul transporters. In the case of imports and exports, logisticians like Nouredine will contract with a freight forwarding agency to generate and circulate customs documents and follow-up with shipping

lines like SeaShip in order to make sure containers enter or exit Moroccan customs territory promptly. While international road transport agencies, like MarocTrans in the previous section, subcontract directly tractor haulage for their trailers, SeaShip does not provide this service for its clients. They must arrange for their containers to be transported to and from the port by a transporter, like BoughazDirect, specializing in the short-haul trucking services otherwise known in English as drayage.

While the Port of Casablanca handles around 30% of Morocco's national port traffic, it handles annually 86% of all imported and exported containers (National Ports Authority 2012b). Due to Casablanca's long history of container traffic in increasing volumes, experience with its port continues to be a preferred qualification for Moroccans interested in working in international container shipping through Tangier Med. This is evident in SeaShip's Operations Department. The men of this department, and they are all men, move between the agency and the port's terminals. They are loud, funny, and the most flirtatious of the men at the SeaShip agency. They are "men of the port" (Mor. Ar. *rjal dial al-marsa*), and Yasmine says that is what explains their behavior in the agency: they are not "civilized" (Fr. *civilisé*) enough for the office. The head of operations, Hassan Hamadi, like the rest of the team, goes by last name only. Hamadi picked up some English after working in Morocco's port, first in Casablanca for several decades. He made every effort to use it with me. He described Tangier Med as a "young port," not like in Casablanca. That Casablanca is "another world," with more congestion and more "old ways of working." At Tangier Med, things are "more organized." The work of his team involves preparing and distributing the monthly and weekly schedules of SeaShip vessels coming to dock at Tangier Med. These schedules include where they will be docking before and after since SeaShip's vessels stop at container terminals around the world. The operations men are in

constant contact with the terminal operators, and greet SeaShip's vessels with the requisite documents for containers to be loaded or unloaded.

Of all the employees of SeaShip, the operations men are the ones who have the most direct, regular contact with the container terminal and yard. Although it was impossible for me to follow one of Nouredine's actual containers through the container terminal, Hamadi brought me to the container terminal to show me the physical process of importing and exporting containers. During the tour of the terminal, I imagined one of Nouredine's export containers on a short-haul truck bed waiting to enter the terminal at its gate. I then imagined how it would be lifted onto the scale to be weighed and then carried by one of the port vehicles to its appropriate stack based on when and where it was going. There it would be placed in its position with the help of one of the rubber-tired gantry cranes (known as "RTGs"), awaiting its scheduled departure on a SeaShip vessel. When Hamadi drove me to up to one of SeaShip's vessels already docked at the terminal, I could imagine one of Nouredine's import containers being unlashd from the ship's stacks of containers, lifted off the ship by the gantry crane, and placed on a waiting terminal vehicle. It would then be delivered to the stacks near the scales, where it would await another flat-bed truck to haul it to the TFZ and the Euroauto factory.

The containers being imported and exported through the Tangier Med Port and on the vessels of shipping lines like SeaShip are not the only traffic through the port. As mentioned previously, Tangier Med was intended to serve primarily the transit traffic of transshipped containers and secondarily the "local" traffic of import and export. As Duceret et al (2011) mention, the mix of container traffics at Tangier Med was anticipated to be 85% transshipped containers and 15% import/export. In maritime logistics, transshipped cargo is cargo shipped to at least one intermediary port between its port of origin and port of final destination. This is now

a critical form of moving goods in the global economy because, among other reasons, of the increasing reliance on mega-ships owned and operated by lines like SeaShip. These vessels are too big and costly to dock at all destinations for the goods they carry. Saad, the director of SeaShip's Tangier agency, told me that their relationship with their local clients must be balanced with the much higher volume of transshipped containers. The latter have distant owners who often do not even know their container is stopping at Tangier Med. As a result, there is a "dilemma of who should be served first" at a port largely devoted to transshipment services.

The transshipment department is located in the back office of the SeaShip Agency. Located around an open doorway from the front office, the department lacks the face-to-face interaction space of client relations mediated over the counter. Instead, the employees of this department, like Noura, spend much of the workday focused on their computers, where they communicate via email with SeaShip's European headquarters. It is there where the transshipment decisions are made. Noura and her colleagues also communicate regularly with the Tangier Med container terminals, where transshipped containers must always be kept separate from import/export ones. This is because the transshipped containers are strictly not allowed to enter Moroccan customs territory.

Noura and her colleagues are all young, and many studied logistics or something similar before joining SeaShip. While Yasmine is part of a previous generation of small-volume container shipping in Tangier, and Hamadi spent years in the large-volume container context of Casablanca, Noura and her colleagues know only the world of Moroccan transshipment as it commenced in 2007 at Tangier Med. Yasmine is successful in her work when local clients are happy with the container services they receive from SeaShip at Tangier Med, while Noura is successful in her work when a transshipped container's shipper or receiver has no idea that their

container stopped at Tangier Med. In fact, Noura gets impatient with what she calls the “slow pace” of the Import/Export Department. Speaking in a combination of French and Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, she says that, “you have to respect” every step of logistics because, “as soon as you miss an aspect from the logistics [chain], a step from the logistics [chain], that’s it. The whole chain gets messed up.” She and her colleagues were trained to speak about containers within this language of logistics, which I will return to in the third chapter of this dissertation when I discuss training programs in Tangier. This language is foreign to Yasmine’s front desk or Hamadi’s back-and-forth between the agency and the terminal.

At the shipping agency, the sea is evoked through posters on the wall advertising destinations and the kinds of promotional materials found in shipping line offices around the world: small flags, maps, and calendars. The lack of containers at the agency is in stark contrast to the plethora of containers at the terminal. However, containers are at the agency too, just not in their familiar, physical forms. Containers are found in traces in around the office: an image of a SeaShip vessel, the logo on the wall behind the front counter, or on the website Yasmine goes to in order to check on a container’s location. The presence of containers in the office is found in codes in documents like manifests and emerges through interactions over email, the phone, and across the counter.

In this section, I looked at containers in their past and present in Morocco and through the departments of the SeaShip Agency in order to show how, like the TIR trailer and the boxes of Nouredine’s export diagram, TEU containers create a basis for standardized movement that must be made through particular social worlds. While globally recognizable, these standardized boxes articulate in different places with different social actors and infrastructures. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, Benjelloun made the container reducible to a tool for

projecting the capacity aspirations of the Tangier Med Port Authority. At the SeaShip agency, the TEU, like the TIR, takes on other meanings and serves as a boundary object for mediating between diverse actors, sites, and traffics between port and hinterland. Through describing the social worlds of the TEU and the TIR, this chapter has shown how the infrastructure of the port is embedded in regional practices of logistics. In the next chapter, I examine another way in which the port becomes a platform for new forms of Moroccan activity. I move away from the regions of logistics formed by the port's standardized objects, and into the development aspirations of logistics at the port authority.

CHAPTER THREE

“Putting Tangier Med on the Map”:

Following Aspirations for Port Responsibility and Expertise

I. Introduction

During my second summer of research at the Tangier Med Port in 2009, I was introduced to one of the port’s top engineer-managers. I expected little more from the man I call Fouad (pseudonym) than a litany of port engineering and management facts and figures. However, I found out that he had a reputation within the port authority for his commitment to mentorship, both academic and professional. Between 2009 and 2011, Fouad became my key informant for explaining the vision of Tangier Med. He portrayed himself and his colleagues in the port authority as having an aspirational, future-oriented approach to the port and its logistics. In this chapter, I discuss how these “technopolitical” aspirations (Hecht and Edwards 2008) reveal two, contrasting forms of “temporal incongruity” (Miyazaki 2003): (1) between the port and the world of logistics it hopes to join and (2) between the port and the Moroccan terrain it hopes to transcend. These forms are evoked in the following quote from Fouad. He explained to me, in English, that:

This port is emergent and will benefit a new traffic that will be created. As a cutting edge infrastructure, we need to benchmark, check, buy knowledge, develop KPIs, and once everything is there, monitor everything like you would a car. But, we also have to change the mentality of people, to fulfill the specifications of international business. Our strategy is therefore global, since because of the port's free zone status, we are connected to the world.

By describing the port as "emergent" and its traffics as "new," Fouad evoked a temporal orientation beyond the present, everyday: The port is a platform not only for activities of goods movement in the present, but also the future. The port is the platform for ongoing, unfolding, and

anticipated activities. As part of this future orientation, the long-term vision of the port is for it to be a platform for meeting the international expectations of its clients and partners. Being "cutting-edge" is not something that can be reached through the mere creation of the port, but rather through the ongoing process of meeting "benchmarks," international standards devised beyond Moroccan borders. What the port needs is not merely the engineering of its infrastructure, but also the managing of its development.

By mentioning the need to "change the mentality of people," Fouad indicated that it is not enough to engineer or manage the physical infrastructure of the port. They at the port authority must also change how Moroccans understand their work. They need to learn to orient beyond Moroccan borders and one's individual tasks, and towards a global system of trade logistics. This project of changing mentalities was not only related to the specific activities of the port, but a larger transformation of Morocco and Moroccans. This relates to the spatial orientation of the port Fouad evoked by describing the port's strategy in relation to being "global" and "connected to the world." In order to become a global platform for logistics, the port must be spatially oriented towards serving clients beyond Moroccan economic space.

These articulations of temporal incongruity were ever present during my conversations with Fouad in his office at the port between 2009 and 2011. He liked to argue that, "Tangier Med is trying to bring Morocco to the next level." He wanted me to focus my research on this aspirational view of the port, and even offered me a provisional title for my dissertation as he imagined it: "Putting Tangier Med on the Map." For this imagined dissertation, he encouraged me to focus my study on aspirations of the Tangier Med Port. In this chapter, I examine the gap between the dissertation he wanted and the one I wrote by juxtaposing his aspirations with what they obscured or denigrated. I show how these aspirations revealed conflicting forms of temporal

incongruity in relation to what Fouad labeled as the “global” and “Moroccan” contexts of the port project. I focus on two, specific aspirations as articulated by Fouad in his office and about which we discussed at length. The first relates to the development of responsibility while the second is oriented towards the development of expertise. Following Fouad’s aspirations from his office to the larger terrain of the port and Tangier, I organize both of these sections into three parts. The first part of each section is sited in Fouad's office, where he described his aspiration to me. These conversations occurred at different points over the course of my pre-dissertation and early dissertation research. The second part of both sections follows this aspiration in a way that Fouad gave me access to. The third part of both sections considers this same aspiration in relation to what Fouad sees as an obstacle in the port’s larger terrain. By organizing the chapter in this way, I chart the progression in my inquiry from being captivated by port authority promises to exploring the gaps and omissions in their discourses.

In the first section, I start during our first meeting in 2009, when he discussed his aspirations for the port to reflect global trends towards environmental responsibility and in turn transform Morocco’s approach to the environment. I then describe how Fouad introduced me to the port's director of security, quality and the environment, Mounir, and provided me access to the port’s sponsored conference on green ports and green logistics. In the third part of this section, I consider how differently social responsibility is conceived of at the port, ending up at the Tangier Med foundation. I start the second section of this chapter during a port visit with Fouad in 2010. Since I had just completed a professional training program in logistics in Southern California, Fouad shared with me his aspirations for practical logistics expertise at the port and in Morocco more generally. In order to help me pursue this aspiration further, he introduced me to Monsieur Benkhadra (pseudonym), director of the proposed Tangier Med

Institute. In the third part of the second section, I shift my focus to the public Tangier University, where I conducted interviews and participant observation in its port logistics management masters program. Although this program was the first of its kind in Morocco, Fouad had dismissed its relevance in arguing that it could not create the kinds of globally recognizable experts of which the port was most in need. For Fouad, this publicly accessible training program, like the port's social responsibility initiatives, were too mired in the Moroccan past of doing things. In contrast, he envisioned a private, exclusive training program under the auspices of the port, like the effort to meet international environmental standards, as the future-oriented path for the port to join the wider world of global logistics.

Theoretical and Methodological Framework

My focus in this chapter on the aspirations of infrastructure builds on scholarly work on technopolitics. Gabrielle Hecht defines technopolitics as “the strategic practice of designing or using technology to constitute, embody, or enact political goals” (1998/2009: 56), a practice that is always contingent on a complex materiality. Hecht and Paul Edwards write that

The allure of technopolitical strategies is the displacement of power onto technical things, a displacement that designers and politicians sometimes hope to make permanent. But the very material properties of technopolitical assemblages... sometimes offers other actors an unforeseen purchase on power by providing unexpected means for them to act (Hecht and Edwards 2008: 3).

I examine these features of “allure” and “hope” in technopolitical strategies through encounters with the aspirations of Fouad and his colleagues at the Tangier Med Port. In unpacking these hopes as experienced and understood, I build on the work of Hirokazu Miyazaki who shows how hope requires a “prospective momentum” because it emerges in response to a sense of “temporal incongruity” (2003). For Japanese financial actors turning to new forms of knowledge in order to

generate hope, Miyazaki writes that this sense of temporal incongruity “was inherent in the Japanese self-location of being behind” (2003: 261), of being “in step with and yet behind the United States” (2003: 257). Building on the temporal focus of Miyazaki’s approach, I would argue that aspirational projects of the port emerge out of a sense of temporal incongruity with the wider world of Euro-American logistics. However, remedying this feeling of temporal incongruity inevitably meets obstacles in the port’s Moroccan terrain. My concern in this chapter is to examine these two forms of incongruity: The first is between Morocco and the world, while the second is between the port authority and Morocco. In Fouad’s aspirations, the port is framed as a platform for developing Morocco as a modern logistics hub for the world through the embrace of environmental standards and the formation of globally recognizable experts. At the same time, Fouad denigrates social responsibility and publicly accessible training programs for being irrelevant to the success of the port as a *global* infrastructure. While environmental standards and exclusive training programs are seen by Fouad as ways to overcome the temporal incongruity between Morocco and the world of logistics, he frames social responsibility and publicly accessible training programs as ways to limit the port to exclusively Moroccan horizons.

The methods of ethnography in this chapter draw on two seemingly contradictory approaches to the study of global experts in cultural anthropology. One approach is based in critique while the other seeks to go beyond critique. The first approach includes anthropologists who are strongly critical of expert subjects and seek instead to privilege what these subjects do not say. These approaches are often positioned from anti-capitalist critique, and examples include Anna Tsing’s (2004) call for ethnographies of friction and Stuart Rockefeller’s (2011) critique of managerial vision. These anthropologists caution against replicating the presumptions of global experts and seek instead to problematize their perspectives by studying the larger

terrain in which they function. This is the method I use when I explore what is obscured or omitted by Fouad's aspirations. The second approach emphasizes working collaboratively with expert subjects, privileging how expert subjects speak and think. Examples of the post-critique method include George Marcus and Douglas Holmes' (2005) para-ethnographic approach to expertise. Seeing the role of the anthropologist as collaborative, they often pursue office-based studies that follow how global experts analyze their worlds. These anthropologists treat the global expert as a "para-ethnographer." Given Fouad's interest in theorizing about economy and society in Morocco, his analyses and insights made him an example of this kind of expert participant in ethnographic research. I attempt to use aspects of para-ethnography and ethnographic critique for a more comprehensive way of looking at Fouad's port aspirations and the forms of temporal incongruity they express.

Fouad insisted that the language of our interviews be in English, a language for which he expressed great affinity. Using his sophisticated knowledge of this language, developed from years of private study and maritime work, Fouad had a way of responding to my questions that sounded as if he had been practicing his answers long before we met. This was evidenced as early as our first meeting, when he told he understood that I was, "interested in modern people doing modern things. And, I can imagine that, as an anthropologist, you could be very good at business, even more than someone who has been to business school. You know people. And so much of business is about people." Taking interest in my perspective, background, and planned research at the port, he told me that, "it will be great to have an outside eye on things." In providing me this access, Fouad showed me an openness that our interactions feel less formal than I experienced with other executives in the port authority, to whom I continued to feel

obliged to address formally as “Sirs” (Fr. *Monsieurs*). Drawing on our interviews between 2009 and 2011, I quote Fouad at length in this chapter.

II. Port Responsibility: Environmental and Social

In July 2009, I met with Fouad in his office to propose my pre-dissertation research project about how port actors conceive of both Tangier Med's regional social impacts and responsibility. This research question emerged out of my first trip to the region in 2008, when I became aware that the port was radically changing the economic landscape, and had created a social foundation to address the impacts of these changes. I told Fouad I wanted to focus on the foundation, its objectives, and its role in the larger port authority. Fouad, however, was not impressed with my proposed research. He told me that, "this is not a doctoral-level research problem." I was concerned with his response, thinking about all the background research I had done on corporate responsibility and the research grant I had received. I asked him to explain why he considered the research to not be "doctoral-level." He responded, "You already knew the answer, that some [from the region] will benefit and many will not, but logistics is the future of this coast. There is nothing more to say."

Instead, Fouad proposed I shift my inquiry away from the port's social responsibility agenda and towards the port's environmental responsibility agenda. Keeping with his hope that my dissertation be about "putting Tangier Med on the map" of global ports, he wanted me to look at how the port is striving to meet global industry trends in green logistics and green ports. Specifically, he wanted me to focus on the port's aspiration to not only be an environmentally responsible port but also spur increased environmental responsibility in Morocco. In July 2009,

Fouad expressed this aspiration for being a globally compliant green port that will drive environmental change in Morocco as follows:

All environmental risks have been assessed. This is a clean port. Responsible. At the same time, in terms of pollution, there is an increase of course with trucks. We are aware and concerned with this at the port. Our goal is to integrate the different forms of circulation within the hub: the autoroutes, zones, et cetera. I drafted regulations on trucks in the port and how best to manage CO2 emissions. But it's also important to ask, how will Moroccans become sensitive to the need to reduce CO2? People have no idea how polluting these trucks are. When people go to the supermarket, and buy milk, does the carton tell them how much CO2 was produced in its transport? No. We want to push things forward on the environmental front in Morocco, but at the same time, not push so hard that they break.

Fouad described the port as an example of environmental responsibility because risks had been assessed. It was "clean" because of meeting international standards for port emissions rather than standard Moroccan practice. However, although the port is "clean," Fouad described the existence of negative environmental impacts indirectly caused by port operations. He referred to the pollution caused by the increased numbers of trucks needed to circulate cargo in the port region, between the zones and the port (see chapter 2). By demonstrating his concern for these indirect impacts, Fouad framed the port as environmentally responsible, seeking to "be clean" not only through mitigating its emissions, but also the emissions of port users by managing truck movements.

Fouad then used the virtue of port environmental responsibility to argue for the need to go beyond the port and increase environmental responsibility more generally in Morocco. He aspired to see Moroccan consumers become as responsible as the port, and as conscious of the need to decrease CO2 emissions. As such, the Fouad's aspiration was both about environmental responsibility at the port and making Morocco more environmentally responsible. Fouad seemed to imply that they in the port administration considered themselves pioneers "on the environmental front in Morocco." In wanting to "push things forward... but at the same time, not

push so hard that they break," Fouad articulated a sense that they in the port administration were on a faster track than the rest of Morocco. The gap between these tracks will not be easy to close.

This aspiration for port responsibility on the environmental front contrasted sharply with Fouad's dismissal of the relevance of social responsibility for the port. This different view of environmental and social responsibilities was evident also in the difference between their respective profiles within the port authority. In the subsequent parts of this section, I turn first to the question of port environmental responsibility. I discuss two ways Fouad helped me access the port's aspiration to be "green": (1) introducing me to the director of the port's department of security, quality and environment (SQE) and (2) helping me attend one of the port's annual logistics conferences, held in 2011, on "green" themes. I then turn to the less aspirational approach of the port to the question of social responsibility. I describe the limited, low profile activities of the port's foundation, and the ways in which port administrators question its utility much like Fouad did in the introduction to this section.

Responsibility Background

In its social and environmental aspects, corporate responsibility has been described as “one of the most persistent ‘management fashions’ and business key words of the last decade” (Keinart 2008: vii). Anthropologists have studied how corporate responsibility uses social and environmental discourses to enable the coercive and oppressive force of global capital. Christina Garsten and Tor Hernes write that corporate responsibility “standards... may sometimes serve as smokescreens... [Since] such standards may detract attention from practices that are condemnable” (2009: 194). Dinah Rajak (2009) looks at how corporate responsibility “creates

categories of benefactor and recipient on which structures of control and dependency are built... that not only serve to demarcate the company's responsibility, but also to consolidate its authority" (2009: 212). Marina Welker (2009) writes that corporate responsibility in mining has become a security strategy by bringing the community closer to the corporation and enlisting local elites in its defense so that corporate responsibility "has also produced fresh zones of struggle and new forms of violence" (2009: 148). Geographer Karen Bakker describes how market deployment of environmental discourses is often either embraced "as a welcome 'greening' of capitalism" or critiqued "as 'green-washing' of the appropriation of resources and the environmental commons" (2010: 715).

The global port industry reflects the increasing public promotion of responsibility discourses in contemporary business. In the past several decades, rapidly expanding port capacity brought with it major social and environmental impacts. NGO and other activism and the threat of lawsuits were contributing factors in shaping the responsibility policies at some ports. While not all ports have faced the same pressures, the existence of some form of responsibility policy is widely evident at the world's leading ports and international port and maritime organizations. The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) passed a sustainability resolution in 2007 that put forth a set of guiding principles for addressing the needs of business and stakeholders as well as protecting and sustaining human and natural resources (AAPA 2007). Around the same time, the United Nations' International Maritime Organization (including Morocco, member since 1962) adopted global regulations on the prevention and control of shipping-related marine pollution. The European Sea Ports Organization's 2004 Seaport Policy promotes stimulating the wider community responsibilities of ports as well as facilitating port development and fostering the provision of competitive and efficient services (ESPO 2004). The actual practices of port

authorities range from Singapore's foundations supporting youth and elderly to the Port of Rotterdam's plan to become "a sustainable port" by promoting a network of organizations and technologies (Port of Rotterdam et al 2007: 1).

In 2006, corporate responsibility formally began in Morocco with the establishment of the Moroccan Global Compact Network. Leading promoter of the Global Compact in Morocco, Law Professor and Transparency Morocco Director Rachid Filali Meknassi was hired to write corporate responsibility policy for the General Federation of Moroccan Businesses (Fr. *la Confederation Generale des Enterprises du Maroc*, CGEM), Morocco's largest private sector business association. This led to the creation of CGEM's corporate responsibility labeling program for Moroccan companies (Fr. *le Label CGEM pour la Responsabilité Sociale de l'Entreprise*) that included a system of evaluation and tax benefits for compliance. Although prominent on the CGEM website (CGEM 2009), the label has struggled to attract adherents (Filali Meknassi 2008). Instead, many large Morocco corporations have instead long had some kind of foundation for philanthropy. Farid Britel, former president of the ONA Foundation, identifies the foundation model of corporate philanthropy as part of a long tradition of Moroccan patronage (Britel 2001).

At Tangier Med, social and environmental impacts did not enter the discursive space of the port administration spontaneously as ethical dilemmas on the part of its leaders. Rather, documenting social and environmental impacts was required by some of the port's international investors. For instance, according to one of my interview participants in the port's finance division, the International Finance Corporation was particularly concerned with the documenting of social impacts. As an example of investor concern with environmental impacts, the European Investment Bank (EIB) described its support for the port's second phase extension as both

financial and green: “In addition to providing valuable financial support for this project, the EIB will provide expertise during the implementation phase to minimise the environmental impacts of the new industrial infrastructure...” (Dubessy 2012).

Beyond the particular Tangier Med project, foreign investment in Morocco, as elsewhere in the world, has included specifically earmarked funds for conducting studies on, and proposing responses to, the environmental and social impacts of new development projects. This started at least by the early 2000s, as environmental and social risks entered the larger domain of financial risk management. For instance, in 2004, a year after the port project began, Morocco started to receive such funding from the United States as part of a multi-year “Millennium Challenge Compact” signed between the two countries. Millennium Challenge Compacts are agreements funded by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), established by the US Congress in 2004 as “an innovative and independent U.S. foreign aid agency” (MCC N.d.) that awards multi-year assistance to countries. The establishment of the MCC reflects how in the 2000s buzzwords and trends in the private business sector, like transparency and accountability, began to enter the foreign development world. The MCC grants U.S. Government assistance based on “competitive selection,” “country-led solutions,” and country-led implementation” only to those countries which are “committed to good governance, economic freedom, and investment in their citizens” (MCC N.d.). Morocco was a prime example of the kind of country the MCC targeted. The amount of the compact signed between the US and Morocco was “not to exceed” \$697,500,000 USD, while the Moroccan government would be able to also access “Compact Implementation Funding” (“up to” \$32,000,000 USD) (MCC 2004). This could be used to fund activities including “feasibility and design studies, strategic environmental (and social) assessments, environmental impact assessments, environmental assessments, environmental management

plans and resettlement action plans for projects and activities included in the Program [of the Millennium Challenge Compact]” (MCC 2004: 2).

Social and environmental impact studies have been conducted by a range of consulting companies as well as by the port’s department of research and development. On the social side, Susan Davis (real name), an American anthropologist and consultant, completed a report in 2006 entitled, “Catching Up: Integration into Development for the Rural Population near the Tangier Mediterranean Port.” Although unpublished, I received a copy of this report from the research and development department of the port authority. After contacting Davis, she told me that the port authority did not allow her any direct access to inhabitants of the region. Rather she was required to hire Moroccan researchers to do the data collection (personal communication, September 28, 2008). Her findings revealed the depth of poverty in the areas immediately surrounding the port, unsurprisingly since these areas are some of the poorest in Morocco. The port’s research and development department also collaborated on a series of studies with the public university of Tangier, including, *Agriculture and Territorial Dynamics in the Tangier Mediterranean Special Development Zone* (2008).

Among the results of these impact studies was the creation of the Tangier Med’s Foundation for Human Development and Department of Security, Quality and the Environment (SQE). The foundation was created in 2007 and has programs oriented around three axes: education, health and job training. As part of the port’s SQE strategy, the promotion of environmental governance takes a much higher profile than the foundation’s modest, local activities. The 2011 edition of the port’s annual international logistics conference, MedLog, was a key event promoting Tangier Med’s commitment to environmental responsibility. The rest of this section is divided into two parts that explore the difference between Tangier Med’s approach

to environmental and social responsibility. This difference articulates with the two forms of temporal incongruity mentioned in the introduction to this chapter: between the port and the world and between the port and Morocco. Environmental responsibility is promoted as the strategic objective of a future-oriented, global port. Social responsibility is portrayed at the port as mired in a past-oriented, Moroccan context.

Environmental Responsibility

For Fouad, there is a strategic imperative for the port to meet international environmental standards. This is because these standards, as well as those for security and quality, are the prime way to attract and retain foreign clients and investors for the port. Environmental benchmarks are part of the port's department of "SQE" standards (Security, Quality, and Environment). Fouad introduced me to his colleague Mounir (pseudonym), the port's director of SQE. From an office at the Tangier Med Port Authority, Mounir is responsible for the port meeting international SQE standards as well as the training port staff to understand the meaning and significance of those standards. Under Mounir's direction, environmental standards are meant to become internal to the port structure as well as a way of qualifying its international stature.

Tangier Med was the first Moroccan port to be certified by the International Organization for Standardization for quality reception of vessels. I met with Mounir shortly after the announcement of this certification. A boxed-plaque handed out at the port's celebration for this event held just the week prior was still in a gift bag on his desk. Speaking to me exclusively in French, Mounir told me he was hired into his position after several years working in the automobile industry in France. He said that the main difference between these experiences is that he is now more focused in "operationalizing security, quality, and the environment" in relation to

staff and clients, whereas his previous work was focused on the machine and production side internal to factories. His higher education was in France, with his first degree in engineering and his second one in quality assurance.

Mounir told me that SQE is a strategic priority of Said El Hadi (real name), the Port's Executive Director at the time. According to Mounir, the port has a "responsibility" to its clients to meet and maintain international SQE standards. Indeed, the idea that meeting and maintaining SQE standards was a way of attracting and keeping international clients was repeated during my meeting with Mounir. He explained that the reason SQE is a "strategic project" of the port is not about valuing security, quality and the environment for their own sake as much as for their current and future clients. Mounir said that the commitment to SQE is important for the following reasons: "to give an image for our clients"; "to ensure that clients' needs are satisfied"; "to get the client to come back"; and "to increase client confidence in port services." Responsibility for security, quality and the environment is all about "risk management" because risk management "requires that all risks be considered." When I asked him about why social responsibility was divided from these other forms of responsibility, he told me that social responsibility is not a strategic issue. He meant that social responsibility is not an issue needed to make the port competitive. Mounir framed the importance of SQE in the port's responsibility to its multinational clients. I would eventually see how this contrasted with how the director of the foundation framed its importance in terms of the port's responsibility to local inhabitants.

Mounir encouraged me to attend Tangier Med's fourth MedLog conference in March 2011. This edition of the annual conference inaugurated the port's commitment to meeting industry trends in green logistics and port development. I agreed, and showed up at the conference hotel, once of the nicest in Tangier. All the executives of the port and their staff were

in attendance including Fouad, Mounir and Monsieurs Benjelloun and Benali. Representatives from the European and American port industry and research community were in attendance, as well as an official US trade delegation, led by an under-secretary of commerce. Unregistered for the two hundred euro a person event, I approached Fouad and asked if he could get me in. He went over to registration, grabbed the conference badge of a no-show, the director of Morocco's central investment bank. He crossed out the director's name and wrote "Janell Rosenberg" in its place. Now an "official" attendee, I observed how the conference program offered a concrete example of how the port positions itself as a global rather than Moroccan logistics platform.

According to the official conference program (see Tangier Med Special Authority 2011b), the conference is a forum for the development of green expertise. This is not simply for Morocco but rather for the Mediterranean region and the world. The cover image on the conference program is of a green, maritime anywhere: two green leaves, arranged like a sailboat on a non-descript, landless background of sea and sky. The image, like the conference name and logo, capture a sense of logistics beyond Morocco's borders. This is even reflected in the name of the event, MedLog, standing for Mediterranean (Med) and Logistics (Log). As "The Mediterranean Conference on Logistics," there is no explicit mention of Morocco, Tangier, or even Tangier Med in the title, but rather what is conveyed is that this forum is for the discussion of shared experiences in global logistics. This representation continues in the conference logo, in which MedLog is written with an "o" containing an image of two arrows going in opposite but symmetrical directions. This was meant to symbolize logistics' object: the optimal flow of things.

The specific subject of the fourth edition of MedLog is "the inclusion of sustainable development issues by key players in the supply chain" (Tangier Med Special Authority 2011b).

The significance of these issues is not represented as Morocco-specific, but rather of international importance:

While the major contemporary debates have integrated climate change issues as a policy shared by the entire international community, transports and shipment activities represent a major item due to their impact in terms of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Compliance with increasingly demanding standards and regulations is becoming a key competitiveness parameter—and one that can make a difference (Tangier Med Special Authority 2011b).

This quote implies that “the entire international community,” including Morocco, recognizes the problem of climate change, and are now turning to transport and logistics as a key domain for combatting carbon emissions. By implicitly tying the “green” of the environment with the “green” of money in the marketplace, the conference organizers argued that standards and regulations are not only important for “making a difference” in terms of decreasing environmental impacts. Rather they are also “a key competitiveness parameter,” as decreased energy consumption leads to decreased port fees.

Framing “green” as both an economic and global priority continued throughout the conference. The head of the Moroccan Rail Authority described the role of rail for green ports. He mentioned that the Rail Authority’s “Vision 2015” involves “environmental and economic optimization.” US under-secretary for commerce, Kumar, described the delegation of business leaders attending the conference as made of “eighteen companies looking for safe, sustainable, and efficient solutions for logistical issues.” He urged the audience to recognize that “we have one world in terms of environmental stewardship.”

The global of the conference appeared in repeated reference to a Euro-American space of experience. The keynote addresses were delivered by a representative of the Port of Virginia on “The American Experience: Environmental Issues in the Maritime Sector,” a French consultant on “Environmental Issues in Logistics Including the Importance of Maritime and Ports

Dimension,” and a leading US-based transportation geographer on “Last-Mile Logistics.” Panels focused on general topics, like “Environmental Issues in the Mediterranean Trade,” “Maritime Transport and the Climate Issue,” and “Last Mile Logistics: A Review of On-Going Actions and Return on Experience.” As described in the French-language, Moroccan press, the event was again not “Moroccan” but rather tied to a broader geography: “This conference has the participation of internationally renowned experts and major logistics and port companies, top-ranking manufacturers and exporters, who compare their experiences and share their best practices in regards to environmental issues” (Maroc Journal 2011).

While most presentations spoke in general ways about green ports and logistics, there were some talks that made explicit mention to the Moroccan dimension of these issues. The general director of Tangier Med at the time, Taoufik Ibrahimi, described the port as having been built on a very particular kind of terrain, environmentally “the most rich and the most sensitive.” As a result, he claimed that sustainability was “at the heart of [Tangier Med’s] strategy, and the heart of our values.” Abdellatif Maazouz, Moroccan Minister of Trade, spoke about how “Morocco offers the possibility of integrating North and South into the same sustainable agenda.” Karim Ghellab, Moroccan Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, a title that was more recently expanded to include logistics, also made the point that Tangier Med can play the role of mediating between North and South. In terms of Tangier Med’s environmental agenda, he argued that, “there is a connection with wider Mediterranean anti-pollution efforts.” Anne Hubert, of Renault Maroc, the French automobile company’s Moroccan mega-facility, described how offshoring production means importing green policies that can have a wider impact. She gave the example of how the Tangier Renault plant aims for zero carbon emissions, which extends to its use of green trucks for transport between the facility and the port in Morocco.

As indicated by these presenters and the conference organizers, MedLog was an occasion for demonstrating Tangier Med's participation in larger trends in the global logistics and port operations industries promoting pro-business arguments for diminishing environmental impacts. While Moroccan participants at the conference spoke of plans and possibilities for the country's logistics industry, international participants described examples of actually existing "green" initiatives. The conference, organized by the port's department of research and development, was an event for the port authority to position itself as a platform for global, as opposed to specifically Moroccan, logistics. The theme "Green Logistics & Green Ports" aimed to show off Tangier Med as a global player in environmentally sustainable development. Alongside industry, governmental, and academic participants from Europe and the United States, the port appeared at the forefront of efforts to "green" the supply chain.

Social Responsibility

Tangier Med's foundation offices are located in a multiuse building in Tangier. Without signage, the only way for an outsider to distinguish these offices are from the aerial photographs of Tangier Med on some of its walls. Monsieur Slimani (pseudonym), director of the foundation, described to me his optimism in French, saying that, "in five or six years [local people] and their sons and daughters will all be involved in the port." However, he also worried that Tangier Med might end up as a "locomotive not only for driving change in the region, but also for passing by the local population." Aware of the poverty of the Tangier Med region, Slimani argued that the port has a "great social obligation" to the region since it is "up to us to qualify people" to benefit from port opportunities. Otherwise, the port will not impact the region's unemployed.

The foundation's objectives were to build and maintain a social infrastructure of schools, clinics and job trainings necessary to give the local population the chance to benefit from Tangier Med. Slimani had foundation interns studying international human development indicators to see if they could be adapted for the region. Slimani argued that only international indicators could provide apolitical "neutrality" and "international logic" for the foundation's programming. Although I had access to the in-depth study of the local population prepared for Tangier Med by Davis (see above), Slimani described how the lack of reports and information on the region required the foundation to look elsewhere for indicators.

While Slimani emphasized social responsibility in relation to ameliorating local impacts of the port, he did not argue for it having any larger importance for the port's global aspirations. Indeed, he did not once mentioned to me the port's overall ambitions for using logistics to develop Morocco and become a major player in the global economy. I also found a seeming distance between the local programs of the foundation and the larger global agenda of the port in speaking with foundation employees and interns. While studying the foundation, I spent most of my time with the educational program managers. They worked to coordinate teacher salary payments and contracts for school construction in the Tangier Med region. When I would ask them about the foundation, their answers were confined to their day-to-day work practices. One was happy to show off a request for construction proposals she just got published. Another put me to work double-checking teacher salary charts.

Foundation summer interns, university students from Moroccan and European schools, were much more candid about the terrain and people in the port's vicinity. They described being drawn to this work in order to help people. Speaking mainly French, their sense of the port itself was from passing by en route to area villages to research or supervise foundation activities. One

intern describes the shock of seeing the port's "super modern" (Fr. *hyper-moderne*) structure just next door to extremely poor people. In this border area of Spain, she described how the people have a real mentality of dreaming of the other coast (Fr. *mentalité de rêver de l'autre côte*). Another intern described to me the poverty of these villages in terms of the lack of satellite dishes, an otherwise pervasive feature of the Moroccan landscape.

While Slimani was an active promoter of the foundation, he was sensitive about research and communication in general on its activities. He described how the many social development organizations and institutions working in the North tend to work in a way in which they are constantly watching each other. This would produce development "bottlenecks" (Fr. *embouteillages*) and "nothing can get done." Rather than participate in this environment, he wanted to work separately and focus on learning from international development practice beyond the borders of Morocco. He argued that only by limiting publicity on their activities had the foundation been able to put in action what he described as "an unprecedented and real engine of development." With the lack of publishable results as of yet, he claimed that his "development train" remained vulnerable to "derailment." Slimani's perspective on the foundation and the port's responsibilities for addressing social impacts contrasted sharply with those of Fouad and his colleagues in the port authority administration. The latter seemed to question the relevance and utility of the foundation, which was seen as doing too little, too late. They argued that social impacts were not a serious way to consider how the port is working to become a global player. Some even questioned why the port had any social responsibility beyond creating jobs for Moroccans. As mentioned in the introduction to this section and the chapter, social responsibility is seen as mired in the very Moroccan past that the port seeks to transcend in joining the wider world of global logistics.

When I had spoken to Fouad about social impacts, he admitted that the size and scope of the project meant these were inevitable. “We are changing the landscape,” he said, and “people had to lose” through expropriation. He saw social impacts as “indirect impacts.” When asked about the foundation, he described the region where Tangier Med is located as having suffered from a century of underdevelopment. Any Tangier Med effort to engage in social responsibility “would be rendered difficult if not impossible by the sorts of mentalities that this underdevelopment produced.” He explained that many in the area cannot participate in what the port can offer because they are unwilling to make a fundamental change in their mentality which would require moving past their historic sufferings and distrust of outsiders.

Monsieur Benjelloun, on the other hand, had argued that the foundation was up against a lot because of the history of the criminalization of the North and the deep social power of the men running the hashish and illegal migration industries. This “mafia” of hash barons, to use his word, poses the first and strongest obstacle for the development of the Tangier Med region. Alongside the modernity of Tangier Med is another he calls “the modernity of the mafia.” Benjelloun told me that the Tangier Med site was previously a major departure point for illegal migrants (Mor. Ar. *harraga*). Tangier Med’s ability to engage in social responsibility initiatives would be limited as long as the mafia maintained social power in the region. He saw the question of social responsibility as part of the challenge of turning people away from involvement in the hash and illegal migration industries. For decades this was the only support they had to avoid starvation. He told me he “does not know who will win,” the mafia or Tangier Med. By contrasting the “good” port economy with the “bad” hash economy, Benjelloun bolstered his claim that Tangier Med is trying to help the region in ways it could not help itself. At the same time, he claimed that inhabitants of the region are more naturally predisposed to illegal activity, a

characteristic that the port ultimately cannot change. In the second section of chapter one, I briefly introduced this paternalistic attitude on the part of port officials towards inhabitants of the Moroccan north.

Monsieur Benali admitted that the foundation was “doing a good job with meager resources.” However, he indicated that the programs are really too modest. The 40,000 people living in the five surrounding districts need some support since they are “very backwards” (Fr. *très arrières*) and have some of the highest national levels of illiteracy. However, although TMSA could provide strong aid to these 40,000, he thought such a distribution would be unfair since “Tangier Med is being built with the money of all Moroccans.” Additionally, he does not want the foundation to turn into a welfare (Fr. *rente*) organization, saying, “we are committed to support, but self-development, people must take charge.” Like Benjelloun, he mentioned the issue of the mafia, saying that, “there is no way for the foundation to win, since for every dollar of the foundation there are many more from the mafia.” The foundation emerged in this director’s discourse as vying for the allegiance of locals.

Before hearing these perspectives and despite Fouad’s skepticism, I still had assumed that the Tangier Med foundation was a key component of the port’s responsibility aspirations. I imagined that it was using social development to promote the image of Tangier Med as a global port as well as manage the risks posed by local resistance to the project. However, Fouad and his colleagues at the port offered different and sometimes contradictory interpretations of the role of the foundation and what relevancy, if any, addressing social impacts had for the company. While the foundation might function as an aspirational policy for foundation director, Slimani, those working in other parts of the company believed the foundation is undermining its own purpose

by setting forth goals it cannot possibly meet. This helped to explain the ambivalent, low profile position of social responsibility at Tangier Med.

I began this chapter by contrasting Fouad's aspiration for environmental responsibility with his dismissal of social responsibility. I went on to show how green discourses on the part of the port's administration are seen as globally orientated, while the social agenda of the foundation is seen as mired in local, Moroccan terrain. I argued that the social impacts are seen by port administrators like Fouad as too inevitable and difficult to solve, while the addressing of environmental impacts is seen as a fast track to attracting international clients and becoming a global port. While environmental responsibility is embraced as a way for the port to transcend the temporal incongruity between Morocco and the world of global logistics, social responsibility is denigrated as a way of potentially widening this incongruity. By not investing in the latter, however, the port widens the incongruity between itself and its Moroccan neighbors.

III. Port Expertise: Practical and Theoretical

In July 2010, I arrived at the port for a meeting with Fouad. The summer season was in full swing. Since the Port of Tangier had been closed to commercial traffic the January prior, nearly all ferry traffic was now arriving at and departing from Tangier Med. Fouad asked me to update him on my research, and I explained that I was planning to include a new research question in my work on how global logistics expertise in Morocco is being developed and experienced by Moroccans training and working at Tangier Med. He was interested to hear that this idea had emerged in relation to my recent completion of professional training in global logistics at the Center for International Trade and Transportation at California State University, Long Beach. Fouad told me that, "your profile is becoming very interesting." He asked how I

wanted to go about studying the question of expertise in my research on the port. I told him that I planned to conduct participant observation at the masters program in logistics management at Tangier's public university. Fouad doubted I would the university's program much of a benefit to my research. He told me he had declined the director invitation for him to speak to the students. He explained to me that, "I really can't see what much will come of the program. I couldn't take the invitation seriously." Expressing a typical derision towards public education in general and particularly in the North, Fouad's statement is representative of the mentality of the elite members of the port authority, who were designing and administering Tangier Med. Fouad saw the program as not the solution for the development of practical expertise in logistics. He explained to me that:

There is a lack of logistics competency in Morocco, a lack of decent training programs. This makes recruitment difficult. 90% of the time I'm disappointed with people who say they have training but don't really understand about what to do and how to solve logistics problems. We need more managers, day-to-day business people with 4+ years of work experience in logistics. Programs like in Tangier don't have clear objectives or a way of meeting them. Many of these programs and their participants don't realize that Moroccan logistics people aren't only competing with other Moroccan logistics people. They are competing with logistics people all over the world because they are competing for the same clients, the same shipping companies. That means they need the same level of expertise (Fr. *savoir-faire*).

Fouad argued here that there was a real gap between the current status of training and where it needed to be in order to equip places like the port and the new zones with "globally competitive" human resources. He was concerned that there are too many people who just have degrees and not the expertise, or "savoir-faire" in French. He accused the Tangier University program of not really understanding the larger context and demands of logistics expertise, and lacking the qualifications and standards to compete. He argued that Moroccans should be trained at "the same level" as logisticians anywhere else in the world. In this section, I follow Fouad's

aspiration for expertise into the larger context of logistics training in Morocco and the port's hope to create a new kind of logistics training. Through speaking with the director of the new, Tangier Med Institute, Monsieur Benkhadra (pseudonym), I learn that the port's aspiration for expertise is still a long way off from being realized. I then shift to the Tangier University program in order to understand participants' actual understandings of logistics expertise, and the aspirations that motivate their embrace of logistics as a way of life.

In this section, I build on literature in anthropology and science and technology studies that examines the formation of experts and expertise. These texts prove that “an *isolated* specialist is a contradiction in terms” (Latour 1987: 152) by examining how experts are formed through membership in communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991), networks of humans and nonhumans (Latour 1987), epistemic cultures (Knorr-Cetina 1999), and expert groups (Collins and Evans 1998). Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, for instance, study experts as holders of tacit knowledge, “the deep understanding one can only gain through social immersion in groups who possess it” (quoted in Collins and Evans 1998: 6). In her review of the anthropology of expertise, E. Summerson Carr (2010) is critical of how the discipline's focus on the articulation of expertise with wider power relations neglects the need to study “expertise-in-practice.” She argues that practice is essential for understanding expertise, which she defines as “something people do rather than something people have or hold” (2010: 18). In this chapter, I look at the different ways in which Moroccans conceptualize and aspire for logistics expertise as “something people have or hold” (2010:18). In so doing, I take these Moroccan understandings of logistics expertise on their own merit and examine how they articulate with the different forms of temporal incongruity seen between the port, Morocco, and the wider world of logistics. I show

how these aspirations for logistics expertise reveal the hopes and exclusions created by the Tangier Med Port.

In the last section, I showed first how environmental responsibility is seen by Fouad and his colleagues as a global aspiration to transcend temporal incongruity between the Moroccan and wider port world. I then showed how social responsibility, on the other hand, is seen as hopelessly mired in the immediate, Moroccan context, and therefore may serve to widen the temporal incongruity between the port and the world. In this section, I pursue a similar line of inquiry into the creation of logistics experts. I contrast the port authority's promise of an exclusive, future training institute with the denigration of an already existing, publicly accessible training program. While the former is seen as a means for the port to join the wider world of global logistics, the latter is seen as widening the gap between this world and a particularly, "Moroccan" iteration of logistics expertise. However, participants in the publicly accessible training program at the Tangier University embrace the same aspirations for joining the wider world of global logistics that they would otherwise be excluded from by Fouad and his colleagues.

The Tangier Med Institute

I spoke to Monsieur Benkhadra on Fouad's suggestion. Fouad believed Benkhadra, the director of Tangier Med's planned institute, would be the best person to explain in more depth the port's approach to the development of logistics expertise. Fouad was confident that the institute would eventually allow them to fill the gap between supply and demand for qualified, high-level human resources. I had heard about the plans for the institute since I started my research in 2008. At the Tangier Free Zone, there had long been an architectural model of the

proposed institute across from the front desk where short- and long-term access badges are distributed for zone entry. Despite the accuracy of the model, I found the actual institute was not yet more than a plan.

Benkhadra's office is located in the city of Tangier, in a building that houses several of the administrative units. I had not been to this building since 2009, when I was conducting pre-dissertation research on the Tangier Med Foundation for Social Development on the floor below Benkhadra's office. There was no receptionist so I looked around for someone to help me find Benkhadra's office. Once inside, Benkhadra started by asking who I was, whom I had met, and who recommended me. Luckily I had good answers prepared and once he was convinced I came through the right channels, we began speaking about the institute. His cautiousness reminded me of Slimani's sensitivity about the foundation's activities and its terrain. Fouad had described this cautiousness before in terms of the port "not wanting to seem like a state within a state." Involved in a range of interventions far beyond the standard activities of a Moroccan port, Tangier Med is a unique institution without precedent in Morocco. This includes pursuing activities, like creating a training institute, normally reserved for Moroccan ministries and development agencies.

According to Benkhadra, director of the planned Tangier Med Institute, logistics training has "rapidly become trendy" (Fr. *rapidement devenue à la mode*). Now every private institute was offering some sort of program. The appearance of such programs was initially noted in 2006, in a report entitled, *Trade Logistics and the Competitiveness of Morocco*, authored by the World Bank, in partnership with the Moroccan Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The report described these new programs as "more the result of current opportunity, seen as the effect of trends, rather than a real vision" (2006: 48). In chapter three of this report on "The

multiple challenges of internal logistics in Morocco,” the lack of professional and continuing training was seen as a major issue (2006: 46). The report observed that, at the time, training was lacking coordination on a national level. The “two, most important deficiencies” (2006: 47) were the lack of certified instructors and curriculum, and the lack of technical training on the operational side of logistics. Additionally, while certain companies operating in Morocco were providing their own training programs internally, “they do not permit the transfer of expertise to the interior of the country” (2006: 47).

A subsequent study by The Center for Transport Research in the Western Mediterranean (Fr. *le Centre d'Etudes des Transports pour la Méditerranée Occidentale*, CETMO) in 2009 identified, “The absence of a culture of multimodal transportation and logistics” (2009: 98). In 2011, the newsletter of a national organization of logistics professionals in Morocco mentioned that, “the modernization of the Moroccan logistics sector creates a demand for new profiles, many of which are very specialized and poorly available or unavailable on the national market (Lyncos 2011). These deficiencies were the focus of a plan designed by la Confederation Generale des Entreprises du Maroc (CGEM), Morocco’s largest private sector business association. One of the goals of this plan was to ensure that 500 Moroccan logisticians would be prepared to enter the job market annually by 2015. “Logisticians” were qualified in this plan as requiring the Baccalaureate, five years of higher education, as well as a management masters (“Bac + 5, Masters”).

The Tangier Med Institute was first proposed in 2007, when the port began to receive its first vessels. The idea was for Tangier Med to “take charge” of the need for qualified Moroccan human resources. Benkhadra explained that because the port is “globalized” (Fr. *mondialisé*), and operating on a “global level” (Fr. *niveau mondial*), it needs similarly high-caliber human

resources at every level, from technicians to managers. The institute is “international” in terms of its vision and priorities, and “not just internal project of the port.” Benkhadra said that, "if you want to bring in concessionaires from all over the world you need the people." Rather than get behind existing or planned public training, Tangier Med concluded that it was "necessary to create a logistics institute in Morocco in the service of the national logistics goals but independent of the METL," the Moroccan Ministry of Infrastructure, Transportation and Logistics. The Tangier Med Institute, therefore, would be a public-private partnership. However, this had been complicated on the legal front since there was little precedent for private-public partnership in education, a sector normally divided between private and public institutions. Benkhadra explained that they were still working to convince the Ministry of Education and METL.

Benkhadra described to me the timeline of the institute. In May 2007, the port began consulting with existing training institutes in Casablanca, France and Spain, and asking, “how to train logisticians?” (Fr. *comment-ils forment les logisticiens?*). Following this they issued a report. Another study was subsequently conducted and in 2008, they synthesized the two studies. In 2009, they worked on the organization of the institute and divided it in two. One would be attached to the Tangier Med Special Authority, offering a master’s, and the other would operate only within the port in terms for training already hired employees. When we met, Benkhadra was preparing the charter, and showed me a folder containing the drafts. He told me they hoped that by 2012 the institute would exist on paper. However, the timeline for the creation of the physical institute was still to be determined. He told me that they had secured a location at the Tangier Free Zone for eventually building the Institute, but that the location had been rejected. Reportedly, port administrators felt that students should be able to see the sea from their

classrooms, since it was to be the Tangier Med Institute after all. Benkhadra told me that they were still searching for an alternative. A few weeks after our meeting, on a visit to the Tangier Free Zone, I noticed that the model of the Tangier Med Institute had been removed. There was no longer a physical reminder of the institute, which still existed more in theory than in practice. I considered how Fouad had dismissed the university programs for not being practical enough, but then sent me to look at an institute that only existed in theory. The problem of the institute, like the foundation, lay in the failure to collaborate with existing, Moroccan institutions in the region.

The Masters Program in Port Logistics and International Transportation

In order to observe Tangier University's masters program in logistics and transportation, I contacted its director, Dr. Abderrahman Saddiki (real name). A few days later, I arrived on the dusty outskirts of Tangier, just past the city prison, to meet with Saddiki at Tangier University's College of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences. During this and subsequent meetings, Saddiki treated me like a colleague as we discussed in French and Darija matters of research, logistics, the region and the Tangier Med Port. He was always quick to suggest resources to me and offer his own take on my research questions. As an academic and consultant, he offered me his perspective and publications to provide context for my own work. When I tried to return one of the studies he had let me borrow (Saddiki and Belkheiri 2005), he clarified that it had been a gift. Additionally, as a public intellectual in the Tangier region, he regularly offers his perspective on regional economic and planning matters to local media outlets such as the Tanja24.com blog and Cap Radio. He let me make his program a research site, sitting in on his lectures, and giving English conversation classes to his students. I followed how, combining his training in

geography, logistics and professional coaching, he taught his students to see logistics as more than mere technical expertise (Fr. *savoir-faire*). As he liked to say, “Logistics, it is a way of life. It is a life skill, not a knowledge” (Fr. *La logistique, c’est une mode de vie. C’est un savoir-être, pas un savoir*).

Saddiki’s approach to logistics drew on his training in geography, logistics and coaching. A son of the Moroccan North and local personality, he was widely recognized in the Tangier region for his knowledge and frank observations. He was often invited to speak on local radio stations and publish op-eds in the local papers and blogs. Born and raised in the vicinity of Al-Hoceima, he was one of only three students in his high school class to pass the baccalaureate exam and continue on to university. He told me that, “Rifis are not known in general for being highly educated or proficient in French” (personal communication, July 26, 2011). He ended up continuing his studies in France on scholarship, completing a doctorate in economic geography. Among his gifts to me that he hoped I would find relevant to my research was a copy of his dissertation on the relation of economy, space, and region in France (Saddiki 1997). Other gifts an impact study he was contracted to do about a new town planned in the Tangier Med region (Saddiki 2012).

From his interest in regional economic geography, he became interested in logistics, which became an emergent domain of study in France around the same time he finished his PhD. He decided to pay his way through an additional master’s degree in logistics management, in France. He would often refer to this experience while teaching his students, telling them about the kinds of resources and port relationships his program had. More recently, he had started training in personal and professional coaching, an increasingly popular activity in Morocco. Drawing on this diverse knowledge base, he saw himself as rather unique among Moroccan

professors. He described himself as an “initiator” rather than a mere “instructor” (personal communication, July 26, 2011). As he told his students one day in class, he aimed, “to train you and transform you.” His aspirations for teaching logistics extended beyond the subject matter and into the fashioning of professional identities.

Saddiki taught his students that logistics is “the management of information, finance and physical flows.” Therefore, he said a logistician must be trained to be “transversal,” French for working across several domains at once. Indeed, Fouad used the same word to describe his occupation at the port. The curriculum of the masters program was also *transversal*, covering issues of economy, law, and communication relevant to logistics management, all with a strategic emphasis. Indeed, the public university in Tangier was the first to offer a specialized masters in port and maritime logistics, according to its website, in 2005 (University Abdelmalek Essaadi 2011). Subsequent initiatives for the development of other programs have led to the university now having the largest concentration of logistics training programs out of all the Moroccan universities.

The logistics masters program under Seddiki’s leadership has the following objectives are “(1) to support the large infrastructure projects in the region Tangier-Tetuan and in the rest of the country through training; (2) prepare professionals with a comprehensive vision (legal, economic, and managerial) of the port and maritime domains; and (3) instruct in the subjects related to port logistics, factory logistics, and international transportation” (University Abdelmalek Essaadi 2011). The two-year, semester-based program is comprised of eight modules: (1) Introduction to logistics and transportation; (2) law; (3) technologies; (4) project management; (5) logistics of international port operations; (6) logistics in practice; (7) port customs and maritime insurance; and (8) professional skill-building including domain-specific

English, job seminars, and guided site-visits. Most modules include two, primarily lecture-based courses, primarily conducted in French. Course materials are drawn on French sources, photocopied for students by the program student assistant.

Besides Saddiki, most of the faculty had limited credentials in logistics, and instead teach logistics course topics within the context of their particular academic backgrounds in law, finance, and management. The lack of instructors' professional experience in the domains of study means that students are taught almost entirely in terms of how logistics and transportation is supposed to work theoretically, and not in terms of what goes wrong and the problems that emerge in everyday contexts. Attempts to get professionals at the Tangier Med Port and elsewhere more involved in the program have been difficult. Although this would allow for more exposure to practice, professionals like Fouad were not convinced it would be worth their time because they looked down on public education. Saddiki found himself in the position of, on the one hand, being under pressure from the Ministry of Education to let more students into the program, and on the other hand, lacking what he would most like to see: the sort of ongoing, potentially mutual beneficent partnership between the program and its nearest port that he remembers so fondly from his experience in France.

On the program website, one evidence of the success of the masters is the placement of its graduates "in the most prestigious national and international companies," including Tangier Med, its terminal operators, and all the major shipping and trucking lines (University Abdelmalek Essaadi 2011). Indeed, before meeting Saddiki, I had come across his graduates at my research sites. Although not yet knowing Saddiki's approach to logistics as a lifeskill (Fr. *savoir-être*), I had observed the particular way these former students talked about their domain. These program alums include Zouhair and Youssef (pseudonyms), who I met in the

transshipment department of Tangier's multinational SeaShip agency. Director of the department, Zouhair, described being interested in his domain because "logistics and shipping is something that, it gives you life. It's all the time changing, all the time developing, and I have to be in the same way." Youssef echoed his sentiment, saying that, "There isn't a routine. Logistics, there is always something new" (*Il n'y a pas une routine. La logistique, c'est toujours un nouveau*). These quotes reveal how Saddiki's former students expressed a sense of logistics as both an expertise and a way of life.

When I mentioned my interest in the development of logistics expertise in Morocco to Zouhair and Youssef, they encouraged me to speak with their former professor, Saddiki. However, Zouhair and Youssef also indicated that there was a real difference between what they learned in Saddiki's program and what they have needed to learn for their particular jobs. According to Youssef, what he learned in the program was "the foundation," but "80% of what I know now, I learned on the job." For Zouhair, the difference between logistics training before an actual job in the domain is that the former is more "theoretical" while the latter is "the time to learn in real-time." Zouhair compared this to the Moroccan proverb, "Ask the experienced one, not the doctor" (Mor. Ar. *sewwel at-tjareb, la at-tabib*), meaning that you should consult the person whose expertise came from experience rather than the person whose expertise is all from books and classroom learning.

The experiential dimension of Saddiki's program is largely limited to the required internship (Fr. *stage*). Both Zouhair and Youssef ended up at their jobs after first doing internships through the program at the SeaShip agency. The internship requirement in the program includes writing a research paper based on some aspect of the internship site, providing an opportunity to apply what they learned in the classroom to a real-world worksite. Since the

choice of the internship has an impact on their post-program job prospects, Saddiki encouraged them to take seriously the process of choosing where to apply and how to convince the site of their suitability. In order to this, Saddiki regularly pushed his students to know their strengths and prepare their self-presentation. He wanted them to not just study logistics, but become logisticians. He often used the phrase, “Once you are managers, God willing,” to orient their thinking towards their work future. For instance, during one class, while going over a slide about the building blocks of integrated logistics management, Saddiki broke away from the content of the slide in order to address his students in a mix of French and Moroccan Colloquial Arabic:

You are managers and not engineers. As you should not wear clothes that aren't yours, you should not do work which is not yours. You need to know what your domain is, particularly since integrated logistics is shared between managers and engineers. How do you know a logistician? By his language and how he uses it. Before going to an interview for an internship, master the vocabulary. You will be judged on the depth of your [technical] language, not merely its use. Every domain has its baggage, every thing its particular vocabulary. You absolutely must (Mor. Ar. *bziz 'aleik*) learn this vocabulary.

He explained domain-specific language as something his students must not simply study and memorize, but accurately and effectively use. In the above quote, he explained that this is the difference between the “depth” and “use” of jargon. In order to get an internship, and hopefully an eventual job offer, he argued that his students must be able to speak as though they already work in the sector. They must cultivate themselves as logisticians even before they are employed as ones.

He also would tell his students that they needed “to be strategic but humble.” This was the advice he conveyed by telling them the Arabic proverb: “be a fox and not a lion” (Ar. *kun tel'ab u la seba'*). This proverb is based on the idea that the fox is clever and the lion is a show-off. After using this proverb in class, he turned to me, knowing that I had met his former students at SeaShip, and said, “Zouhair and Youssef are foxes.” Further stressing the need to approach

potential internship sites like foxes and not lions, he turned back to his students, and gestured at me, telling them “you should follow the example of Janell. Do you think she was able to access the port and all the different companies by simply showing up and saying, with airs, ‘I’m an American and I want to research here’? No. She approached with humility.”

Mastering Saddiki’s various instructions for logistics as life skill was not always easy in practice. I accompanied Siham (pseudonym), one of Saddiki’s first-year students, to her interview at a Tangier-area transport and logistics company. I observed how her commitment to a future-oriented logistics mentality came into conflict with the present context of the domain in Morocco as well as the humility needed to get a position. In the office with the company’s director of development, he explained to her their current warehousing format. I recall cringing at her response, in which she told him, that the format “doesn’t sound logistical.” In retrospect, I see how this quote expressed her confusion over the seeming incongruity between the global logistics and port organization she was learning about in her classes, and the particular context of Morocco.

As part of my participation in Saddiki’s program, he asked me to teach some informal sessions on conversational English to a small group of his students. During the first session, I had us work in pairs to get information about our partners and then introduce them to the class. Their introductions revealed their own aspirations for joining what they perceived as a modern and global domain. Since I had already accompanied Siham on her interview, I demonstrated the lesson by introducing her. She comes from Nador in Eastern Morocco, a nine-hour, all-night bus ride from Tangier. Her family lives in Bni Ensar, the neighborhood of Nador adjacent to its port and the border with the Spanish enclave of Melilla. Her father has worked at the Nador port for decades, and before that, at the port in Casablanca. She moved to Tangier in order to study in

Saddiki's program. She loves Nador, but would prefer to work some place like Tangier Med, since it is "more modern." In this description, she expressed the same kind of discourse I encountered with Fouad and his port colleagues, which positioned the port as a uniquely modern and global infrastructure in Morocco.

As introductions continued, we learned that Nadine (pseudonym) is from Casablanca and was raised in Tangier. She wanted to intern in a trucking company because she likes trucks. Mahmoud (pseudonym), from Tangier, wanted to intern in a maritime shipping company because he likes the sea. He wanted to work with Tangier Med because "it is the future of Morocco." Redwan (pseudonym), also from Tangier, wanted to intern in a logistics company because "it is a new field in Morocco." Fatima Zohra (pseudonym) moved to Tangier from Meknes and wanted to intern in warehousing because "they've studied a lot about it." Finally, Imad (pseudonym), from Errachidia, wanted to intern in factory logistics in the Tangier Free Zone because he likes machines. While some students had prior interest in particular forms of transportation, others were drawn to logistics because they were aware of increasing jobs in this emergent domain. Through training in logistics, they aspired to participate in the new opportunities made possible by the creation of the Tangier Med Port.

During another English conversation session, I wrote on the board the words "global" and "globalization." I told them that I wanted us to think about how to define these words and also what the relationship is between these words and (1) logistics and (2) Tangier Med. Imad said that, "even in Arabic and French, we don't know how to define them." I encouraged them to try and offered some examples drawn from my own research. For example, I described how globalization creates connections while also maintaining differences. I illustrated this by describing one Moroccan logistician I had interviewed at the Tangier Free Zone. He had

explained how he likes his work because it requires him to talk in English to people all over the world. However, he has learned from this experience there is not one uniform way people speak in global business. For instance, at first he found it strange when Japanese and Chinese suppliers did not use the same small talk that Moroccans do when starting to speak with him over the phone. After I shared my example, Fatima Zohra asked to try, saying that, “when something is global it means that the whole world is interested.” Then Siham contributed by saying, “globalization is international economic phenomena.” Redwan said, “we need a global optic, to think outside the box, and beyond borders.” Nadine described globalization as “things becoming more similar.” For logistics, Samir described “global” as meaning “logistics is becoming more uniform, standardized.” During his classes, Saddiki too encouraged his students, in French, to “think globally.” The information he used in his PowerPoint presentations on logistics were not Morocco-specific, but rather presented a universal, placeless domain. However, he regularly shifted from the topic of his slides to ground the content in anecdotes, proverbs and current events. What he could not offer were anecdotes from personal experience working in logistics. He told me that he would like to establish an institute to train in both the practical and theoretical aspects of port work by having the kinds of simulators he used in his own logistics training in France. Such a project would require money and he joked that perhaps I could find interested investors in America (personal communication, May 21, 2012).

While Saddiki’s students are taught to develop kinds of logistically grounded and globally oriented mentalities that Fouad wants to see more of in Morocco, the lack of port collaboration is glaring in the program. Reflecting on my own experience of being trained in global logistics in Southern California, I told Saddiki that the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles supported my program in various ways. Saddiki replied that the same was true about the

port nearest to the university where he studied logistics in France. As for Tangier Med, he told me in French that,

Normally it should be them who create new training opportunities since they are also a development agency. Ports in Europe sponsor scholarships as a way to attract new workers. Tangier Med should be doing this with students from all over Africa, if Tangier Med is to become a major port for African transshipment. But it is as though [the Port Authority] does not understand what kind of project they have (personal communication, May 21, 2012).

Saddiki spoke with frustration about the Tangier Med authority, saying that they had been too dominated by engineers and not enough managers. He saw the difficulty with engineers as being their distance from everyday “practice” (Fr. *la pratique*), meaning that, “they do not understand what kind of project they have” (personal communication, June 7, 2012). Since these individuals generally do not have a background in logistics, they have not understood enough their need to be investing in the development of logisticians. Their focus on developing physical infrastructure and technical capacity was not sufficient for a project of its kind. He also argued that engineers in the port authority are more concerned with general theories and less with specific contexts, trying to apply in Morocco developments that have worked in Europe. He told me, “I did my research on France, but I knew Morocco before. You need to know Morocco” (personal communication, June 7, 2012). He claimed that Tangier Med is not interested in “local experts” like him, but would rather bring in foreign consultants or people from Casablanca and Rabat.

When I had spoke to Fouad at the port authority, he told me that logistics training in Morocco is too theoretical and that the program in Tangier in particular is not producing Moroccan logisticians with globally competitive expertise. I came to learn that Tangier Med was trying to create its own private training institute instead of collaborating with existing programs in the region. While this institute continued to exist only in theory, the Tangier University program director continues going strong. Saddiki teaches his students to value logistics as both

savoir-faire or expertise and *savoir d'être* or life skill. In his classroom, he combines a training in logistics knowledge with coaching in personal development. Committed believers in the potential of logistics for the region and Morocco more generally, his students, both past and present, reappear as either interns or employees of many of the leading logistics and transportation sites in the region. Ultimately their aspirations for logistics as the future of Morocco are far more resonant of Fouad's hopes than the latter would expect. Fouad portrayed the Tangier University program as not globally-oriented enough to produce the kinds of experts the port needs to join the wider world of logistics. Unwittingly excluded from his vision, the program's director and students are nonetheless fashioning themselves as future, Moroccan participants in this world.

IV. Conclusion

I have a photo from my first meeting with Fouad in 2009. In the photo we are looking up at the sky framed from within the round walls of an oil tank in construction. Fouad had driven me out to the hydrocarbon terminal. We stopped by the temporary offices for the French construction company contracted to build the infrastructure for the port's hydrocarbon terminal. As we pulled up, I noticed men on the tops of some of the tanks, bolting the sides to the beams inside. Fouad proudly boasted of the construction project's safety record, and showed me how the signage is up to international standards of worker safety, rather than Moroccan ones. Images indicating what and who was and was not allowed in the construction site, how to access medical and fire assistance, and what to do in case of emergencies, were all translated into familiar, universal signs and directions. Inside the temporary offices, we put on hardhats, work boots and yellow vests. The French project director and his Moroccan assistant took us out into the site,

and let us enter one of the tanks, still empty except for the supporting beams crossing between its insides, and still open to the sky. The Moroccan assistant asked us to turn and smile. He had a digital camera, and took a few photos of Fouad and I. Looking at the photo now I find that it captures the kind of access that Fouad extended me: an access to the insides of the port administration and its aspirations, its offices and infrastructures. I also find that, in the abundance of barriers made from the tank's beams and sides, the photo captures the limits to seeing that this access imposed, as Fouad sought to focus my research in some ways rather than others.

In this chapter, I followed Fouad's aspirations for port responsibility and expertise in and out of his office. The course of our interviews from 2009 to 2011 mirrored the course of the port development itself. As the port transitioned from its future-forward project phase to its everyday operations phase, administration members like Fouad started to become more suspicious about outsiders. At the same time, my own interests and inquiries broadened from questions about the offices of port administration to questions about the terrain of port users. In moving from promises to practices, I became increasingly aware of the limits to Fouad compelling but exclusionary ways of seeing. His aspirations sought to transcend the temporal incongruity between Moroccan and the wider world but simultaneously widened other forms of incongruity between Tangier Med and Morocco. In recognizing these multiple incongruities, my evolving research aims led me away from Fouad and the port authority to study how port clients, users, and workers experience the port as an everyday site in their lives. In the next chapters of this dissertation, I reveal what I learned from this shift in inquiry away from the port as an aspirational project, an inquiry that led me out of Fouad's office and into a broader field of practice. In these chapters, I return to the port's region of everyday logistics that I introduced in chapter two of this dissertation.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Practical Connectivity of Global Logistics

I. Introduction

On December 6th 2012, the Tangier Med Port received a call from the world's largest containership. At 396 meters long and 54 meters wide, the *Marco Polo* has a capacity of 16,020 twenty-foot, standardized containers. Containerships of this size only call at a limited number of highly connected port hubs, where containers are transferred to smaller, feeder vessels serving a wider range of destinations. For the ship, Tangier Med was merely another port of call on its first 31-day rotation between China and the United Kingdom. For the Tangier Med Port Authority, the *Marco Polo's* call had symbolic significance for both this particular port and the wider, Moroccan nation. In reference to the ship arriving at Tangier Med, the port director was quoted as saying that, "this event symbolizes the top-notch, international scope of this port and logistics hub, which places Morocco among the top eighteen countries in the world in terms of maritime connections" (Tanja24 2012). In this quote, the director draws on two measures of port connectivity in terms of increasingly global flows of goods. First, she uses the mega-vessel itself as a symbolic measure of the port's reach. Second, she refers to the port's impact on Morocco's rank on the UN Liner Shipping Connectivity Index. From the time Tangier Med opened in 2007, Morocco had risen rapidly in this index's annual ranking of countries by number of maritime connections. While in 82nd place on this ranking in 2007, Morocco had risen to 16th place as of 2014 (see UNCTAD 2014). Both measures represent the port's connectivity as frictionless flows.

Anna Tsing faults metaphors of flow for over-emphasizing global movement while

ignoring "how this movement depends on defining tracks and grounds or scales and units of agency" (2000: 337). Stuart Rockefeller claims that there is a "managerial perspective" inherent in anthropological theories of flow with the consequence that "'flow' is action seen from high above" (2011: 566). While Tsing (2004) argues for replacing flow with friction, I am interested in finding a way beyond binary concepts of friction and flow. In this chapter, I introduce the concept of "practical connectivity" in order to examine the port connectivity as an ongoing project of social actors. I use this concept to examine two, specific projects of global logistics at the port. These projects are described as global because they involve cargo transshipped only temporarily to Tangier Med between other ports of origin and destination. Through an analysis of these projects in terms of practical connectivity, I frame flow as the everyday, aspirational and often interrupted work of cargo movement in context.

This chapter is based on research conducted with actors in global logistics at two transportation companies operating in the Tangier Med region that I introduced in the second chapter of this dissertation. These companies are the SeaShip maritime shipping company and the MarocTrans international transportation company (both company names are pseudonyms). The main sections of this chapter analyze projects at these companies of global logistics via the Tangier Med Port. More specifically, these projects are cargo flow coordination at SeaShip and building a regional consolidation network at MarocTrans. I use the concept of practical connectivity to analyze flow in these projects as an everyday object of practice rather than as a mere metaphor for movement. This concept builds on the circulation literature in cultural anthropology and, in particular, Nancy Munn's practice-oriented approach to space, time and circulation. I claim that practical connectivity is a way to go beyond binary divisions between friction and flow in the anthropology of globalization.

After this introduction, the first main section of this chapter is based in the cargo flow office for transshipment at the Tangier agency of SeaShip. In maritime logistics, transshipped cargo is cargo shipped to at least one intermediary port between its port of origin and port of final destination. This is now a critical form of moving goods in the global economy because, among other reasons, of the increasing reliance on mega-ships like the *Marco Polo* that are too big and costly to dock at all destinations to unload the goods they carry. The SeaShip transshipment office in Tangier is engaged in the everyday, local tasks of coordinating what the company refers to as “cargo flow,” the planned movement of cargo. While cargo flow is planned at the SeaShip headquarters, members of the local transshipment office mediate between these plans and the Tangier Med terminals where cargo movement will take place. I analyze the perspectives and activities of two actors in this office responsible for various aspects of cargo flow coordination. I consider how these actors mediate regular, unplanned frictions in these planned flows. I focus first on how the cargo discharge coordinator, Noura (pseudonym), mediates discrepancies across multiple information systems and formats. I then look at how container logistics coordinator, Youssef (pseudonym), mediates damages and other sources of container immobility.

In the second main section of this chapter, I examine a project of practical connectivity based at a new warehouse at Medhub (real name), the logistics free zone at Tangier Med, which I will describe in more depth later in this chapter. Created by the MarocTrans, this warehouse is the central node of an emergent network of consolidated shipping services between China and West Africa. Cargo consolidation is a logistics service that reduces container shipping costs and delivery times for cargo that is referred to as “Less-than-Full-Container Load” (LCL). Since global shipping companies only process full container loads (FCLs), it is up to third-party

logistics providers like MarocTrans to build them out of LCLs. MarocTrans had long been coordinating a related logistics of consolidated truck loads between Europe and Morocco since the early 1980s. The creation of Tangier Med and the new transshipment traffic it makes possible inspired the MarocTrans president to start a new venture for consolidating container loads at the port. This venture focuses specifically on the increasing West African imports of East Asian cargo that are first transshipped to Tangier Med. This flow-work requires building relations between very different spaces and things. I follow this network-in-the-making through its key actors and spaces. These include expatriate warehouse director, whom I call Georges, at the Tangier Med logistics free zone; MarocTrans president, the Moroccan Monsieur Bensalem (pseudonym), at the company's headquarters in Casablanca; and Senegalese logistics consultant, Lionel (pseudonym), at MarocTrans' affiliate in Dakar. I examine the practical connectivity of this project to show how the global logistics of the Tangier Med Port takes place within particular regional contexts. The project's aspirations for specifically regional cargo flow challenge the assumption in contemporary anthropology that flow is a universal metaphor for explicitly global connection (see Tsing 2000, 2004). I also use Bensalem's description of MarocTrans as a project of "trying to capture the flow" as a way to think about the how new logistics companies may use elements of friction to intervene in existing forms of commodity movement. In the next chapter, I will continue to challenge traditional concepts of friction and flow by examining the infrastructural politics of work stoppage at the Tangier Med Port's container terminals.

Theoretical Framework

In order to analyze the relationship between practice and connectivity in these projects of

global logistics, this chapter builds on anthropological theories of circulation and flow.

Circulation is one of the key components of economic life, defined by James Carrier as “the activities through which people produce, circulate and consume things [material and immaterial], the ways that people and societies secure their subsistence or provision themselves” (2005: 3).

As such, circulation has long been a central concern in the anthropological study of economy and society. From the small-scale ceremonial exchange circuits of Melanesia to the globally dispersed circuits of extractive industries and financial markets, circulation remains a critical object of analysis for understanding the interrelationships among things, people, and systems of meaning. With the turn to studying global processes, anthropologists began to conceptualize circulation in terms of flows. As a result, circulation is often associated with the study of small-scale societies while flow is associated with the study of globalization. The popularizing of flow in anthropology is related to Arjun Appadurai’s theorizing of “scapes” of global mobility (e.g. Appadurai 1996). Despite differences between older approaches to circulation and more contemporary approaches to flow, Appadurai recognizes their complementarity for the development of anthropological theory. He confirms that, “Anthropology does not yet have a robust theory of circulation, and when such a theory does emerge, it will owe as much to recent theories of flow as to the long-standing ethnographic concern with the local, the bodily, and the nonmodern as elements of social life” (2011: 569). The theoretical framework for this chapter aims to similarly go beyond simple divides between older and contemporary theories of circulation. Through my concept of practical connectivity, I seek to bring anthropologist Nancy Munn’s practice-based approach to long-distance circulation into conversation with critical work on global flows.

Studying circulation brings attention to movement in social life: the movement of things

and people and how the mediation of this movement creates certain kinds of social relations. Following such circuitry, however, demonstrates that circulation is not only about things moving but how, why, when and where such movement stops. Through an anthropological approach, circulation emerges as a constituent structuring component of social life, the movement and stopping of things and people at different speeds and spatial scales. However, Tsing argues that focusing on circulation “shows us the movement of people, things, ideas, or institutions, but it does not show us how this movement depends on defining tracks and grounds or scales and units of agency” (2000: 337). She claims that the emphasis on movement in the anthropology of globalization was the consequence of internalizing popular 1990s-era discourses heralding “a new era of global motion” in which “the flow of goods, ideas, money, and people would henceforth be pervasive and unimpeded. In this imagined global era, motion would proceed entirely without friction” (Tsing 2004: 5). More recently, Rockefeller (2011) has argued that flow has been used to assimilate a neoliberal, managerial perspective of global systems into the very optics of the discipline of anthropology. Tsing claims that flow is an overused and inaccurate metaphor for global processes that implies unrestrained movement and circulation. Understood in this way, flow is seen as supporting “the lie that global power operates as a well-oiled machine” (2004: 6). As an alternative, Tsing argues that “friction” is the best way to conceive of global processes in terms of “the sticky, materiality of practical encounters” (2004: 1).

Theories that emphasize circulation in terms of flow, while acknowledging its frictions, have a long history in anthropological studies of economy: from Karl Marx to Bronislaw Malinowski to Marcel Mauss. In the works of these scholars circulation is not mere flow. Rather, for Marx, money must stop at the worker before flowing back to the capitalist; Kula objects must stop at points of exchange in order to be exchanged again. Without stopping at these points of

friction, flow could not occur within the ongoing social system that the word circulation implies. Subsequent anthropologists also indicate how the use of certain moneys exists alongside the storing of others (e.g., Zelizer 1997) and how people in gift exchange contexts attempt to keep certain valuables out of circulation (Weiner 1992). As part of the history of such anthropological approaches, Nancy Munn's work on circulation is particularly relevant to an ethnographic study of logistics. This is because Munn's approach, like logistics, requires seeing space and time as interrelated and made through human-material action.

Munn offers a practice-based approach to circulation across time and space. She does not explore either space or time as much as "spacetime." She writes that, "in a lived world, spatial and temporal dimensions cannot be disentangled, and the two commingle in various ways" (1992a: 94). She defines spacetime as having three components: it is "formed through dynamics of action... connecting persons and places"; (2) involves "certain crucial subjective aspects [or 'acts']"; and (3) "derives from the qualities or properties of certain [material or nonmaterial] entities involved" in these dynamics of action (1992b: 9). Munn's "spacetime expansion" is a process of building long-distance relationships of trade and exchange. Munn writes that, in this context, "value may be characterized in terms of differential levels of *spatiotemporal transformation* – more specifically, in terms of an act's relative capacity to extend or expand what I call *intersubjective spacetime* – a spacetime of self-other relations formed in and through acts and practices" (1992b: 9). Acts are thereby judged according to whether they have positive potential to expand, or negative potential to contract, the spacetime of self-other relations. Spacetime is thus not merely an already existing relation between space and time. Rather, spacetime is being continually created by human activity.

Munn's approach provides a flexible set of ethnographic and conceptual tools for

studying any actually existing activities of circulation. In addition, the very kind of circulation she studied, maritime long-distance trade, has more in common with contemporary practices of long-distance commodity circulation than might be immediately obvious. On the basis of these similarities, Munn rejected the notion that relations of pre-capitalist circulation require fundamentally different conceptions of temporality. This is clear in her argument against Pierre Bourdieu's binary opposition between the immediate future in pre-capitalist societies and the "future as a field of possibilities to be explored... by calculation" in capitalist societies. Munn writes that,

Societies practicing long-distance exchange do indeed regard the future as a 'field of possibilities to be explored with calculation' in making long-range plans to obtain desired objects or returns, in the preparation of exchange networks for major transactions, and so forth (1992a: 106).

Building on this argument, I see contemporary logistics as using new technologies to solve what are essentially old kinds of questions in the human history of long-distance trade. These questions are how to get goods to arrive in the right time and the right place. Thus, Munn's scholarship is relevant to understanding logistics work as a more contemporary attempt to solve the very old problem of ensuring the regular circulation of goods across distance. What is different is that the meaning of "right time and right place."

Contemporary logistics aims to solve problems of long-distance trade transportation through complex planning algorithms. Local logistics workers must mediate these plans in far more uncertain contexts. In order to capture this human mediation of the maritime flow of goods, I propose the concept of "practical connectivity" as an alternative to binary concepts of flow and friction. I build this concept on Munn's observations that time should be understood, "as a symbolic process continually being produced in everyday practices." She goes on to argue that,

People are 'in' a sociocultural time of multiple dimensions (sequencing, timing, past-present-future relations etc.) that they are forming in their 'projects'... these

dimensions are lived or apprehended concretely via the various meaningful connectivities among persons, objects, and space continually being made in and through the everyday world (1992a: 116).

This conceptualization emphasizes time as the result of "everyday practices," "projects" and "meaningful connectivities." As such, it has much in common with my own view of flow as a project of making connectivities across space and time. Practical connectivity thus becomes a way to combine Munn's thinking on this topic with the particular connective practices of cargo flow and consolidation that I examine in this chapter. Rather than conceive of flow as more than something that just happens at infrastructures like port hubs, the concept of practical connectivity emphasizes the role of social mediation in global circulation and provides a way to explore flow as the everyday logistics of infrastructural actors at the Tangier Med Port.

II. Coordinating Cargo Flow

During research at the Tangier Med Port Authority, my participants expressed the desire to become a highly connected hub in the global network of mega-ports. By offering connections to the largest vessels and most critical lines of global container shipping, port official Monsieur Benjelloun (pseudonym) told me, "We want to join this map," while gesturing to the physical map of the fifty, most connected ports in the world on his office wall. Port engineer Fouad (pseudonym) suggested that I make this aspiration the focus of my dissertation and entitle it, "Putting Tangier Med on the Map." Subsequently, the director of container terminals explained that Tangier Med had become more than just a typical Moroccan port, "captive to local flows" of imports and exports. Rather, Tangier Med was now a transshipment hub with "world connectivity." In this section, I look behind these discourses of promised connection by examining the everyday work of mediating between global transshipment networks and the port's

particular terminals. I do this by following the work of local cargo flow coordinators at the Tangier agency of SeaShip. These actors are involved in the information-driven dimension of contemporary logistics, through which digital movements of information must precede each physical movement of cargo. Participants in SeaShip's local cargo flow department use their computers and phones to coordinate the movement of transshipments between the cargo flows planned in SeaShip headquarters and the particular terrain of Tangier Med's terminals. I explore how these local cargo flow coordinators carry out the practical connectivity of making Tangier Med into a hub for global transshipment.

I first introduced the Tangier agency of SeaShip in chapter two of this dissertation in order to explore the social worlds of container movement in the Tangier Med port region. In that context, I focused on the work of importing and exporting containers at this agency. While conducting this research, I learned about the company's transshipment services via Tangier Med and the local cargo flow coordination that makes it possible. Indeed, the first time I met the SeaShip agency's director, Saad (pseudonym), he was explaining the difference between "local" and "transshipment" services to Tangier-area logisticians. He described how they face a real "dilemma of who should be served first" at the SeaShip Tangier agency. On the one hand, they must serve their local import and export clients. On the other hand, they are required to serve SeaShip's global, transshipment network. Saad defined transshipment as the "world-world traffic" of containers that stops only temporarily at Tangier Med before being picked up by other vessels to continue toward their destinations. He contrasted this with "local traffic," referring to containers either exported from or imported to a port's local markets in Morocco. He disclosed that transshipment cargo always comes first although the clients they are closest to physically and personally are importers and exporters. The perspective he offered at this meeting was one of

a hierarchy of cargo flows in the following order: the “world-world traffic” of transshipment followed by “local traffic” of exports and imports.

The hierarchy of cargo flows described by Saad corresponds to the hierarchy of ports in the larger port and logistics industry. According to Jean-Paul Rodrigue and his colleagues in *The Geography of Transport Systems*, ports can be considered to have "global importance" depending on characteristics like port type and the number of containers handled. They specify that, "About 4,600 ports are in operation worldwide, but only less than one hundred ports have a global importance. There are about 500 container ports with 110 handling a traffic of more than half a million TEUs," i.e. standardized shipping containers (Rodrigue et al 2009). As one of these 110 ports, Tangier Med has become part of a world map of large-capacity, container infrastructures. In addition, Tangier Med is "global" as a hub for the container movement of transshipment. Hubs and gateways are the two major types of large-scale ports. The gateway port is closest to the origin of the word "port" in the Latin *portus*, meaning "gate or gateway" (Rodrigue et al 2009). Gateway ports are used to refer to those large-scale ports, which "have established themselves as gateways of continental distribution systems and have access to high capacity inland freight distribution corridors, notably rail" (Rodrigue et al 2009). Gateway ports are contrasted with hub ports, which are "used for ship-to-ship operations within a maritime transport systems. These operations do not take place directly, which requires the temporary storage of containers in the port's yard, usually one to three days" (Rodrigue et al 2009). Hub ports are commonly connected to existing shipping lines through "hubbing," in which "an intermediate hub links regional port calls to mainline, long distance services" (Rodrigue et al 2009). While Tangier Med has characteristics of both a gateway and hub, its primary role is as the latter. As a result, Tangier Med is more than a port in the historical sense of a site for

transporting goods between land and sea. As a transshipment hub, this port is a particularly "global" infrastructure.

Missing in this typology of ports, as in the globalizing discourses of the Tangier Med Port Authority mentioned above, are the forms of everyday work practice linking these infrastructures to larger networks of vessel and cargo movement. The shift from direct shipping (i.e.: between ports of origin and destination) to transshipment (i.e. between ports of origin and destination via intermediate hubs) has made container shipping more complicated. New labors of coordination are required for these indirect routes to make sure that transshipped cargo arrives at the right destination in as little time as possible. For SeaShip and other global shipping companies, the complex work of managing transshipment is assigned to companies' departments of cargo flow. Like other global shipping companies, each of SeaShip's lines has its own cargo flow planner based in company headquarters. SeaShip's local agencies, as in Tangier, coordinate between centrally planned cargo flow and the particular ports where cargo must actually be unloaded and loaded. Working largely through databases and digital communication, these local coordinators connect plans for cargo flow from their companies' global headquarters to the Tangier Med terminals where cargo movement will take place.

In the rest of this section, I examine work practices of two cargo flow coordinators in the SeaShip agency in Tangier. I show how these actors try to manage the challenges that emerge between the planning and places of transshipment cargo flow. These everyday challenges resemble the elements of "logistical friction" identified by Jean-Paul Rodrigue and Markus Hesse (2004). The introduction of this concept of friction into the study of logistics in transportation geography coincided with Anna Tsing's 2004 introduction of friction into anthropological theorizing on global circulation. However, the purpose of the concepts could not

be more different. Like the Moroccan actors who mediate cargo flows and their various stoppages, Hesse and Rodrigue are concerned with impediments to flow in order to offer suggestions for their mitigation. As scholars in the discipline of transport geography, Hesse and Rodrigue analyze the practical materiality of logistics in order to improve its functioning. This kind of scholarship on mobility is associated with positivism, quantitative reasoning, and applications in industry. However, logistical friction is also useful for a critical understanding of the practical connectivity of global logistics.

Hesse and Rodrigue built their concept of logistical friction on what is called the “friction of space,” one of the foundational principles in their discipline. They describe the relationship between transportation, friction and space as follows:

the unique purpose of transportation is to overcome space, which is shaped by a variety of human and physical *constraints* such as distance, time, administrative divisions and topography. Jointly, they confer a friction to any movement, commonly known as the *friction of space*” (Rodrigue et al 2009).

Hesse and Rodrigue coined the term, logistical friction to refer to the specific constraints for logistics of such spatial friction. They divided logistical friction into four elements, namely: (1) transport/logistics costs, (2) supply chain complexity, (3) transactional environment and (4) physical environment. I observed these elements of logistical friction in the discourses and practices of my cargo flow participants. In the first of this section’s case studies, “Discharging Discrepancies in Cargo Flow,” I look at how the element of supply chain complexity emerges in the practices of the coordinator I call Noura (pseudonym). Supply chain complexity is defined as the principle that “the more complex the supply chain, the higher the friction since it involves both organizational and geographical complexity” (2004: 180). This complexity relates to Noura’s practices of preventing discrepancies between cargo flow plans from SeaShip

headquarters and discharge instructions to the Tangier Med terminal operators. Her colleague, Youssef (pseudonym), on the other hand, deals with aspects of the fourth element of physical environment in his work as container logistics coordinator. This element is defined as "the 'material space' where any social and economic activity is embedded in, and also the 'hard' transport infrastructure that is necessary for the efficient operation of the system..." (2004: 181). In "Damaged Mobility in Cargo Flow," I examine how the physical environment of cargo flow enters his work of maintaining the mobility of SeaShip containers at the Tangier Med terminals. While SeaShip demands that containers are to be as mobile as possible, Youssef regularly encounters immobile containers stuck in the physical environment of the Tangier Med terminals.

While transshipment cargo flow may first appear a frictionless concept for global movement, the practices and perspectives of Noura and Youssef reveal the frictions that constitute transshipment coordination. By using the concept of practical connectivity to analyze the work of these local cargo flow coordinators, I aim to show the ways in which these actors mediate between the plans for flow and the frictions of actual practice. I argue that frictions in the flow of cargo are a pervasive and structuring feature of everyday logistics, the material practices of making commodities move. Indeed, these Moroccans and their colleagues referenced the frictions in the flows as what they found most stimulating in their work. For example, Noura said that, "even if routine, the work is active [Fr. *dynamique*] and there are always new problems." Youssef said that, "there is not a routine in logistics" (Fr. *il n'y a pas la routine*) because "there is always something new" (Fr. *logistique, c'est toujours un nouveau*). Noura and Youssef's supervisor, Zouhair (pseudonym), explained that, "shipping is all the time changing, all the time developing, and I have to be in the same way." These quotes about the daily interruptions in their daily routines illustrate the importance of friction to the coordination of

cargo flow. In other words, Moroccans in cargo flow enjoy working in logistics even if things usually do not go as planned. Their perspectives describe emerging supply-chain subjectivity on the part of logistics actors in Morocco. These actors' self-fashioning reflects the same aspirations for connection and global flow that frame the official promotion of the Tangier Med Port.

Discharging Discrepancies in Cargo Flow

As the coordinator of discharging (Fr. *déchargement*) in SeaShip's local cargo flow department, Noura is responsible for requesting the unloading of containers from SeaShip vessels onto the Tangier Med terminal yards. Her work includes receiving discharge plans from company headquarters for a SeaShip vessel calling at Tangier Med terminals, checking these plans against the company's databases of shipping information, fixing any discrepancies, and then sending the final discharge requests to the terminal operator's office of operations at Tangier Med. Discrepancies between these methods of communication and the information they contain can cause delays for transshipped cargo at Tangier Med and subsequent destinations. This potential source of delay is addressed in the dimension of logistical friction called, "supply chain complexity." This is the principle that "the more complex the supply chain, the higher the friction since it involves both organizational and geographical complexity" (2004: 180). Noura's work provides a virtual map of the complex material geographies linking the cargo flow department between the SeaShip home office, its vessels, and the Eurogate terminal at Tangier Med. In this subsection, I focus on the discrepancies that Noura identifies while trying to coordinate movement across this complexity.

Noura works vessel by vessel. She first receives the unloading instructions from the cargo flow planner in the SeaShip global headquarters. These instructions are organized by vessel and

container and sent to her by PML, an information format of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). Noura imports (Fr. *intégré*) the list of containers to be unloaded at Tangier Med into an Excel spreadsheet. She looks up the vessel code (Fr. *code de la navire*) and voyage number (Fr. *numéro de voyage*) to determine whether the vessel operator is SeaShip or one of its affiliates. If the vessel is one she has not worked on before, she goes to the website, *Vesseltracker.com*, to see who the operator is and what flag the vessel flies. She then extracts the necessary documentation from her company's global, online database, and makes sure the same information is found in the company's Moroccan database. I refer to the global database as "SeaShip Systems International" (SSI) (pseudonym). SeaShip employees can use SSI in agencies around the world. However, since any change entered in one agency can impact any other, only very few local employees have access to this database. On the other hand, all employees have access to their country's local, SeaShip database. I refer to the Morocco version of this database as "SeaShip Systems – Maroc" (SSM) (pseudonym).

Working between formats and systems, Noura's encounters various discrepancies. She describes three examples of discrepancies in port reference codes and container temperatures. If there is a difference in entries between the global SSI and Moroccan SSM databases, she must both determine which is correct as well as note the difference. First, she explains one regular discrepancy in port codes: that the Moroccan SSM database continues to use the old, now defunct Tangier Port code of "MATNG." In this code, "MA" stands for the French word for Morocco (*Maroc*) and "TNG" stands for the name of Tangier's port (Fr. *Port de Tanger*). However, the correct code for Tangier Med is "MAPTM," in which "PTM" stands for the name of the port (Fr. *Port de Tanger-Med*). The source of this discrepancy is that the Moroccan SSM database was designed before Tangier Med came online and the Port of Tangier ceased to be used

for commercial shipping. Second, she shows how for another discharge list the global SSI database showed the discharge port as Monrovia, the port city capital of Liberia. In the Moroccan SSM database, the discharge port was described with the defunct Tangier Port code of “MATNG.” She has to correct (Fr. *modifié*) this discrepancy in SSM as well as replace the old code with the current one for Tangier Med. Third, she shows how on the same discharge list, there is a discrepancy related to forty-five refrigerated containers (“reefers”). She notices a problem with the temperature at which these containers must be kept. Some of the container entries had one temperature while others had minimum and maximum temperatures. She fixes this by first checking with SeaShip operations to determine the correct temperature. By identifying and fixing discrepancies such as these between SeaShip’s Moroccan and global databases, Noura attempts to create consistency in the information infrastructure of cargo flow. Her job is to provide a human bridge between global plans and Moroccan sites of transshipment.

Noura has me observe her steps as she begins the discharging process for the upcoming call of the SEASHIP *Navarro* at the Tangier Med Port. This feeder vessel, with 4298 TEU capacity, is on a regional line that delivers diverse transshipped cargo, from clothes to building materials, from Tangier Med to destinations in West Africa. First, she downloads the discharge list created by the cargo flow planner at SeaShip global headquarters. She then saves the file and creates a folder for the vessel in order to follow-up. The cargo flow planner at SeaShip headquarters works on the base of the discharge list for each port, but does not work in SSI. Therefore, Noura makes sure that the SSI and SSM databases match this list. Once this search for discrepancies is done, she sends an email to the cargo flow planner at SeaShip headquarters to confirm the final discharge list. For SEASHIP *Navarro*, her email containing the list is copied and pasted below a simple message in English, “Please confirm us the new nomination below.”

In this part of her work, she connects the plans of SeaShip headquarters and the Moroccan informational context of these plans. Upon receiving confirmation from the cargo flow planner, Noura begins to turn these discharge plans into discharge instructions for the Tangier Med terminal operator.

Noura prepares to send discharge instructions for the SEASHIP *Navarro* by drafting an email with the subject heading, “SEASHIP *Navarro* MAPTM Discharge List.” Such an email requires several attachments: the discharge list from the Moroccan SSM database, a document with this information in the terminal operator’s format, the total discharge list, and a separate list of the refrigerated containers to be unloaded to the attention of the terminal’s relevant department. In order to notify the terminal of what containers need to be discharged, Noura reformats the SeaShip PML discharge information into COPRAR, the terminal’s particular format of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). She uses an EDI translator to reformat SeaShip’s PML-formatted information into the Tangier Med terminal operator’s COPRAR format. Noura mediates between these two different formats of information (PML and COPRAR) in order for discharge plans from SeaShip headquarters to be accurately transformed into discharge requests for movement at the Tangier Med container terminals. Her resulting emails to the terminal operator at Tangier Med forge a link in a longer chain of digital communication across messages and databases.

This work of coordinating the discharging of transshipped containers in a local shipping agency might seem insignificant when compared to the much larger cargo flow planning operations based in SeaShip’s global headquarters. However, Noura explained, “You have to respect” every step of logistics because, “as soon as you miss an aspect from the logistics [chain], a step from the logistics [chain], that’s it. The whole chain gets messed up... Really the

numbers are incredible that add up in a bad logistics chain.” While the plans from SeaShip’s global headquarters use precise algorithms for the design of optimal flows, Noura’s more tedious translation work is what links these cargo flow plans with the practices of a particular port. Facing the complexity of SeaShip’s transshipment plans, discharge coordinators like Noura are charged with the project of fixing informational discrepancies between virtual and territorial borders. While transshipment cargo is global, in the sense that it is heading onward to another, non-Moroccan destination, the transshipment port requires local mediators to ensure that this cargo does not get stuck at these intermediary locations. As practical connectivity, this work is an ongoing project of connecting information formats and physical sites of cargo movement.

Damaged Mobility in Cargo Flow

As container logistics coordinator, Youssef’s job is to track and manage the inventory of SeaShip containers at Tangier Med. He tries to prevent containers from being immobile for too long. This is because, as he explains, immobile containers lead to higher port storage fees for the company. In order to reduce costs, SeaShip’s “[maritime] logistics aims for the greatest re-use of containers” (Fr. *la logistique essaye le maximum de reexploitation des conteneurs*). However, plans for cargo flow presume that containers will be undamaged and mobile. Local cargo flow coordinators, on the other hand, must face the regular possibility that containers will become damaged and immobile. This is a particular dimension of Youssef’s work in the SeaShip cargo flow office. In this subsection, I focus in particular on the container immobility caused by forms of damage. This problem evokes the element of logistical friction termed the “physical environment” (2004: 181). Hesse and Rodrigue define this frictional element as “the ‘material space’ where any social and economic activity is embedded in, and also the ‘hard’ transport

infrastructure that is necessary for the efficient operation of the system..." (2004: 181). As a cargo flow coordinator, Youssef's work is the ongoing project of identifying and fixing container immobility in the "material space" of the Tangier Med container yards.

Youssef moved to Tangier from his childhood home of Casablanca, after studying accounting and management. Having heard about the plans for Tangier Med, he decided to enroll in Tangier University masters program in order to study port logistics. He started as a provisional employee of the SeaShip agency before being hired for a permanent position as container logistics coordinator in the cargo flow office. When I ask Youssef to describe this job, he responds in two ways. He starts with a description of his regular tasks of coordinating the inventory of empty containers between SeaShip and the Tangier Med container yards. When he completes this description, he makes sure I understood that he has only described his work "without problems" (Fr. *sans problèmes*). He then describes the "typical problems" (Fr. *problèmes typiques*) he encounters and what he does in response. Youssef describes how as a result of these problems, "there is always something new: there is a new case, merchandise, perishable good, plant, [damages] claim..." Most of these problems are caused by either actual or potential container-related damages. These include refrigerated containers that are leaking, containers with poorly packed bulk cargo at risk of spoilage, and containers with spoiled contents that must be destroyed. In addition, he describes other problems caused by the Moroccan Customs Authority's lack of experience with the category of transshipped cargo in space like the free zone of the terminals. Traditionally, the Moroccan Customs Authority deals with imported and exported cargo for which there is either a Moroccan shipper or receiver. However, with transshipped cargo, neither the shipper nor receiver is in Morocco. As a result, Youssef and other transshipment coordinators need to explain to Customs the nature of this cargo. Youssef and his

co-workers are in the process of pushing for a new system for dealing with customs issues as they arise with transshipped cargo in Morocco. This range of possible problems regularly challenges Youssef's supposed routine of job of ensuring container mobility.

Youssef starts with receiving container inventory information from the Tangier Med terminal operator and communicating this information to SeaShip headquarters. The main part of his inventory responsibilities is keeping track of SeaShip's empty containers (Eng. "empties") at Tangier Med. The continually updated and communicated inventory of empty containers is part of the essential services that hubs provide to global shipping lines like SeaShip. One of the three essential services of port hubs is "becoming logistics' junctions, buffer zones, where empty containers can be stored ready for rapid dispatch to deficit regions" (CMA CGM 2013). The availability of empty containers at hubs like Tangier Med, therefore, are important as an on-demand inventory for other ports in SeaShip's network. Out of the inventory of containers at Tangier Med, Youssef explains that, "90% of empties are sent to China." China's imbalance between imports and exports in favor of the latter means that the country's ports require far more containers for exporting than are available from importing. Youssef says that most other empties are used for "local" purposes, either for shipping Moroccan exports or transferring cargo from a damaged container (Eng. "cross-stuffing").

In order to manage SeaShip's container inventory at Tangier Med, Youssef uses Excel worksheets to keep track of empty containers, their locations in the terminal yard, and when they are scheduled for use. Youssef saves each updated empty list into SeaShip's Moroccan database. He then compares and corrects this information by checking it against SeaShip's global database. When containers are loaded on vessels, Youssef reduces the inventory on the lists. He receives regular updates from the terminal about containers and their locations in the yard. In this first

description of his tasks, Youssef summarizes his work in relation to containers without problems. For such containers, he presents himself as a conduit of container information between the container terminals at Tangier Med and his company's headquarters. In mediating between these sites, his role is to ensure that containers keep moving into circulation. However, there are other times in which containers become immobile, whether due to damage or problems with the Moroccan Customs Authority. It is at these times, that Youssef intervenes in other ways in order to try to mobilize immobile containers. This becomes a pressing matter of concern for him, since problems of immobility are calculated by SeaShip as costs in both money and space. As I discuss in the final chapter of this dissertation, port fees are levied on shipping companies for containers remaining in terminal space in order to discourage the long-term use of this limited space for storage. In addition to these fees, containers taking up room at the terminal can restrict the availability of space for newly transshipped containers. Therefore, SeaShip headquarters instructs its agencies to not allow empty containers to be immobile at port terminals for longer than sixty days. Unlike empty containers, however, damaged and abandoned containers require additional work to become mobile and re-enter circulation.

Youssef describes a first kind of damage as caused by a container being "poorly marked" (Fr. *mal empreinté*). This is when a container's markings indicate that it contains one cargo when it actually contains another. Without correct markings, this container may be stored in the terminal in a way that spoils its cargo. For example, a container carrying grain in bulk needs to be properly aerated by being stacked in a particular way. If such a container does not have the markings to indicate that it contains cargo in need of such aeration, it may end up being stored in such a way that there is poor air circulation and the cargo spoils. Improperly stuffed containers cause another kind of damage. These containers are packed beyond required weight limits for on-

dock infrastructure. Youssef recounts an incident that had happened at Tangier Med with one such overweight container that arrived from a small port in West Africa. While being lifted by an on-dock crane, the overweight container caused the crane's cord to snap. The crane came crashing down onto the other containers on the vessel. The impact caused damage to several of the containers below. He claims that this is particularly a problem when cargo arrives at Tangier Med from smaller ports where terminal operators are not as strict about weighing containers before vessel loading begins.

Finally, a third kind of container damage is a refrigerated container that starts leaking while on a vessel. As for the leak, a legal expert is hired to determine who is at fault. Youssef then files the damages claim accordingly. The other issue is the cargo itself: since the container is damaged, cargo must be cross-stuffed into an undamaged container. However, there is no refrigerated depot for cargo at the container terminal. As a result, both the damaged and undamaged containers must be plugged in (Fr. *branché*) side-by-side in the container yard and a health inspector must be present for the cross-stuffing. This newly stuffed container can then continue on its way with the addition of documentation explaining the container change. A different problem emerges if the cargo has spoiled. For example, vessel operators refuse to load containers with rotten cargo because of the risk it could damage other cargo on board. Such containers cannot simply be left in the terminal, delaying their reuse and accruing storage and port fees for the space they occupy.

Dealing with these and other kinds of damage, whether to a transshipped container or its cargo, poses new problems in Morocco. This is because procedures for dealing with such containers and contents often require their processing outside of the port's free-zoned terminals. However, nothing can be moved from the Moroccan terminals into other Moroccan spaces

without being imported. While transshipment containers are expected to stay within the terminal, and thus outside of Moroccan customs territory, dealing with damaged transshipment containers has shown Youssef the limitations of the Moroccan Customs Authority. Youssef explains that, “[Moroccan Customs] does not understand” this kind of cargo. When Youssef has tried to get permission to destroyed rotten transshipped cargo in Morocco, he says that the Moroccan Customs Authority has responded either that, “[the terminal] is a free zone, they do not intervene” or “The Moroccan state does not accept garbage.” Without a Moroccan importer or exporter, transshipped containers have no legal way out of the terminals besides being loaded onto a vessel. In the face of this issue, Youssef and his shipping company have gone to the Moroccan courts demanding to be recognized as proxy cargo agents with the power to import damaged transshipments from the duty-free zone of the Tangier Med terminals and into Moroccan customs territory.

Another example in which Youssef’s container logistics has conflicted with the Moroccan Customs Authority concerns the case of long-term “immobile containers” (Fr. *conteneurs immobiles*). He tells me that there are “immobile containers that have been here [in the terminal] for more than two years. These are containers that were destined for delivery in Morocco but were not claimed by their recipient for various reasons. There is no problem with getting them onto another vessel except that we are waiting for Customs.” Youssef explains that there is not yet a way to move such containers from the free zone of the port’s terminals into Moroccan customs territory without the importer first paying the accrued fees. Youssef says that, “We do not yet have the power as a shipping company to deal with these containers.” He tells me that they are still waiting for a new customs code to be created in Morocco that would allow him to move damaged and abandoned containers outside of terminal space. These containers cannot be

destroyed in terminal space because there is no extra room for such operations. Other transshipment ports that have been operating for a longer duration have solved these issues in collaboration with their countries' customs authorities. In Morocco, however, transshipment is still a new form of cargo without specific recognition from the customs authority. As a result, abandoned containers remain in the terminal yards, taking up space and accruing fees. Youssef's experience with abandoned containers, like with damaged transshipments, reflect how the Moroccan Customs Authority has yet to adjust to these new forms of cargo in Morocco made possible by the Tangier Med Port.

While Tangier Med was built as Morocco's first hub for global transshipment, Youssef encounters practical impediments to the mobility of these cargoes and containers. Although Youssef had studied port logistics in Tangier prior to being hired by SeaShip, the experience of damaged mobility make him reflect on the difference between container work in theory and in practice. He tells me that, "the Masters [from Tangier University] gave me the foundation, the background concepts, but 80% of what I've learned, I've learned on the job." This is because his training focused on mobile containers. In his work as container logistics coordinator, various forms of damage and delay cause such containers to become stuck in the port's container terminals. In working with immobilized containers and cargo, Youssef is confronted with how containers are not merely components of connectivity. Rather, they can just as easily undermine the plans for cargo flow. Unlike in his studies, Youssef's work experience has taught him that containers cannot be taken for granted as the stable and invulnerable building blocks of cargo flow.

In the cargo flow department I observed how the management of logistical frictions are the objects of coordinators' cargo flow work. These frictions in the flow of cargo could range on

a given day from discrepancies between information systems, damaged containers, or disputes over delay. Even the very labor of making cargo flow seems to contribute friction to the movement of things. Emergent in the practices and perspectives of Noura and Youssef, and the increasingly large vessels they work on, is a story about the changing conditions of commodity circulation in contemporary life. The cargo flow department is one site for understanding the practical connectivity between global cargo movement and its infrastructures. In the next section of this chapter, I turn from cargo flow coordinators to actors in an emergent cargo consolidation network. I follow the beginnings of the MarocTrans project to create a network for consolidating and deconsolidating cargo transshipped between Tangier Med and West Africa. Through this project of practical connectivity, as in cargo flow coordination, the port is transformed into a site for mediating between plans and practices of global logistics.

III. Capturing Cargo Flow

Tangier Med's global aspirations are foregrounded in marketing the port as a hub for global logistics. However, the port also has more regional aspirations. West Africa specifically figures in important ways in the vision of both the port and the emerging logistics industry it inspires. For instance, Tangier Med is described as "a hub for Africa" in a 2015 brochure by the port authority. This claim is based on how Tangier Med now "serves more than 37 ports and 21 countries in West Africa thanks to weekly services" (Tangier Med Port Authority 2015). Referred to as "feeder ships," the vessels on these weekly services rarely carry cargo that originates in Morocco. Rather, their cargo is largely West African imports of East Asian goods. Before the Tangier Med Port was created, such goods were first transshipped west to a European hub port before being loaded onto feeder vessels heading south to the ports of West Africa. One

of the main goals of building the Tangier Med Port was to transform this geography of transshipment between East Asia and West Africa. For Monsieur Bensalem (pseudonym), Moroccan logistics entrepreneur and president of MarocTrans, the results are that Tangier Med “has made Asia-Morocco-Africa a new route” (Fr. *De faire Asie-Maroc-Afrique une nouvelle voie*). This is echoed by his Senegalese business partner in Dakar, Lionel, who argues that the port “has become a must” (Fr. *est devenu incontournable*) for shipping to West Africa. In this chapter, I follow the new logistics venture created by Bensalem, Lionel and their colleague Georges in response to this changing geography of West African transshipment. As Bensalem explains, “we are trying to capture the flows” (Fr. *Nous essayons de capturer les flux*).

The MarocTrans logistics venture is based at a new warehouse in Medhub, the Tangier Med’s logistics free zone. Within the boundaries of the port, and therefore outside of Morocco’s customs territory, this warehouse provides a duty and tax-free site for consolidated shipping: the consolidating of multiple small shipments into one shared container. Cargo consolidation and deconsolidation are logistics procedures that reduce container shipping costs and delivery times for cargo that is referred to as “Less-than-Full-Container Load” (LCL). Since global shipping companies like SeaShip only process full container loads (FCLs), it is up to third-party logistics providers like MarocTrans to build them out of LCLs. While MarocTrans has long been coordinating a similar logistics of consolidated truckloads between Europe and Morocco, MarocTrans was created to consolidate containerized, transshipped cargo at Tangier Med. Like the transshipped containers of SeaShip’s cargo flow department, the consolidated cargo that will arrive at the MarocTrans warehouse will originate from, and be destined for, ports in other countries.

In this section, I examine the MarocTrans project and its vision in order to do two things.

First, I show how the global logistics of the Tangier Med Port takes place within particular regional contexts. The project's aspirations for specifically regional cargo flow challenge the assumption in contemporary anthropology that flow is a universal concept for global connection (see Tsing 2004). Second, I use Bensalem's vision of the project to show how cargo flow is malleable to new forms of routing and reorganization. By "trying to capture" these new movements of things in and out of Tangier Med, Bensalem uses the malleability of cargo flow as the basis of his new venture.

Before learning about the MarocTrans project, I saw the maritime proximity between Dakar and Tangier Med evoked in other ways. Massive ships, like the *Marco Polo*, call at Tangier Med in part to discharge cargo that is transshipped on smaller feeder vessels headed south to the ports and emerging markets of West Africa. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, increasingly large mega-vessels are generally restricted by size and operational costs to a few, major hubs on East-West shipping routes. Feeder vessels are needed to connect the cargo at these hubs to ports on North-South shipping routes generally and smaller consumer markets in particular. In terms of feeder vessels serving West African ports, many stop firstly and lastly at Dakar because of its capacity and location. This has made it a key, regional hub for coastal and inland ports throughout the region.

Marketing materials from the Tangier Med Port Authority illustrate that the port's strategic position is due, in part, to being equidistant between ports of Africa and Europe. This is emphasized, for instance, in representing the transit time between Morocco and other countries on Tangier Med's regular scheduled liner services. In a presentation by the port's director of container terminals, a series of maps are used to represent intervals of five, ten, fifteen or twenty days of transit from Tangier Med. Each map uses a particular color to show which countries can

be reached within each interval of transit time. Each color illustrates how these intervals in time put the port into connection with a wider scope of spaces. While these countries are largely located in Europe, with blue extending over most of Western Europe excepting the one, African country of Senegal. Five-days of transit time to or from Tangier Med is shown to connect Morocco to both Europe and Africa. Thus the port's proximity to Senegal is evidence of its strategic location.



Figure 13: Map of Tangier Med and Dakar
Google Maps. Map data ©2015 Google, INEGI, ORION-ME

Similarly, the MarocTrans official website foreground the proximity between Tangier Med and the Port of Dakar in order to illustrate the strategic site of the company's Tangier Med warehouse. The website's flash animation begins the visual argument for the project's focus on West African destinations with its first image, recreated in Figure 13: a map of the world with all territories unmarked except for Morocco and Senegal. Lines trace the maritime connections

between the ports of Dakar and Tangier Med, respectively continental Africa’s most western and northern ports. The subsequent animation on the website depicts how the connections between these ports are part of a much larger world of East-West liner shipping services from East Asia, through the Suez Canal and the Strait of Gibraltar, and to the North and South Atlantic. This is recreated in Figure 14, a map that reiterates the claim of the Tangier Med Port that its location and connectivity is ideal to offer transshipment and other logistics services. However, in this context, the claim is used to bolster the specific project to create a West African consolidation network via the port. The animation ends with a different image of Morocco and Senegal in which connection between the countries is represented by icons for the MarocTrans network’s nodal points. These icons located the network’s warehouses in each of the ports’ respective logistics free zones and were connected through lines of maritime and road transportation.



Figure 14: Map of the World Connectivity of the Tangier Med Port
Google Maps. Map Data ©2015 Google, INEGI

MarocTrans has long dominated the Morocco-France market for the international road transportation. This includes its long experience of offering services for the consolidation of

multiple, “Less-than-a-truck-load” (LTL) shipments transported by MarocTrans trailers between Morocco and Europe. The West Africa connections of MarocTrans are part of the company’s attempt to expand outside the Europe-Morocco market. While meeting with MarocTrans president Bensalem (pseudonym) in his Casablanca offices, he explains that the company is specifically looking for “South-South” connections because the Europe-Morocco transportation and logistics market is too saturated for new opportunities. Bensalem emphasizes that the unique position of MarocTrans as a Moroccan-domiciled logistics company puts them in an ideal position to create new cargo connections between Morocco, West Africa, and elsewhere. He describes this project as the most recent and largest of his efforts since the early 2000s to transform MarocTrans into a leading Moroccan provider of global logistics services. For Bensalem, the idea for MarocTrans emerged from the possibilities offered by the Tangier Med Port. Given its experience as a Moroccan company with international cargo consolidation services by road, Bensalem wanted the company to enter the new market for logistics services made possible by the port’s provision of new liner shipping routes and free trade spaces for Morocco. For MarocTrans to join and augment the connectivity of this new, Mediterranean port, Bensalem decided to establish MarocTrans.

In the previous section of this chapter, I examine the practical connectivity of cargo flow actors in service work for the port’s primary aim: connecting containers between the multiple lines of maritime transshipment. In the present section, I analyze a different form of connectivity at the port. While the cargo flow actors at SeaShip coordinate the arrival and departure of already routed containers, the cargo consolidation actors in the MarocTrans venture reroute and reorganize the cargo of such containers. Following the MarocTrans project to “capture the flows” of West African transshipment, my research included gaining access to the central site of the

MarocTrans network from Georges, director of the warehouse in Medhub, the Tangier Med Logistics Free Zone. I then traveled to Dakar to meet with Lionel, Georges' business partner and the director of the new MarocTrans affiliate for West Africa. Through these actors and sites, the company builds new spaces and services for consolidating cargo transshipped between West African and East Asian ports.

The MarocTrans Warehouse in the Tangier Med Logistics Free Zone

When conducting research at the Tangier Med Port, I regularly passed by Medhub, the port's logistics free zone. Facing the container terminals, the fenced-off zone with its large, rectangular, white buildings was always visible to me while traveling the road that bisects the port area. With entry requiring permission from both the port authority and the zone's occupants, this area at first appeared as inaccessible as its activities invisible. During my research into other regional, social worlds of the port, I began to be interested in finding a way into the zone. I was encouraged by a customs inspector at the port who told me that, "if you're really interested in logistics, than you should go to Ksar Mjaz," the Arabic name for the zone's location. Additionally, the director of the MarocTrans agency in Tangier, Samir (pseudonym), told me that I needed to go to his company's new warehouse in this zone if I wanted to see "the real logistics" (Fr. *la vrai logistique*). I had also read about Medhub in a Tangier Med marketing brochure as "a logistics zone with a world-world calling" (Fr. *une zone logistique à vocation monde-monde*).

In July 2011, after gaining access to the zone, I look out over the port's container terminals from inside the empty and hot warehouse of MarocTrans. I watch the silent movement of the container yard with Georges, the expatriate director of the MarocTrans warehouse in the Tangier Med logistics free zone. The sight of container movement is one that never tires

Georges. He tells me, “I love watching the cranes loading and unloading the boats. It’s just incredible.” More than a captivating image for him, this sight evokes the project of “capturing the flow” of Tangier Med through building up this nodal platform in the MarocTrans network. Following him at the new MarocTrans warehouse, however, I learn that his “real logistics” of creating consolidated shipments is still only a potential of the port’s emerging connectivity.

The Medhub zone and warehouses are not merely adjacent to the port’s container terminals and the East-West mega-vessels and regional feeder ships that serve them. These spaces were designed by the Tangier Med Port Authority to host potential interventions in the port’s transshipment container traffic. The economic, administrative and spatial promises of Medhub are described in more depth in an official marketing publication produced by the Tangier Med Port Authority, entitled, *Medhub: Logistics from a New Perspective* (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). This brochure opens with an image that situates the zone at the middle of a map of the world. Tied to a range of maritime and territorial transportation links, Medhub is described as being “a privileged location” (Fr. *une situation privilégiée*) and “an ideal platform” (Fr. *une plateforme idéale*) (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). Intermediate between Morocco and its bordering international waters, this zone is depicted as offering the most convenient way for logistics companies to use space at Tangier Med to expand and extend the port’s cargo flows.

As a duty-free site exclusively for cargo that cannot enter Moroccan customs territory, Medhub is described in the brochure as “a logistics zone with a world-world calling” (Fr. *une zone logistique à vocation monde-monde*) (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). Like other spaces of “graduated sovereignty” (Ong 2000), the zone is territorially in Morocco but administratively and economically under a separate regime. Administratively, Medhub is duty and tax free, which has particular, promised implications: “the synergy that exists between the port and its free

logistics zone through a unique customs regime places Medhub at the doorstep to markets and business hubs in the region, permitting a rapid and efficient distribution towards a market with more than 600 million consumers” (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). These respective administrative and financial features of the zone are framed as enabling a frictionless, speedy flow for the regional movement of cargo.

Describing the zone as a space both global and Moroccan, the brochure addresses the projected logistics client with the claim that, through leasing warehouse space in the zone, “You are already in Morocco!” (Fr. *Vous êtes déjà au Maroc*) (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). The warehouse spaces are also promoted in terms of both their adjustability and the degree to which they conform to the broader design principles of the port complex. The adjustable qualities project the space as one of possibilities and potentials. In this adjustable space, warehouses (Fr. *entrepôts*) can be as small 300m² and as large as 10,000m² while offices can be between 50 and 500m² (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). Additional, undeveloped terrain is available “for the construction of warehouses that investors can adapt to their needs” (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). In terms of the offices, “a particular attention was devoted to their design in order to offer a maximum flexibility for their set-up and use” (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). The warehouse space is available for a range of procedures, and “can be used as temporary storage for stock and product distribution or as a site for light processing” (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.).

In addition to these adjustable, structural qualities, other design features of the warehouses and offices are also used to promote the zone. The brochure mentions that the buildings were “harmoniously developed in line with an architectural plan designed by Jean Nouvel” (Tangier Med Special Agency N.d.). A favored French architect of the Moroccan

monarchy, Nouvel has been associated with several “prestige projects” (Barthel and Planel 2010) in Morocco as well as in the Gulf. Reflecting Nouvel’s general plan for the port, the zone’s buildings are attributed a similar added value of luxury design. The buildings contain Nouvel’s larger, Orientalist motif for the port zone structures of windows patterned on *mashrabiyya*. This is a type of wood carved, latticework window found in vernacular architecture in Morocco and elsewhere in the Arab world. In the repetition of these motifs, the zone looks like a seamless part of port space. Through navigating across this space with Georges, it was easier to identify its seams.

Bensalem introduced me to Georges, who gave me access to the warehouse. On the instructions of Samir, director of the MarocTrans Tangier agency, I sent Georges a copy of the first page of my passport in order to request this temporary pass from Tangier Med security. On the form for requesting the badge, Georges describes me as a “consultant” rather than researcher. He explains that this was a way to give me a lower profile. On our way to the port in his car, Georges gives me the resulting temporary access pass stamped and signed by port security. At the port, he drives up to the gate at the Special Administrative Zone (SAZ) that is also the way to Medhub. I hand the security guard my badge and passport, and Georges jokes with the guard that he has “New York” in the car with him. Once through the gate, Georges drives around the edge of the SAZ and out, waving at the security guards and customs officials minding the exit. Just across from this exit, passing containers and trailers on their way to the port’s terminals, we enter the fences of the Medhub zone. We drive around the first two warehouses, and park in front of a loading dock at the third. Midway up the right edge of the building is a small sign with the MarocTrans name and logo.

When we enter the building, I comment to Georges about the heavy, hot air. He

apologizes by saying that the air conditioning has not yet been installed and offers me a bottle of water, “So you don’t dehydrate,” he said. Then, on our way upstairs we pass several still vacant offices. In the space in front of his office, there is a workstation with four attached desks and new computers. He tells me that he plans to eventually have these workspaces filled. However, he will not have the necessary capital to do this until the cargo starts to arrive. Next to his office, there are two MarocTrans posters advertising their Casablanca warehouses. Going back downstairs to the warehouse space, I am overwhelmed by its emptiness. Regardless of the importance of this site for the network, the space itself is still just a place for future cargo. The racks are almost all empty except for a couple pallets of cigarettes being stored for a client in Rotterdam. Georges tells me that he hopes I would get to see these stacks fill up overtime. He explains that, “We are still just beginning.”

At the time of this visit, only a few warehouses had started operating in the Medhub zone. Georges asks me if I had spoken to any of the other warehouse directors. He is particularly critical of one of the companies, a subsidiary of a multinational logistics firm. He tells me that they do not have to create their own network like him but instead are handed clients through the partner contracts designed by their parent company. Partner contracts, he explains, are exclusive contracts between logistics providers and client companies. Through these contracts, the logistics firm agrees to not take stock from its clients’ competitors. As an example, he tells me that if they have a partner contract with Sony, they would not be able to store anything created by RCA. He rolls his eyes, saying that he finds this situation to be “ridiculous” and “constraining.” Unlike them, he has to “work from scratch, building up their clientele from nothing.”

Georges and I discuss the difference between the warehouse at Medhub and the one at Samir’s Tangier agency. I ask Georges about the loading docks and lack of parking at the

MarocTrans warehouse in Tangier. The dimensions of neither seem adequate for the number and size of trucks that service the warehouse. Georges replies that, “I don’t understand how they can work in a place like that. The best thing is to build from scratch.” While Georges is able to do that, Samir is not since the land in Tangier “is really expensive.” As a result, Samir has to settle for a pre-owned facility designed for neither the cargo nor vehicles of transportation logistics.

I ask Georges about his investment in an electronic system for managing inventory in the Medhub warehouse. I comment that the Tangier agency does not have such a system and yet somehow the warehouse manager remembers where everything is and what goes where. Georges replies by asking, “what would they do if he does not show up? What happens when he makes a mistake?” Indeed, I had heard of examples of this, when the wrong cargo was loaded at Tangier on a particular truck or another cargo was misplaced. Georges, on the other hand, has a greater budget for warehouse equipment and technology. He explains that they are going to get a Warehouse Management System (WMS) installed as well as handheld scanners. He is also in the process of buying a new forklift instead of renting one like at the Tangier warehouse.

These differences between MarocTrans warehouses at Tangier Med and in Tangier are also reflective of the contrast Samir had drawn between the work of his agency and Georges’ “real logistics.” Since Samir’s agency dealt with the traditional demands of international transportation in and out of Morocco, they could do with less-than-optimal infrastructure. The “real logistics” of the MarocTrans project, on the other hand, necessitates a more optimally designed site. Unlike the Tangier warehouse, used for Moroccan imports and exports, the MarocTrans warehouse has to compete with free zone warehouses at ports around the Mediterranean and beyond. Despite this physical infrastructure, however, Georges faces other challenges in practical connectivity. He tells me that, “If they really want Tangier Med to be the

Port of Africa, they must focus on the details.” These details are more administrative than physical, he claims, arguing that, “They have built the port well, but everything else has followed poorly” (Fr. *Ils ont bon construit le port, mais le reste est mal à suivre*). Through this quote, he contrasts the fast establishment of the port’s physical infrastructure with the far slower establishment of the administrative necessities for its use. Lacking this administrative infrastructure, he argues that MarocTrans faces challenges in capturing the flow of Tangier Med despite the port’s increasing traffic.

The MarocTrans Office in Dakar, Senegal

In September 2011, I went to Dakar to meet with Lionel and follow the practical connectivity of the MarocTrans network to Senegal. Lionel describes himself to me as having had decades of experience in logistics and ports management. After studying maritime administration, logistics and transportation in France, he returned to Senegal to start working at the local agency of SeaShip in Dakar. He then spent several years working in terminal operations at the Port of Dakar and then in international road transportation. Subsequently, he started consulting at logistics and transportation companies elsewhere in West Africa, including the Ivory Coast and Mali. Although his career goal had been to own his own company, he lacked financial means. It was in the context of his consulting work that MarocTrans recruited him in order to establish a Dakar-based affiliate for its new, MarocTrans network. As the Senegalese director of the MarocTrans’ affiliate, Lionel attempts to use his regional experience in West African ports and hinterlands in order transform this projected connectivity of the MarocTrans project into the practical connectivity it requires.

Lionel explains the idea for the MarocTrans cargo consolidation network as resulting

from the creation of the Tangier Med Port. He describes that Tangier Med “has become a must” (Fr. *il est devenu incontournable*) for anything crossing the Strait of Gibraltar. His perspective reflects how the new hub port has already changed the routes of container shipping between West African ports. While such container shipping to and from West Africa previously relied on hubs in Europe, Tangier Med is now receiving much of this transshipment traffic. He describes the aim of his efforts as “developing deconsolidation opportunities in each of several destinations in West Africa. This is a network, MarocTrans, with Tangier Med as the transshipment port.” By “developing deconsolidation opportunities,” he means creating relationships with regional importers of small container loads to coastal and inland destinations in West Africa. He informs me that several land-locked destinations in the region, like in Mali, have designated facilities at the Port of Dakar since they do not have maritime ports of their own. As part of his work of practical connectivity between clients in these countries and the MarocTrans network, he describes a number of activities. This include setting up contacts, giving marketing presentations, and arranging agreements with local companies in Mali, Burkina Faso, and the Ivory Coast. Lionel frames his work as transforming the new maritime connections between the ports of Dakar and Tangier Med in the basis of the cargo consolidation network.

Besides the connectivity of cargo logistics between Morocco and Senegal, Lionel also provides cultural and social evidence of the countries’ past connectivity. He explains that, “there has already been a strong relationship between Morocco and Senegal that goes back into history and evident in fields of culture, society, and religion.” As examples, he mentions the existence of a street in Dakar called “Mohammed V,” the first king of independent Morocco. In terms of religious connections, he refers to the activities of the *Tijanniyya* brotherhood based in Fez and very active in Dakar. In terms of social relations, he cites the large number of Senegalese who go

to Morocco for education and business. This is facilitated by the fact that, unlike citizens from many African countries, Senegalese do not need a visa in advance of arriving in Morocco. He also emphasizes that the network should be seen as part of expanding economic relationships between the two countries. He explains that there are increasing Moroccan export opportunities in textiles, foodstuffs like fruit and vegetables, conserved fish products, and manufactured items like cables and building materials. For Lionel, the close relationship of Senegal and Morocco in the MarocTrans network is a natural outcome of a long history of connection in multiple domains.

Despite the proximity between these countries as described by the Tangier Med Port Authority and Lionel, my trip from Casablanca to Dakar presents some of the challenges faced by practical connectivity between these two countries. For instance, although there are plenty of Senegalese in Morocco and Moroccans in Senegal, there is no way to directly exchange these countries' currencies. Both the Moroccan Dirham and the Central Africa Franc (CFA) are limited in their ability to be freely exchanged. Morocco adopted the modern Dirham in 1960, four years after independence from French rule and its currency. Replacing the French franc, the CFA Franc was adopted in 1945 during French rule and continued upon independence. In addition to Senegal, seven other countries in West Africa use the CFA Franc issued by the Dakar-based, Central Bank of the Countries of West Africa (Fr. *La Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*). Despite the appearance of Moroccan banks in the Senegalese financial sector, the inconvertibility of the countries' currencies require travelers between the countries to exchange Moroccan Dirhams for Euros in Morocco and then Euros for CFA Francs in Senegal.

Like finance, transportation reveals challenges in practical connectivity between the two countries. While the maritime route between Morocco and Senegal is the foundation of the

MarocTrans network, the absence of reasonable transport alternatives becomes particularly evident during my time in Dakar. This visit coincides with one of the period of stoppages at Tangier Med that I discuss in the final chapter of this dissertation. On the phone with one of his local clients, Lionel tries to explain why her container was stuck at the Tangier Med Port. Impatient with the delay, the client demands to know if the container could go instead by road. Lionel explains to me that before the “Med” project, MarocTrans had tried to expand its road transport services by between the countries. However, the maritime connections offered by Tangier Med provide a much faster and safer alternative. In order to explain why sea is more reliable than the road, Lionel recommends I talk to the few MarocTrans trucker drivers who still drive this difficult route from the Southern Moroccan agricultural port city of Agadir to Senegal. Air transport also offers little alternative, since there is only one, expensive air route between the two countries. On this route are two, daily evening flights between Casablanca and Dakar operated by the Moroccan national airline, Royal Air Maroc. The road does remain an option in terms of passenger travel. Due to the cost of air travel and the unavailability of passenger ships, many Senegalese in Morocco travel between the countries by joining caravans of people driving south from Europe via the ferries at Tangier Med.

Besides finance and transportation, practical connectivity between Dakar and Tangier Med involves Lionel mediating other social and spatial relations. I first meet Lionel in his offices in the historic downtown of Dakar. Unlike either the multi-story headquarters of MarocTrans, or the new warehouse of MarocTrans, Lionel’s office is a modest, two-room space in an unassuming building in the historic downtown of Dakar. The staff consists of just a part-time secretary and a security guard. I notice a generator near the secretary’s desk. Lionel explains that they have it in order to deal with the blackouts and ruptures in distribution. These are events

much more common in Senegal than in Morocco. Indeed, I noticed the lack of light at night in Dakar compared with Casablanca and Tangier. Beyond the office, Lionel also interacts with other spaces in Dakar, namely the port and its logistics free zone. During my visit in September 2011, the container terminals at the port were under construction and the logistics zone was not yet occupied. Nonetheless, Lionel gave me a tour of these spaces in order to see his future field of activity.

Our tour of the port reveals the unevenness of its constituent spaces. We start with the older spaces of the port, with their non-containerized cargoes like fish, bulk grains, and vehicles. These are the parts of the port most familiar to Lionel, where he could drive around easily in his car and pass by his former colleagues. At the fishing port, Lionel draws my attention to the small, painted wooden fishing vessels called *pirogues* in French. Lionel tells me that they are taken long distances and that the Senegalese are known as great navigators. At the bulk terminals, we watch large pink bags of rice being unloaded from a ship using on-boat cranes. The bags are deposited onto a line of flatbed trucks. Men are sitting or standing on top of the bags in order to stack them. Similar bags are loaded onto train cars headed to Bamako. Lionel explains that landlocked Mali has an agreement with Dakar so that they can use the port with special privileges, including their own warehouse spaces and customs officers. The port warehouse spaces overlook the port's vehicle cargo, also called "roll-on-roll-off" cargo. I notice a number of yellow earthmover machines and a range of new passenger vehicles. Finally, at the old cargo terminals, Lionel points out the unevenness of the ground that had long prevented the port from investing in the heavy machinery needed for reliably handling shipping containers.

From the older spaces of the port, we drive to the container terminal being redeveloped by one of the largest, global terminal operators in the world. In contrast to the older parts of the

port, our visit to the terminal requires special permission and more restricted mobility. The terminal operator's safety regulations mean we must stay in the company car as we are given a guided tour. We enter the car with two Senegalese men from the terminal's communications department. While one of the men drives, the other explains what we are seeing. In the operational part of the terminal, I notice a SeaShip vessel docked below one of the large, gantry cranes. Our guide points out some of the new container yard equipment that is digitally connected to the yard operations office. Lionel remarks that he is impressed, saying that the yard workers must be a lot smarter than in his day. Our guide explains that the terminal grounds are in the process of being remade in order to be even and strong enough for large, container handling machinery. Lionel jokes that he can hardly recognize the terminal, since the ground was so uneven before.

My tour with Lionel reveals the Dakar-based spaces of the MarocTrans network. This includes both the warehouse and terminal spaces that Lionel hopes to connect to Tangier Med as well as the older port spaces outside of his company's network-in-the-making. Following our guided tour of the container terminal, we return to Lionel's car and he drives us to the port's only recently completed logistics free zone. He points out where the zone will eventually connect directly to the container terminals. Not yet usable or open to view, the zone's built spaces include the warehouse that Lionel will establish for the MarocTrans network. Already represented on the company's website, Lionel describes how the still unfinished warehouse will be the site for deconsolidating the containerized cargoes first consolidated at Georges' Tangier Med warehouse. By mediating these spaces, Lionel plans to translate new destinations connected to West Africa through transshipment at Tangier Med into a network of consolidated cargo relations on the ground.

On our way back from the port, Lionel is interrupted by a call on his mobile from Monsieur Bensalem, the man he refers to as “the big boss.” During the call, Lionel tells Bensalem his plan for his upcoming trip to meet with prospective clients in other West African countries. When Bensalem questions this plan, Lionel reminds him, in French, that, “I understand Africa well” (Fr. *Je comprends bien l’Afrique*). Through his use of “Africa,” Lionel implies sub-Saharan, non-Arab Africa. This quote articulates Lionel’s particular mediating role in the larger MarocTrans project. Despite the history of connections and maritime relationships between Morocco and Senegal countries, Lionel evokes the necessity for the network of local expertise that Bensalem does not have. The practical connectivity of MarocTrans requires multiple forms of local and logistical mediation. While Bensalem envisions MarocTrans as new kind of Moroccan project of logistics, Lionel mediates its African frontiers.

Monsieur Bensalem, Lionel, and Georges reveal different horizons of MarocTrans network-in-the-making. During my visit to their sites in Casablanca, Dakar, and Tangier Med, they claim that the port is the ideal locus for the company’s logistics network by virtue of its constituent and connected spaces. These include the existing and emerging connections between Tangier Med, the Port of Dakar, and the clients and contractors of consolidated shipping. I describe first how Bensalem envisions MarocTrans as a project “to capture the flows” of the Tangier Med Port. I then examine Georges’ work to create and market the network’s warehouse space at Medhub, the Tangier Med logistics free zone. Finally, I explore how Lionel draws on his “African” expertise to network these flows’ West African destinations. While Tangier Med made “Asia-Morocco-Africa” a new route for transshipment, MarocTrans aspires to make a new route for *consolidated* transshipment. With its specific aspirations to capture West African transshipment activity at Tangier Med, I show how the global logistics of MarocTrans operates

within specific regional contexts. As a project of practical connectivity, MarocTrans involves the ongoing attempt to transform the port's shifting connectivity into the basis for new consolidated cargo connections. While the port already exists as a hub of cargo flows, Bensalem and his partners aspire to capture these flows. They work to transform their warehouse into a hub of cargo consolidation as a new, Moroccan provider of a specifically regional form of global logistics.

IV. Conclusion

Although the movement of commodities is often glossed with metaphors of frictionless flow, even at the level of physics, friction is a property of the matter of almost all things in movement. In the next chapter, I will continue examining the relationship of friction and flow by studying the infrastructural politics of work stoppage at the Tangier Med Port's container terminals. In the current chapter, case studies in practical connectivity illustrate how friction is an integral part of the flow-work of global logistics. Coordinating and capturing cargo flow are useful research and conceptual objects for the anthropology of circulation. For instance, transshipment relies on cargo flow, and yet the latter poses a paradox. "Cargo" evokes the inherent friction of physical things in space, while "flow" resembles a frictionless metaphor for movement. Global shipping companies attempt to remedy this paradox by creating new forms of mediating labor. While planning cargo flow continues to be centralized in company headquarters, the cargo flow coordinators in Tangier are charged with the much less predictable work of minimizing delays in flow caused by logistical friction. As part of a project of practical connectivity, these cargo flow coordinators are mediate the gap between the plan and practice of transshipment. Not only referring to the work of mediating the movement of goods, cargo flow

coordination can also be used as a concept for understanding the co-constitution of friction and flow in the circulation of things.

In the second ethnographic section of this chapter, the MarocTrans project to consolidate West African transshipment illustrates how global logistics is not a placeless concept. Rather, such cargo flows are mediated in ongoing, regional ways. Additionally, the aim “to capture the flows” of the port reveals how existing cargo flow can become a potential for new forms of mediated movement. Thus, existing forms of mediating flow also open the potential for others. In the case of MarocTrans, transforming transshipment flows into flows of consolidated transshipment requires particular sites of mediation at Tangier Med, in Dakar, and elsewhere. Like “coordinating flow, the concept of “capturing flow” appears paradoxical. By being captured, flows lose their seemingly essential quality of motion. The MarocTrans project does not seek to stop the new cargo flows at the port, but reroute and recombine goods into more efficient combinations, with cheaper costs. In this way, “capture” emerges as an intervention rather than an endpoint. This example illustrates the importance of understanding cargo flow as inherently frictional and mediated. Like cargo flow coordination, “capturing flow” can thus be seen as another useful concept for understanding the practical connectivity of global logistics.

CHAPTER FIVE

Port Stoppage and the Shifting Visibilities of Infrastructure and Labor

I. Introduction

On October 3rd, 2011, I began a three-month position as a customer service trainee at SeaShip's local agency in Tangier. I anticipated that this site would offer insights into how this global maritime company intervenes in the regional social worlds of container movement. I entered the daily office work of global shipping with activities that included calculating container fees and communicating with clients. Just a week later, on October 11th, 2011, container movement was abruptly stopped at the Tangier Med terminal used by SeaShip and its vessels. In the face of rising demands from its Moroccan dockworkers, the European terminal operator instituted a work stoppage. Along with my colleagues in the SeaShip agency, I experienced what happens when the promises of container services are physically disrupted by a breakdown in negotiations between terminal labor and management. The image of the Tangier Med Port is highly visible as the symbol of the emergence of global Morocco. However, this breakdown revealed the normally less visible aspects of its operations and governance. Consequently, this national project of development was rearticulated as site for the exploitation of national labor. The shifting visibility of infrastructure and labor made possible by the terminal's disruption is expressed in the following quote from an Arabic-language pamphlet circulated by the National Union of Port Workers, affiliated with the reputable Union Marocain du Travail (UMT) and representing the largest number of Moroccan dock laborers:

Who among us does not know the Tangier Med Port? Pride of all Moroccans, a development project relied upon to grease the wheels of the national economy and provide employment for Moroccan youth.

But do we really know what is going on behind its walls? How are the conditions inside of our young people, the strength of our land?

Is everything truly good, or ‘can decoration on the outside tell you anything about the inside?’ (National Union of Port Workers 2011b).

While most of the pamphlet is written in the official language of Modern Standard Arabic, this quote ends with a Moroccan Arabic expression, “can decoration on the outside tell you anything about the inside?” (Mor. Ar. *l-mzawwaq min barra, ash khbarak min ad-dakhil*). Roughly similar in connotation to the English idiom, “do not judge a book by its cover,” the expression is used in this context to argue that the outside image of the successful, national port hides the actual conditions of Moroccan working on its inside. Despite the port’s exterior representing something good for the nation, the port’s interior is a new site for the foreign exploitation of national bodies. The disruption of the terminal’s operations, despite the intentions of the terminal management to teach labor a lesson, becomes something else: a break, an opening, that brings visibility to working conditions. The breakdown is a way to render visible the conditions of these otherwise invisible men.

This is a very different kind of breakdown than the ones that are typically analyzed in the social study of infrastructure. While much of this literature has looked at infrastructures that break or that are pirated, breakdowns created by infrastructural labor and management provide a different way to understand the social lives of infrastructures. In the case of logistics infrastructures like ports, such breakdowns take the form of stoppages that offer periodic interruptions to the global flows of commodities, disruptions that challenge many of the commonly held anthropological assumptions about global flows and frictions. For mega-projects of nation building, like the Tangier Med Port, such breakdowns have a further usefulness in rendering visible the internal working conditions of infrastructures that are otherwise obscured

by the promises of their external surfaces. In this chapter, I build on literature about infrastructure visibility and breakdown in order to explore how port stoppage reveals the conditions of contemporary dockworkers, the interdependence of physical infrastructure and human labor, and the role of the container terminal as a platform for globally connected networks of worker solidarity.

Theoretical Framework

In the article, “The Ethnography of Infrastructure” (Star 1999), Susan Star provided the first ethnographic framework for the study of the infrastructure of social organizations. Unlike more recent work in the anthropology of infrastructure (see Larkin 2013), Star’s concept of infrastructure was not meant as a general category of analysis. Rather, it emerged out of her scholarly concern with understanding the connections between scientific and technological communities of practice. Like her previous concept of “boundary objects,” discussed earlier in this dissertation, Star uses “infrastructure” as a way of conceptualizing how specific scientific and technological workplaces become part of larger communities. Rather than trying to study the easily observable practices in these workplaces, she argues that an ethnography of infrastructure requires “foregrounding the truly backstage elements of work practice” (Star 1999: 380). Arguing that ethnographers normally analyze what is most visible to their informants, the study of infrastructure requires focusing instead on another kind of “anthropological strangeness” (Star 1999: 378). Infrastructure as an object of ethnographic research is “an embedded strangeness, a second-order one, that of the forgotten, the background, the frozen in place” (Star 1999: 378-379). This led Star to study such “infrastructures” as the systems of standards that allow computer programmers to communicate across platforms. In my own dissertation research into

commodity circulation, I did not choose the traditional anthropological approach of following particular commodities in circulation. Rather, I focused on the “background,” or what Star would call the “infrastructure,” of commodity circulation in an emerging port logistics region.

Drawing on her previously published work on early digital networks, Star claims that infrastructures of scientific and technological practice have several shared qualities. Of particular importance for this chapter of my dissertation is the infrastructural quality of becoming visible only upon breakdown (Star 1999: 382). Star writes that this quality of infrastructure refers to “The normally invisible quality of working infrastructure becomes visible when it breaks: the server is down, the bridge washes out, there is a power blackout. Even when there are back-up mechanisms or procedures, their existence further highlights the now-visible infrastructure” (1999: 382; For more on blackouts, see Bennett 2005). Brian Larkin (2013) claims this quality is not relevant outside of the Euro-American contexts of Star’s research sites, where infrastructural breakdowns are the rule rather than the exception. Focusing on the political and poetic work of infrastructure, Larkin rejects Star’s assertion about how infrastructure becomes visible during breakdown. In his review of the anthropology of infrastructure, Larkin describes Star’s claim as “fundamentally inaccurate,” “a partial truth and, as a way of describing infrastructure as a whole, flatly untenable” (2013: 336). He fully rejects the relationship between breakdown and visibility, arguing instead that “the point is not to assert one or another status as an inherent condition of infrastructure, but to examine how (in)visibility is mobilized and why” (2013: 336). At mega-projects like a transshipment hub, stoppages of the kind discussed in this chapter are exceptional and do make port infrastructures visible in ways that they are not normally. This becomes particular evident in the third section of this chapter, on the reverberations of the port stoppage. At the same time, Larkin’s claim to look at the mobilization of visibility is also important for

analyzing the politics of stoppage, something I explore in the second and fourth sections of this chapter on, respectively, the representations and solidarities of port stoppage.

Rather than describe infrastructure as a whole or universal category, Star argues that infrastructure is “a fundamentally relational concept, becoming real infrastructure in relation to organized practices... ‘Analytically, infrastructure appears only as a relational property, not as a thing stripped of use’” (Star 1999: 380). Unlike Star, historian Paul Edwards makes the far larger and problematic claim that modernity is marked by invisible infrastructures of circulation that rarely fail and “reside in a naturalized background, as ordinary and unremarkable to us as trees, daylight, and dirt” (2003: 185). While Star proposes her understanding of breakdown in relation to particular communities of practice, Edwards implicitly excludes from modernity those places without “mature technological systems... [Of which] we notice them mainly when they fail, which they rarely do” (2003: 185). In place of this linear understanding of infrastructural modernity, Larkin offers another, arguing that the outside of this particular Euro-American context, “The dialectic of technological breakdown and repair imposes its own culture experience of modernity, an alternative speeding up and stasis, and a world where gaps in space and time are continually annihilated and reinforced” (2004: 310).

Instead of focusing on the exceptional events of breakdown as mentioned above by Star, Larkin’s view is based on his study of the everyday breakdowns of media infrastructure in Nigeria. In this work, he aims to understand how breakdowns can be generative, disruptive in a positive way. He used this approach to explore how the breakdown of state infrastructures leads to informal, or “pirate”, infrastructures, “a powerful mediating force that produces new modes of organizing sensory perception, time, space, and economic networks” (2004: 291). As I discuss in the last part of this chapter, the port stoppage by terminal management opened up new

possibilities for seeing the port as a platform for something very different than it was intended to be: a node for new networks of dockworker solidarity. The dockworkers, through their discursive and physical actions during the stoppage rearticulated the port as an infrastructure of organizing rather than exploiting Moroccan dockworker labor.

The Tangier Med Port was designed as part of a new logistical ordering of the Moroccan nation, one in which Moroccan dockworkers must be more flexible and precarious than ever before. However, the Moroccan dockworkers, aware of similar projects of reordering port labor away from national protections in order to be more exposed to global pressures, had simultaneously inserted themselves within a global movement of dockworkers. This insertion would not have been possible if not for the building of container terminals at Tangier Med operated by multinational terminal operators. These global network terminals are the infrastructures that allowed Moroccan dockworkers at Tangier Med to join the international Global Network Terminal campaign, which connects dockworkers at similar terminals all around the world. This evokes Larkin's statement that "the very success of any infrastructural flows create possibilities for their own corruption, placing in motion the potential for other sets of relations to occur and creating a ripple effect on movements of people, culture, and religion" (2004: 293).

In his 2013 review of the anthropology of infrastructure, Larkin defines infrastructures as "metapragmatic objects, signs of themselves deployed in particular circulatory regimes to establish sets of effects" (Larkin 2013: 336). As a result, he argues that "infrastructures operate at the level of the surface" (2013: 337). However, as a result of staying on the surface of infrastructure we see infrastructure's aesthetics but not its labor. While Larkin defines infrastructure in this way as it functions from outside as a category of political objects, Star's

infrastructure is the more modest “backstage elements of work practice” (Star 1999: 380). While Larkin’s review gives minimal attention to work practice in order to consider larger political effects, Star’s approach emphasizes the former without the latter. In this chapter, I attempt to draw together both understandings of infrastructure. The events of the port stoppage reveal how the visible political and poetic work of infrastructure depends on the invisible work practices of its labor. The port stoppage shifts the well-circulated image the port as a site of perpetual, global cargo flows with another: the otherwise invisible and anonymous dockworker, who identifies, with the help of transnational solidarity networks, the gaps between the promises and practices of the port.

In order to address the challenges of visibility for both infrastructure and labor, Star offers two strategies. First, drawing on Geoffrey Bowker, is “‘infrastructural inversion’— foregrounding the truly backstage elements of work practice” (1999: 380). Second, is “surfacing invisible work,” which is key to understanding the relational property of infrastructure. This is because, as she argues, “one person’s infrastructure is another’s topic, or difficulty” (1999: 380). It is not enough to focus only on infrastructure in relation to its planners, managers, and designated users. These actors may not notice those workers who interact with the infrastructure but “whose work goes unnoticed or is not formally recognized... leaving out what are locally perceived as ‘nonpeople’...” (1999: 386). In this chapter, I consider how dockworkers, normally unnoticed by the planners, engineers, and users of the port, surface their own invisible work during the port stoppage. Simultaneously unnoticed and highly important, the port stoppage reveals the ways in which the planning and organization of Tangier Med focused on machines while neglecting the conditions of men needed to operate them. Through their arguments for the

right to work with dignity, the dockworkers rejected being “nonpeople” and proved that they are needed for the port to be a working system.

This chapter includes my observations of the port stoppage from the maritime agency where my three-month internship in Fall 2011 allowed me to observe how the disruptions reverberated through the work of maritime logistics in the port region. My direct interactions with terminal workers and management were limited for various reasons including my desire to remain neutral despite my boss at the maritime agency repeatedly requesting that I meet informally with dockworkers and report back to him. In order to extricate myself from these demands, I chose to follow the dockworkers in other ways. I combined information from my contact with the head of the National Union of Port Workers, his press releases and other materials, social media and news sources, and foreign coverage through the updates of the International Transport Workers Federation.

The rest of this chapter is divided into three main sections. First, I explore the representations of port stoppage and the disputes that preceded it through a timeline of six key events. This section includes attention to Moroccan media coverage of the events. In the subsequent section, I follow the reverberations of port stoppage at the maritime agency through work practices including the calculation of container fees. In the final section, I consider the solidarities of port stoppage that have transformed multinational terminals like those at Tangier Med into infrastructures of international dockworker solidarity. I focus in particular on the experience of Said El Hairech (real name), both head of the National Union of Port Workers in Morocco and dockworker committee member of the International Transport Workers Federation. Through such involvement, which becomes visible during the stoppage, the port's terminals are

transformed from a platform for global goods movement into one for global organizing against the exploitation of labor.

II. Representations of Port Stoppage

This section is organized around the key events in the industrial dispute between terminal workers and management between 2010 and 2011. An industrial dispute is defined as “A conflict between workers and employers concerning conditions of work or terms of employment” (ITUC 2013). Although through different forms of activities, both organized labor and terminal management may disrupt operations. In trade union terminology, such activities are collectively known as forms of “industrial action,” defined as “Any form of action taken by a group of workers, a union or an employer during an industrial dispute to gain concessions from the other party, e.g.: a strike, go-slow, or an overtime ban, or a lockout on the part of the employer” (ITUC 2013). Described as “social conflicts” (Fr. *conflits social*), such disputes between labor and management emerge out of the social fabric of their infrastructures. The industrial disputes of container terminals thus provide an insight into how the work of a port is the outcome of inherently vulnerable relationships between multiple social actors. Such vulnerability is made particularly evident when such disputes result in the industrial action of a port stoppage.

I structure this section according to the timeline included in an extensive report on Tangier Med that was published in the July 2012 issue of the French-language monthly business magazine in Morocco, *Economie Entreprises*. Under the heading, “How the port was inflamed,” this timeline describes the events before, during, and immediately after the extended stoppage at the Eurogate terminal (El Karmouni 2012: 26). I annotate this timeline with information from my locations in the field, definitions of the forms of industrial action used, and news and labor

sources. I focus on six, key events in this timeline. First was the 2010 creation of the first union office, affiliated with Union National du Travail du Maroc (UNTM), at Tangier Med's terminals. Second, in December 2010, this union launched the first strikes of dockworkers at the port following the failure of contract negotiations with the APM terminal management. The third event was the opening, in June 2011, of the second union office at the port's terminals. In the fourth event on the timeline, this union, affiliated with Union Marocain du Travail (UMT), launched strikes of its own in September 2011 after the failure of negotiations with the Eurogate terminal management. The fifth event was the stoppage called by management at the Eurogate terminal in October 2011. Finally, the sixth event considered in this section is the agreement concluded in November 2011 that led to the reopening of the Eurogate terminal. I discuss these unions in more depth below.

“2010: Creation of a UNTM trade union office at the port's first terminal, operated by APM Terminals” (El Karmouni 2012).

Having completed pre-dissertation research in the summer of 2009, I returned briefly for a week in 2010 to speak with some of my contacts in the Tangier Med Port Authority. However, I was not yet aware of the emerging labor activism at the port, since, as mentioned in chapter 3, I was still strongly within the technocratic ethos of the engineers and managers at the port administration in Casablanca, Tangier, and Tangier Med itself. Within this context, 2010 marked the year that the historic Port of Tangier ceased to be a recognized port of trade. All vessel lines carrying commercial cargo, whether by containership or ferry, had by 2010 been transferred to Tangier Med. Summer 2010 was Tangier Med's first, official “season of return,” offering in the Port of Tangier's stead the infrastructure for the annual return by ferry of Moroccans in Europe.

This appeared to be an unmatched moment in the Tangier Med's timeline as an infrastructure of movement in and out of Morocco.

Unknown to me during this visit was that at the container terminals, dock labor was beginning to organize. They had quickly learned that the port could extract value from their cargo flow work without simultaneously recognizing their rights. Although lacking visibility in the press and other sources, dock labor began resisting the expectations that they would remain invisible behind the highly visible exterior of the port welcoming its first season of returnee ferry traffic and increasing containership connectivity. The first union to represent this rising awareness was the UNTM (Fr. *Union Nationale du Travail du Maroc*), which opened the first union office at the Tangier Med terminals. The UNTM is close to the Islamist political party, the PJD (Fr. *Parti de la Justice et du Développement*), in power with a parliamentary majority since winning national elections in 2011. Although the first to set up an office at the new port, the UNTM is not widely known for dockworker organizing and much more for activity in the education sector. By opening their office at the first of Tangier Med terminals, operated by APM, this union began negotiating with one of the largest private terminal operators in the world.

“December 2010: First strikes, interspersed with pauses” (El Karmouni 2012).

Just a couple months before I returned to the field in March 2011, for my main period of doctoral fieldwork, the first period of stoppages at the port commenced. Initiated by members of the UNTM at Tangier Med's APM-operated terminal, these strikes went on for several weeks into January 2011. They were waged following the UNTM's first official submission to the terminal operation of docker demands regarding salaries due, shift timing, and other conditions. According to one local business journalist, “after depositing the file of demands and the first

[union-management] meetings, tensions began to rise...” (Abjiou 2012). Although scarcely covered in the national media, these actions included the first public appearance of striking dockworkers in the public space of the port. These protests were held outside the terminals fences and faced the public road that bisects the port. They were therefore visible for all those who traveled passed the road. Although I was not in Morocco at the time, videos taken of these protests show hand painted banners, Moroccan flags, and portraits of the King. Videos were filmed by dockworkers themselves on camera phones and then uploaded to Youtube.com (e.g.: niceday05 2011). The footage shows a total lack of media or port security. Cars and trucks passed between the demonstrators easily. This is evident in the example of one uploaded video (niceday05 2011), which captures a protest staged by dockworkers from APM Terminals Tangier on January 11, 2011 on the walkway outside of their terminal. The APM cranes are visible in the background behind the fences. Some of the protesting men can be seen wearing their APM safety work vests or jackets. Others hold photos of King Mohammed VI or are wrapped in Moroccan flags. Chants are led and speeches made by dockworker representatives with bullhorns standing opposite on the median. The banners and chants call for an end to the anti-union approach of the terminal operator as demonstrated since the establishment of the UNTM office at the terminal.

After I returned to Morocco in March 2011, I spoke to a former shift manager at APM Terminals Tangier. He told me that, during this period of strikes, he and the other Moroccan work supervisors, “believed the position of management.” While APM allowed trade union activity at other terminals, mostly in Europe, the management of APM Terminals Tangier wanted the trade union activity of Moroccan dockworkers to be punished. However, through a subsequent agreement was reached between APM Terminals Tangier and the UNTM, certain managers most associated with the creation and application of this policy were fired. This

included the Moroccan shift manager with whom I spoke informally, who ultimately left Tangier and Morocco to find work at a terminal elsewhere in the Arab world.

“June 2011: Creation of a UMT trade union office at the port’s second terminal, operated by Eurogate. Eurogate makes tough concessions on salaries, but the union maintains pressure on the question of subcontracted workers.” (El Karmouni 2012).

In 2011, the UNTM office was joined at the port by one affiliated with the UMT (Fr. *Union Marocain du Travail*), the largest, oldest national labor union. Founded in 1955, on the eve of Moroccan independence, this is the only one of the top four unions to operate independently of a political party. The UMT set up an office at the port’s second terminal, operated by the German-Italian consortium Eurogate. The UMT is not only most nationally representative of Moroccan dockworkers, is also affiliated with the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF). The UMT has subsequently become the most vocal actor for working conditions at Tangier Med, organizing many of its industrial actions, and brokering most of the agreements with the terminal operators and port authorities.

The UMT is based in Morocco’s historic economic capital of Casablanca. The location of these national headquarters in Casablanca puts them in close proximity to Morocco’s historically largest and most organized port. Indeed, at the union’s headquarters on Avenue F.A.R. in Casablanca, the tops of the port’s cranes are visible from windows at the offices of the UMT’s National Union of Port Workers. While the Port of Casablanca remains the capital of Moroccan dock union expertise, the Tangier Med Port is now Morocco’s largest. I learned from Said El Hairech (personal communication, September 19, 2011), secretary general of the National Union of Port Workers, that the national unions were concerned with the implications of a massive,

inexperienced workforce at the Tangier Med terminals for the conditions of experienced, unionized dockworkers elsewhere in Morocco. Thus, dockworkers from Casablanca made contact with those at Tangier Med through meetings at regional union offices in Tangier to educate the latter about their rights.

For union leaders in Casablanca, staffing practices at the Eurogate terminal at Tangier Med became a particular concern. Eurogate is one of the private, multinational companies operating container terminals at Tangier Med. Labor activists focused on trying to end Eurogate's reliance on outsourcing work at its terminal by contracting with staffing agencies to provide cheap, non-union, temporary labor. Labor and management refused to compromise on this issue. UMT demanded an end to outsourcing, particularly in terms of dangerous work, while Eurogate claimed this practice was absolutely necessary for terminal efficiency, allowing the terminal to increase or decrease staffing at a moments notice. This was not only a conflict over outsourcing but also labor law, as was made clear in an article published on the conflict between the UMT and Eurogate (see La Vie Éco 2011). This article quoted El Hairech as saying that the terminal executives "violate the Labor Code" through their non-response to the demand to end outsourcing (La Vie Éco 2011). The article then quoted Mohamed Hachami, Director of Public Relations and Human Resources for Eurogate Tangier, who retorted that, "the demand to no longer use sub-contractors or to permanently integrate recruited employees with a CDI [permanent contract] indicates interference in the management of the company," which is prohibited by the same national labor laws (La Vie Éco 2011).

"September 2011: Work-to-rule strike. Eurogate postpones its work assignments. It's a stand-off" (EE 2012).

In mid-September 2011, I met with El Hairech for the first time in the offices of the UMT's National Union of Port Workers in Casablanca. I knew about the strikes during the summer, and the subsequent agreements with APM Terminals Tangier. This had been covered internationally thanks to the solidarity updates of the London-based, International Transport Workers Federation (ITF). Certain positions of Eurogate terminal management were still not satisfactory to the UMT since they were concerned that Eurogate still thought of itself as beyond Moroccan labor law. This included what UMT saw as Eurogate's disregard for article 9 of the country's Labor Code, which states that, "It is prohibited to offend in any way the freedoms and rights related to the trade union practices inside of a business..." (Morocco 2004). El Hairech told me to expect more strikes. Indeed, by late September these actions began with a "work-to-rule" strike, defined by the International Trade Union Confederation as, "a form of industrial action whereby the workers strictly adhere to all laws, rules and principles that apply to their work, effecting a slowdown" (ITUC 2013). This was also the first time that terminal management responded with its own industrial actions of postponing work assignments.

Coverage of the intensifying conflict between the two sides at the Eurogate terminal continued to be only briefly mentioned in the Moroccan press, which largely ignored the union politics at the Tangier Med Port. Instead, most continued running articles on the promises of the port for the development of the Moroccan economy. For example, on September 25, 2011, *Le Matin* published an article entitled, "Tangier: Visit to the Container Terminal" (Ben Said 2011). This French-language, Moroccan daily newspaper runs articles that exclusively cast Morocco and its elites in a favorable light. In this article, organized labor activities were invisible. Rather, APM Terminals Tangier was described as a positive symbol of human resource management. Indeed, the article stated that: "The strong results realized up to now by APM Terminals Tanger

are the product of significant investment in recruiting, team training and workplace security” (Ben Said 2011). Investment in Moroccan workers is portrayed here as the perpetual policy of management, without mention of the conflicts and upheavals at the terminal.

“October 2011: Work stoppage during two and a half months. The employees of APM Terminals support their colleagues by slowing down their work. APM Terminals reroutes its ships towards other ports, notably Algeciras” (El Karmouni 2012).

In Moroccan media, I found the most consistent, daily coverage of the port stoppage in two outlets: the local, Arabic-language, Tangier news blog, *Tanja24*; and the national, French-language business newspaper, *L'Économiste*. These outlets also provided sharply contrasting representations of the events. While *Tanja24* offered a view of the stoppage not far from the perspective of labor, *L'Économiste* reinforced the perspective of terminal management. For example, while *Tanja24* mainly illustrated these articles during the stoppage with photos of protesting dockworkers, *L'Économiste* used photos of the physical, terminal infrastructure. Although both quoted sources from management and labor, *L'Économiste* relied more on the former while *Tanja24* relied more on the latter. As a print publication with online access, *L'Économiste* articles only featured the editorializing of its correspondents. *Tanja24*, on the other hand, is a purely online publication with an active comments section where readers can leave their perspectives in multiple languages and scripts. In addition, these publications have vastly different readerships. *L'Économiste* is preferred by Francophone managers and owners in the Moroccan private sector and focuses mainly on news from Morocco's economic capital of Casablanca. *Tanja24* is one of a handful of Arabic-language blogs in the Tangier region, considered “popular” (Ar. *sha'bi*, literally meaning “of the people), and is primarily read by

Arabophone locals. In the following, I examine one article from each of these Moroccan publications in the wake of the October port stoppage.

On October 13th, 2011, *Tanja24* published its first article on the closure under the lengthy title, “Congestion Returns to the Tangier Med Port After a Terminal Operator Prevents its Workers from Accessing their Workplace” (Tanja24 2011). The article is illustrated with a photo of a protest of Eurogate dockworkers outside of the terminal. In the photo, dockworkers are shown to be wearing their brightly colored work vests, and carrying Moroccan flags and photos of King Mohammed VI. Behind them, affixed to the terminal fence, are UMT printed banners expressing two of their claims. The article itself is based primarily on sources from the union and the local authorities. The result is an article that describes the port stoppage from the perspective of labor rather than management.

In the *Tanja24* article, the stoppage at the terminal is described as the action of management against its workers. Management responded to the demands of its dockworkers, according to this article, by “closing the doors in their faces and preventing them from accessing their places of work” (Ar. *ighlaq al-abwab fi wajuhhum wa mina'hum min al-waṣul ila amakin 'amalhum*) (Tanja24 2011). The article also mentioned that Eurogate management took this action despite the fact that “local authorities had already re-opened negotiations with some union representatives in order to contain the situation and work to avoid an increase in congestion and escalation between workers and Eurogate terminal management, which had broken its promise to fulfill all of their demands many weeks ago” (Tanja24 2011). The article goes on to describe these demands and hold the Eurogate management responsible alone for the stoppage.

Following the text of this article appear comments from dockworkers themselves, in a mix of Standard and Moroccan Arabic. This includes the comment posted in Moroccan Arabic

by a reader with a screen name that indicates he is a driver in the terminal. He starts by criticizing Eurogate, writing that, “This company is not working in the interest of our country!” (Ar/Mor. Ar. *hadhahi ash-sharika ma katkhdamash l maṣliḥa dial bladna!*) (Tanja24 2011). He goes on to write that management’s decision to close the terminal does not only impact its workers. Rather, the terminal management is “closing its doors not only to its workers but to the entire regional and Moroccan economy! See for example that there are companies waiting for their goods to arrive! The workers of these companies, even they are threatened! This is very dangerous!” (Mor. Ar. *shaddat al-biban dialha mashi ghayr ‘ala al-‘amal dialha walakin ḥta al-iqtisad al-jaḥwi wa al-maghribi kul! Rah kaynin sharikat lli kaytsennu as-sila’ tuwṣul! Al-khaddam dial had ash-sharikat ḥta huma amḥaddin! Hadshi khṭar bezzef!*) (Tanja24 2011). With an implicitly supply-chain view of the port, the reader points to the reverberations of the stoppage far beyond the terminal and into the companies that rely on it for their goods.

While the *Tanja24* article and dockworker commentators provide a perspective critical of the Eurogate management, the subsequent articles published in *L’Économiste* are far more understanding of management. This includes blaming labor’s intransigence for management’s imposition of the stoppage. The first of these articles about the stoppage was published on October 17th, 2011, and entitled, “Strikes/Tangier Med: First collateral damages.” The pro-management perspective of the article begins with this title, which describes the stoppage at the Eurogate Terminal as the outcome of “strikes” (Fr. *grèves*) by labor instead of a lockout by management. The article draws extensively on the perspective of one source, Mohamed Hachami, the Human Resources Manager and Public Relations Director for Eurogate Tanger. The article is particularly critical of the union’s refusal to negotiate on the question of subcontracted labor, the use of which the terminal management insists is necessary in order “to

improve its productivity” (Abjiou 2011a). The article neglects to explain the union’s position on this matter, which is that subcontracting generally threatens job security and safety in the port.

This article goes on to give a thorough explanation, reasoning and support for Eurogate’s decision, arguing that it was a matter of the terminal management “taking precautions” (Fr. *prenait les devants*) in the face of the threat of additional strikes (Abjiou 2011a). The author, Tangier correspondent Ali Abjiou, writes that, “The dispute which opposed union and management was poisoned enough to drive towards another work-to-rule strike... For the company, the reduced pace of work put in danger the terminal equipment and it was from there that the decision to stop [was made]” (Abjiou 2011a). This argument claims that the reduced pace of dockworker work meant that terminal machines could not work at the speed for which they were designed. In other words, the decision to shut the terminal appears to have been made in order to protect its machines from the men that operate them. The terminal management is depicted in this article as having been forced to choose its machines over its men. The continuing of the stoppage is likewise described as the fault of labor rather than management, which is described as “currently waiting for an end to the situation” (Abjiou 2011a). The article describes management as hamstrung as long as labor continues to make demands. Unlike the *Tanja24* article above, Abjiou’s article in *L’Économiste* places responsibility for the creation and continuation of the port stoppage exclusively with labor. Concluding with a postscript entitled ‘Danger,’ Abjiou goes further, writing that, “Serial strikes do not herald anything good... If ever these conflicts repeat again in the future, it is the competitiveness of the Tangier Med Port which is in danger” (Abjiou 2011a).

“November 17, 2011: Signing of a memorandum of understanding between Eurogate and UMT” (El Karmouni 2012).

On November 17, 2011, I received an email from Said El Hairech with the subject heading “Latest in Tangiers.” With nothing yet published in the press, only El Hairech’s email informed me about what had occurred. The text of the email, in both Arabic and English, described the conclusion of the most recent negotiations with a nine-hour session that produced an agreement that satisfied major dockworker demands. What was signed turned out to be a “Memorandum of Understanding” (MoU) on these matters. This meant that the terminal management did not officially agree to fulfill all of these demands, notably leaving out the earlier, explicit demand for an end to the use of outsourcing dockworkers. Rather, what was agreed on in order to end the port stoppage was an agreement to return to negotiations. This is the meaning of MoU: an agreement to eventually make an agreement. When referring to negotiations, “a *MOU* is considered to be a preliminary document - an agreement to *meet and discuss* - not a comprehensive agreement... Most MOUs imply - but to not guarantee - that something more is eventually expected” (Duhaime 2015). Not surprisingly, this meant that everything was not as settled as it seemed not, and subsequent dockworker strikes in 2012 were made in order to force a return to negotiations. However, the MoU in November 2011 did bring to a formal end the terminal management’s port stoppage. In the subsequent weeks, container vessels began to return to the port.

A week later, Abjiou published an article in *L’Économiste* about the MoU and the end of the stoppage. Although subtitled with the phrase, “A sigh of relief at TangierMed” (Fr. *Ouf de soulagement à TangerMed*), this article shifts from the relief in the present to anxiety over the port’s future (Abjiou 2011b). Concerned with the greater ramifications of the stoppage, Abjiou

writes that, “it is legitimate to ask if these actions will be enough to help resume confidence in the port” (Fr. *il est légitime de savoir si ces actions seront de nature à aider dans la reprise de la confiance au sein du port*) (2011b). Abjiou posits that the first resumption at the port, of terminal operations, cannot necessarily produce the other needed resumption: of pre-stoppage levels of confidence in the port’s reliability and stability. He goes on to summarize the decisions of the various shipping companies to replace Tangier Med with other, proximate, and largely Spanish ports of call (Algéciras, Malaga, and Valencia) during the terminal closure, writing that “it is the Spanish ports which have most benefitted from the social tensions at the Tangier Med Port” (Fr. *ce sont les ports espagnols qui ont le plus bénéficié de ces tensions sociales au port de TangerMed*) (Abjiou 2011b).

The article argues that Spanish dockworkers, first losing work with the rise of Tangier Med, have reduced their recourse to industrial action in order to benefit from the labor instabilities on the opposite coast. He writes that:

Maritime transportation is based on a precise timing and planned in advance, with stops calculated to the minute and every delay causes snowball effects dreaded by shipping companies. From this comes the necessity of absolute confidence in port installations and their human dimensions, a lesson that the trade unionists on the other shore in Spain have understood. It remains to be seen if they will do the same at Tangier Med (Abjiou 2011b).

Absent in this portrayal of Spanish dockworkers “who have learned their place” is the fact that Spanish ports have further automated. Removing more and more workers from the docks, terminal automation in Spanish ports continues in order to compete with lower labor costs at Tangier Med and in order to prevent paralyzing industrial actions. Spanish dockworkers “have learned” but not in the way Abjiou presumes.

This article's patronizing tone towards unionized Moroccan dockworkers echoes what I heard about dockworkers from managers in shipping and at the port. These managers took the opinion that dockworkers have lessons to learn. Saad (pseudonym), SeaShip agency director, asked me to explain what the dockworkers want. He asked me, "Do they understand what will happen? The companies will stop using Tangier Med." Although I declined, he encouraged me to surreptitiously ask them and then report back, telling me, "You are neutral in this matter. I cannot ask them." A port official had told me that the future of the port depends on its "labor stability," implicitly arguing that striking dockworkers could jeopardize the future of the port. These managers, and the pro-management perspective of *L'Économiste*, represented the dockworkers as not understanding the world in which they are working and its demands. They claimed the dockworkers are focused only on their own narrow agendas and not aware of the larger and extremely competitive world of maritime shipping. They framed dockworker actions as risking the future of dock work. For Tangier Med's managerial actors, port stoppage renders visible the threat of labor instability for cargo flow. However, for Tangier Med's dockworkers, port stoppage renders visible the threats caused by the labor policies of these new terminal formations for all Moroccan workers as well as the larger global dockworker movement.

III. Reverberations of Port Stoppage

At SeaShip Tangier, I began observing and working in the customer service department a week prior to the start of the stoppage. As the events at the Eurogate terminal unfolded, the SeaShip agency proved an ideal site for observing the reverberations of the stoppage within the export-processing world of the port region. With the containerized cargoes of these manufacturers increasingly delayed or rerouted, time-dependent supply-chains started to run out

of time. As a result, the agency was faced with an increasing uncertainty over what to do during the day or say to clients. Clients' concerns over the slowing of movement through the port were expressed in a range of angry communications at the front desk, over phone calls staff nervously passed off to each other, and through emails with an expressive use of typefaces. The supply chain manager from one of SeaShip Tangier's largest clients, a car parts manufacturer, emailed the agency to announce in French that, "We are facing ruptures in the chain" (Fr. *nous risquons ruptures en la chaine*). Not long afterwards, another French email was received from one of this company's competitors, informing the SeaShip agency that, "we already have ruptures in supply" (Fr. *Nous sommes déjà en rupture de stock*). As automotive parts manufacturers, these companies are particularly dependent on the careful timing of imported materials and exported products. With these cargoes either stuck at the terminal or unable to arrive in the first place, the delays of stoppage began to undermine manufacturing processes across the Tangier Med port region. The immobility of the stoppage reverberated in the physical and temporal immobilizing of these regional supply-chains.

Like many principles of "the supply-chain condition of capitalism" (Tsing 2009) or "post-Fordist flexible accumulation" (Harvey 1990), just-in-time is often understood as something already achieved, an accomplished and central fact of contemporary global economy. For example, Hoffman (2011) used just-in-time to describe what structures the contemporary, flexible modalities of all kinds of labor including the labor of war. In the context of overlapping extraction and war economies in his study of fighters for hire in West Africa, Hoffman writes: "the organizational logic at work in the region was increasingly one of making young men available for 'just in time' production based on whatever opportunities presented themselves: mining, timber cutting, tapping rubber, or war fighting" (2011: 42). This evidence of an

unrelenting teleological shift in how labor is organized resembles an earlier one described by E.P. Thompson (1967) in the relationship between time and labor separating the pre-industrial era and industrial capitalism. He argues that time was reorganized in this shift and used to discipline new forms of factory-based labor. Thompson observes in developing countries at the time of his writing modern examples of the same teleology and conflicts between pre-industrial and industrializing temporalities that had earlier existed in England, where industrial time-discipline was eventually victorious.

In the *Dictionary of International Trade*, just-in-time is defined as “The principle of production and inventory control that prescribes precise controls for the movement of raw materials, component parts and work-in-progress. Goods arrive when needed (just in time) for production for use rather than becoming expensive inventory that occupies costly warehouse space” (Hinkelman 2008: 107). This principle does not simply mean movement (“precise controls for movement” and “goods arrive when needed”) opposed to non-movement (occupying “costly warehouse space”), but movement that must be made by actors in particular places and at particular times. Building on this understanding of the work that goes into making this temporality, I approach just-in-time in this section as more than a late industrial equivalent to the “time-discipline of industrial capitalism” (Thompson 1967). Instead, I frame just-in-time as an ongoing project, made and unmade by the labors of logistics and transportation. This is just-in-time as I observed it in the everyday irregularity and unknowing of shipping work during a port stoppage.

In this section, I claim that the port terminal should be seen as both a physical *and* temporal infrastructure for container shipping and the regional supply-chains it supports. I explore this claim by describing the shifting temporality of the SeaShip agency during the port

stoppage. This includes, in the latter part of this section, a case study of the temporal reverberations of stoppage in one particular work practice at the agency: the calculating and charging of demurrage. In shipping, demurrage is defined as fees to penalize delays caused by clients in the circulation of containers at either the time for their pick up or return at the terminal. The work practices of demurrage, like all others at the shipping agency, depend on a careful and constant timing of container movement into and out of the terminal, whether by land or by sea. The supply-chains of multinational manufactures with assembly sites in the region also depend on such timing. However, the human and physical infrastructures of this timing at the terminal are normally taken for granted as the background to these regional work practices of shipping and supply-chain management. Through the stoppage, the Eurogate terminal shifted from the infrastructural background of SeaShip customer service to the foreground of everyday concerns. Stoppage revealed the temporal instabilities and vulnerabilities in the otherwise embedded, invisible infrastructures of these time-based work practices.

Reverberations in the SeaShip Customer Service Department

The SeaShip customer service department is responsible for three general types of work practice: (1) tracking container and vessel whereabouts; (2) authorizing entries, exits and returns of containers via the terminal; and (3) invoicing handling, demurrage and storage fees. In tracking containers and vessels, a client provides by phone or email the number of their container, bill of lading, or vessel voyage. The customer service staff search for this number in one of two places: online in the company's website tracker or the company's database. In either case, the information given is the *estimated* day and time of a vessel's arrival. This estimated information in turn relies on the presumption that the vessel will in fact arrive at the terminal and

be loaded and unloaded by the terminal's labor force. While these estimates always allow for the possibility of delay, even delay has its presumed limits within a particular, window of time. The practices of invoicing container fees and authorizing their movements are also based on presumption that the terminal will be a place of flow rather than stoppage. As a result, when the stoppage started, the employees and managers of the SeaShip agency could not imagine at first that the closure would last more than a day or two.

Once the stoppage began, estimations of time became inestimable. The reverberations of the stoppage began to draw vessels, and their cargo, farther and farther away from Tangier Med. This was reflected in the schedules of vessels calling at the terminal that are circulated within the agency. The first of these is a daily schedule with information about those SeaShip vessels scheduled to arrive at the Eurogate terminal. The second schedule is circulated weekly, and describes the times and dates for all stops on each SeaShip line that calls at "MAPTM," the international shipping code for the Tangier Med Port. When the stoppage commenced, the schedules started to shift from giving date and time estimates for vessels berthing at the Eurogate terminal to more ambiguous and irregular temporal information. One vessel scheduled to call at MAPTM was "At berth waiting to resume cargo ops: TBC," meaning that container loading and discharging was in process when the stoppage began, and the ship was still at berth with the hope, to be confirmed ("TBC"), that these operations would resume. Another vessel on the schedule was described as having, "Left Tangier without completion of cargo operations due to industrial action." Unlike the first vessel, still waiting, this vessel could not wait and continued on to its next port of call without finishing discharging and loading all the MAPTM containers. Other vessels contained the note that their "ETB," estimated time of berthing, remained to be confirmed. One such vessel went on to the Spanish port of Malaga, otherwise scheduled to

follow its call at MAPTM, accompanied by the note: “will call Malaga 1st then confirm if Tangier call will be maintained or not.”

The decisions to wait to berth or proceed to the next ports on the vessels schedules were made based on the size of the vessel and how many containers were scheduled to load or discharge at MAPTM. Over time, vessels began to be rerouted in advance on a temporary basis away from MAPTM and its troubled Eurogate terminal. Notes on the vessel schedules changed from describing partially completed cargo operations to vessels being canceled or having containers sent to other ports. Eventually “MAPTM” was omitted from vessel schedules as SeaShip agencies around the world were instructed to stop accepting Tangier Med as a destination. In an advisory sent from SeaShip’s headquarters to its local agencies around the world on October 19th, 2011, the global reverberations of the local stoppage were made clear. The advisory told SeaShip local staff around the world that, “At this stage even though the situation is monitored on a daily basis - there is no clear sign of any resumption of work. In this respect all worldwide bookings destined to Tangier (local cargo) or originated from Tangier will be suspended— until further notice” (SeaShip 10/19/2011). Through this advisory, the port’s liner connectivity, as described in chapter four of this dissertation, was officially disconnected. This period of stoppage lasted in one way or another for nearly two and a half months (El Karmouni 2012: 26).

The stoppage reverberated in the agency’s practices of authorizing entries, exits and returns of containers via the terminal. Normally, clients pay handling fees by sending an authorized agent to the SeaShip front desk. When payment is received, SeaShip employees generate a series of electronic and paper authorizations. These include the delivery order (Fr. *Bon à livrer*) described in the *Dictionary of International Trade* as “an order from a steamship

company to the terminal superintendent for the release of goods to a consignee following payment of freight charges” (Hinkelman 2008: 53). After the delivery order is printed, it is certified as paid through two forms of stamps. The first are official, paper stamps printed by the Moroccan government that certify the amount. These stamps are affixed to the delivery order followed by the second stamp, the official SeaShip ink stamp to certify that SeaShip has accepted the payment. Then another type of notifications are generated and sent by email to the terminal office workers at Eurogate. These emails contain three kinds of documents: A check out slip (Fr. *Bon de sortie*) for an imported container exiting the terminal that also certifies the payment of storage fees if applicable; A check in slip (Fr. *Bon d’entrée*) for an exported container entering the terminal; or a return slip (Fr. *Bon de restitution*) for a container that has been emptied at its local destination of import and is now being returned to the terminal. These emails are also printed out and certified by SeaShip ink stamp for the transporter or forwarder to show at the terminal.

During the stoppage, the terminal no longer operated with the temporal predictability of regular shifts. At first, the stoppage was complete and container movement was at a standstill. When clients would ask about the terminal, they were told in Moroccan Arabic that it was “still shut” (Mor. Ar. *baqi ħabis*). This situation became more complicated once the Eurogate management brought in a couple of foreign, temporary dockworkers from a Eurogate terminal in Italy, in order to release import containers previously discharged from vessels and currently stuck in the container yard. On the one hand, this decision led to a deepening of conflict with the union. This was reflected in an email the SeaShip operations manager sent around the agency the day after the Italian dockworkers arrived with two words in Moroccan Arabic, in red font, warning that, “The escalation is escalating (Mor. Ar. *an-nayḍa nouḍa*, “the rising rises”). In the

SeaShip customer service department, the appearance of the foreign workers added an increasing dimension of irregularity and ambiguity to gate operations. The operations manager, who daily traveled to and from the port for updates on the situation, informed the agency that there was only a couple temporary workers brought in by the Eurogate management to do all the work normally assigned to many times their number.

During this period of the stoppage, customer service employees at SeaShip were at times instructed to process and circulate authorizations for container exits without knowing if, when, and for how long the terminal would be open. At other times, the department was informed in the morning not to authorize any container movements, but then to authorize them in the afternoon only for an hour. Such inconsistencies provoked an escalating feeling of uncertainty among employees and clients during the stoppage. This uncertainty reflected the increasing divergence between the unstable infrastructure of the terminal and the work practices of the agency that rely on the stability of this infrastructure. In this divergence, regular agency practice was undermined by both the irregularity of terminal operations and of terminal information.

Reverberations in Demurrage

Not only did the period of terminal stoppage rupture the supply-chains of commodities and their components but also the circulation of the boxes that contains them. The reverberating consequences of the stoppage were rupturing the circulation of containers. During my first week at the agency, I learned how to respond to the requests of freight forwarders acting as agents for containerized cargo. SeaShip clients, mainly export-oriented manufacturers in the Tangier region, hire freight forwarders to do the paper and physical work of container movement between factories and terminals. Before the stoppage, freight forwarders would come to the

SeaShip front desk with jokes and requests. After the stoppage began, they began bringing threats of legal action against the SeaShip agency. They and their clients were impatient with the accumulating demurrage charges containers that were to have arrived from or been dropped off for SeaShip vessels. Now these containers were stuck in various ways, either inside or outside the Eurogate terminal. The ability to explain, mediate and even calculate demurrage charges became more complex as the operations of the terminal became more unpredictable.

The concept of demurrage charges comes from vessel chartering, and was “a creation of the English common law arising from judicial decisions going back more than 200 years” (Schofield 2011). Vessel demurrage is both a kind of delay and charge for that delay, defined in the *Dictionary of International Trade* as “(a) the detention of a freight car or ship by the shipper beyond time permitted (grace period) for loading or unloading, (b) The extra charges a shipper pays for detaining a freight car or ship beyond time permitted for loading or unloading” (Hinkelman 2008: 54). Vessel demurrage is always calculated in relation to “laytime,” the grace period contractually determined between vessel owner and the vessel charterer that hires the vessel and a crew for the delivery of a shipment. While laytime can be extended by several different kinds of exceptions, including strikes (see Schofield 2011), vessel demurrage starts immediately upon the conclusion of laytime and only ceases once loading or unloading is finished and fines paid. This is reflected in the common maritime maxim, “once on demurrage, always on demurrage.”

A different use of demurrage for facilitating circulation is found in Silvio Gesell’s theory of free money (1958[1916]). Gesell argued that there should be no value in the possession of money. Rather, it should exist for exchange alone and be worth no more than other other thing. He explained that, “Only money that goes out of date like a newspaper, rots like potatoes, rusts

like iron, evaporates like ether, is capable of standing the test as an instrument for the exchange of potatoes, newspapers, iron and ether” (Gesell 1958[1916]: 121). In order to make money “good,” as “an efficient instrument of exchange” and nothing more, the hoarding of money must be penalized by demurrage through which it decreases its value in relation to the time it remains out of exchange (Gesell 1958[1916]: 120). Gesell’s “free-money loses one-thousandth of its face value weekly, or about 5% annually, at the expense of the holder,” a process that can only be counteracted by one of two methods: (1) buying currency stamps to affix to the notes or (2) “by passing them on - by purchasing something, by paying debts, by engaging labour, or by depositing the notes in the bank, which must at once find borrowers for the money... In this way the circulation of money is subjected to pressure” (1958[1916]: 123). In considering the impact of Gesell’s theory for complementary currency systems, Blanc describes demurrage as one way in which complementary currency systems “work to the benefit of local populations” through being “opposed to the accumulation, conservation and concentration of wealth” (2010: 304).

Demurrage also has a third meaning of delay and the delay-related costs of goods delivery, as explained by Marx in the second volume of *Capital*:

The demurrage of the commodity-capital as a supply on the market requires buildings, stores, storage places, warehouses, in other words, an expenditure of constant capital; Further more the payment of labor-power for storing the commodities. Finally, the commodities spoil and are exposed to injurious elementary influences. Additional capital is required to protect them, and this capital must be invested in materialized labor as well as in labor power (Marx 1907: 156-157).

Marx describes demurrage as one of the regularly occurring expenses of commodity circulation that emerges in the inevitable delay between production and exchange. It is in this in-between time in the circulation of commodity-capital that commodities are rendered into a supply that accrues costs in time, space and labor. Demurrage refers to the expenses of circulation in such

interstitial times between the production and consumption of goods. This concept of demurrage, like those found in vessel chartering and alternative currency, thus share with container demurrage a similar underlying logic. This logic is that in order for the circulation of things to be ongoing, delays need to cost money. The principle of charging for demurrage as well as storage is to facilitate the speed of container circulation by penalizing clients who allow containers to dwell in the scarce space of the terminal yard, delay in unloading cargo, or do not return their empty containers quickly enough back into circulation. Container demurrage resembles in these ways other forms of demurrage that aim to facilitate the circulation of things through charging for the time things spend out of circulation.

At the SeaShip agency, container demurrage (referred to by the French term, *surestaries*) starts to accrue when free days end. Demurrage continues to accrue until the container has been returned empty to the terminal. Thus these are charges based on the entire length of the client's use-time of the container following its discharge and regardless of whether the container is filled with cargo or empty. SeaShip's client contracts, like those of other lines, include a specified free-time, during which containers are available for pick-up and return without demurrage charges. At Tangier Med, SeaShip has a standard number of five calendar days free for demurrage. Clients with large, regular shipments are able to negotiate additional days of free-time as an incentive to keep using SeaShip services.

Even when the operations of the terminal are regular and stable, demurrage charges often are a source of conflict between the shipping agencies and their clients. The Moroccan business publication, *La Vie Éco*, published an article on the client perspective on these conflicts entitled, "Container Demurrage: A Shady Business That Only Profits Shipping Lines" (Darif 2013). This article explains that demurrage charges in Morocco are the most expensive in the Maghreb

region, with an annual total cost of around seven billion dirhams (approximately 835 million US dollars) (Darif 2013). The article quotes a member of the Freight Forwarders Association of Morocco (AFFM) as saying that among Moroccan forwarders, “there is not an agency today which does not have a lawsuit pending against a shipping line because of these charges” (Darif 2013). One veteran forwarder is quoted as arguing that, “The absence in Morocco of a regulating authority able to control or at least to cap these rates, encourages practices which clearly lack transparency” (Darif 2013).

However, from the shipping agency perspective, the high costs of these charges are necessary to encourage the rapid return of containers into circulation. In the same article from *La Vie Éco*, this is explained by stating that, “the raising of container storage costs [discourages] importers from using the port terminals as [temporary] storage sites” while “high demurrage and detention [discourages] another more common practice: that of using containers as a means of storage outside of the port” (Darif 2013). At the SeaShip agency, my co-worker Jallal (pseudonym) explains these charges as the natural result of how time costs money. Using a Moroccan Arabic proverb, he would often tell recalcitrant clients that, “if you add water, you have to add flour” (Mor. Ar. *zid al-ma, zid ad-dqiq*). This proverb refers to how, in making bread dough, flour and water must be added in balanced amounts. If too much flour is added, the dough is dry. If too much water is added, the dough is wet. In Jallal’s use, the water refers to time and the flour refers to money. This means, in the context in which Jallal uses the proverb, that if someone extends their container time, they must correspondingly increase their container payments.

Once the stoppage began, demurrage emerged as an increasing source of conflict and uncertainty. After several days of non-stop demurrage work at the SeaShip agency, my co-

worker Jallal announced that “there is a strike” (Mor. Ar. *kayn idrab*) at the terminal. In my field notes from this day, I registered a phrase: “If strike, the client doesn’t pay storage or demurrage.” This policy was confirmed in an email from the SeaShip agency director, Saad (pseudonym), to agency employees on the second day of what we were still calling a “strike.” The email instructed employees “to not charge demurrage for strike days.” This decision was made in the interest of Saad’s expanding, local clientele. The reason for this decision seemed logical: that if the terminal is shut, containers cannot be moved out or in to the terminal yard. Therefore, these days should not be included in calculating a client’s demurrage charges. The very notion of charging a client for demurrage presumes that had they moved their containers faster these fees would not have accrued. During strike time, the stoppage of work makes the circulating of containers a temporary impossibility. Jallal informed me that, as a “strike,” this situation was also a case of “force majeure,” referred to as “Acts of God” in the United States. He described force majeure as “a big issue applying to all clients that makes the fulfillment of their contractual responsibilities impossible.” In the SeaShip customer service department, the assumption of force majeure became a key way in which we all interpreted the stoppage and its temporal consequences for our clients.

I had first heard the term force majeure in relation to an interview several weeks prior with a logistics manager at a Tangier distribution center. When I contacted him to confirm our appointment, he told me, in French, that we were all set “excepting force majeure.” I learned that, in commercial law, force majeure refers to a clause in contracts, “which usually excuses a party who breaches the contract because that party’s performance is prevented by the occurrence of an event that is beyond the party’s reasonable control” (Hinkelman 2008: 75). Such events include “natural disasters, labor strikes, bankruptcy, or failure of subcontractors to perform”

(2008: 75). In article 268 of the Moroccan law on contracts, force majeure is defined as “every event that man is unable to prevent, such as natural phenomena (floods, drought, storms, fires, pestilence), foreign invasion, act of state, and which makes it impossible to execute an obligation” (Morocco 1913).

It is with the assumption that we were experiencing a case of force majeure, that the first week of the stoppage was spent explaining to concerned clients that they could rest assured that the stoppage would not be included in calculating their demurrage charges. On the fourth day of the stoppage, a client came to the front desk wanting a written and signed guarantee that he would not be charged storage and demurrage fees for the days of port stoppage. He waved at us a copy of the document he was prepared to file with the courts if need be. Jallal explained to me that this client was still concerned he would receive container charges for days the terminal was closed because he did not believe force majeure would protect him. Without the confidence in SeaShip, this client wanted a written guarantee that he would not have to pay.

By the second week, I began to understand this client’s lack of confidence in the applicability of force majeure. The week started with the terminal operating, but irregularly. I could tell from Jallal’s worried face that something had happened, and observed that he was no longer talking about force majeure. There were rising frustrations and vitriol in interactions between clients and SeaShip staff. At one point, there were ten cargo agents jostling at the front desk and demanding to speak to the agency director, Saad, about fees and force majeure. Jallal showed me a new email from Saad, in which there was no mention of the word “strike.” Rather, the terminal action was referred to as a “closure.” The email instructed customer service staff, “do not automatically award free days for the terminal closure.” In this way, Saad informed the department that clients would have to pay for demurrage for those days of “terminal closure” that

just a week before had been referred to as “strike days.” Jallal shows me another carbon-copied email from Saad to the national head office in Casablanca, explaining that clients do not want to pay demurrage and storage because of their losses from contracting trucks for the pick up and return of containers during the closure. Jallal highlights this line with his cursor, and says that this is not true. Jallal clarified the untruth by saying that, “people do not want to pay because we told them that they would not because we were dealing with a case of strike! And therefore force majeure!” Later, we find out that the policy of not including strike days in our demurrage and storage calculations the previous week had been Saad’s decision alone. When SeaShip’s global headquarters in Europe found out, they voided the decision and said clients would have to pay. Their argument was that force majeure did not apply since the industrial action was a closure rather than strike. Saad was allowed to get a few additional days deducted from demurrage only for the agency’s most important clients.

Calculating delay emerged as a constant crisis point in our interactions with clients during the port stoppage. Jallal and I became the face of whatever policy on fees was being upheld at a particular moment, whether such policy had been improvised by SeaShip’s local management or decreed by SeaShip’s European headquarters. Uncertainty over the applicability of force majeure continued during the stoppage. After overhearing a client loudly rejecting having to pay demurrage, an employee from another department said to Jallal and me, “but isn’t it force majeure?” Later, another client came in to the agency upset over the expectation to pay storage and demurrage. Yelling at the customer service department, she shouted that, “It is not logical! It is a strike!” Yet another client claimed that it is discrimination that they are being treated this way by SeaShip. Since strikes are a well-understood condition of force majeure all

over the world, he believed SeaShip was not following the law. Finally, Jallal concluded, “Do you know the theory of chaos? That is what we are in.”

During the first week of the stoppage, Saad had provided the days of exemption from demurrage charges to clients in order to weather the time-costs of the terminal closure. During the second week, the change in demurrage policy revealed the larger reverberations of the stoppage and exposed the customer service department to frustrations and confusions of its clients. When I asked Saad about the change in policy, he told me that, “this is how things work in shipping. We have to deal with things changing.” While during the first week of stoppage, Saad expressed concern over his clients’ losses, he took a different tone by the second week because of pressure from the company’s head office. He told me, “in this business there is a lot of risk, particularly at the beginning, and clients need to accept this or otherwise do something less complex, like be a small farmer.” Saad had shifted from using the legal principle of force majeure to protect his clients from risk to arguing that risk is the cost of doing business.

The work of calculating and invoicing demurrage charges are practices that produce regular conflicts between the shipping agency and its clients. These conflicts only deepen and expand in a period of port stoppage. Once the infrastructure of demurrage, the terminal, ceases to be a place of regular movement, demurrage itself becomes ruptured. Demurrage charges normally encourage circulation by penalizing circulation’s delays. In this way, demurrage work mediates the interstitial times and places of containers in the supply-chain. However, circulation must always be enacted in relation to the infrastructure of the container terminal, its labor and temporality. Such variables become unsettled and irregular during a terminal closure. At the SeaShip agency during the port stoppage, the work of calculating delay was an elusive attempt to suture between ruptures in supply-chains and ruptures in client relationships, between incomplete

information and changing interpretations of responsibility. Despite a rapidly changing infrastructure situation, SeaShip's global headquarters had intervened as if to remind its Tangier agency that container time is money even when blocked at the terminal gates. For clients, however, they felt penalized for a situation out of their control.

In this section, I examined the reverberations of the port stoppage in October and November 2011 from the site of the SeaShip agency. These reverberations brought into question the certainties of supply-chain timing and the temporal assumptions of shipping work practices. SeaShip, like all maritime shipping companies, is no longer merely in the business of selling the transport of things between places. With the rise of logistics, and the importance of just-in-time supply chains, the shipping company must compete to sell the *time* of the transport of things. The reverberations of one port stoppage reveals how the commodity of time is also inherently vulnerable, and connects beyond the port and region into a much larger world of promised but ever vulnerable connectivity of new and massive terminal infrastructures. Even after the agreement on November 17th 2011 to start reopening the Eurogate terminal, the reverberations of the stoppage continued through uncertainties about the future. By the end of November, this uncertainty was still in evidence in the official SeaShip advisory informing its local agencies that the company would reopen its service to Tangier Med. This included the warning to "Be careful at this stage. The situation in this terminal is unstable and can be changed overnight." In the next section of this chapter, I will explore how the temporal and spatialized vulnerabilities of supply-chain circulation are transformed into a new potential source for labor power. Tangier Med dockers affiliated with the UMT (Fr. *Union Marocain du Travail*) and the ITF (International Transport Workers Federation) rework time into a source of power and leverage at the globally networked terminal. In conflicts between labor and management, work delay and stoppage can

take multiple forms. Stoppage is thus a complex temporality of events, which may include both labor strikes and management lockouts. Nonetheless, stoppage is the disruption that most interferes with the central logic of flow in supply-chain capitalism.

IV. Solidarities of Port Stoppage

The month before starting my SeaShip research, I met and interviewed Said El Hairech (real name) in Casablanca. El Hairech is the general secretary of the National Union of Port Workers, affiliated with the UMT (Fr. *Union Marocain du Travail*). This syndicate represents the largest number of workers at the Tangier Med terminals. Founded in 1955, the UMT organized first clandestinely under the French Protectorate before becoming a legal institution after Moroccan independence in 1956. Compared with the other labor unions in Morocco, the UMT has historically been more politically independent and internationally connected. In addition to his Moroccan labor leadership, El Hairech is also a veteran dockworker at the Port of Casablanca and an active player in the Arab World dockworkers section of the London-based, ITF (International Transport Workers Federation). He had informed me that the situation of workers at the port's second terminal was not settled despite previous agreements, and that I should expect more labor actions (personal communication, September 19, 2011). What I did not expect was the lockout that began on October 11th, 2011. On October 15th, El Hairech forwarded me a press release from his office that described this stoppage from labor's perspective:

In the first step of its kind in the ports' sector, the management of the Eurogate terminal at the Tangier Med Port decided to stop operations and prevent workers from entering the terminal as of October 11, 2011 in order to intimidate and threaten workers in reaction to their raising of demands... We, the National Union of Port Workers in Morocco, know that terminal management would not have considered using this archaic measure if it was not aware of the presence of gaps

in oversight on the part of the port authorities, the Tangier Med Special Agency, which failed to solve the problem and force the terminal management to respect Moroccan legislation... We also firmly believe that, through this tactic, the terminal management aims to supplant port and local authorities in terms of the rights guaranteed by Moroccan labor laws and affirmed by international agreements ratified by Morocco (National Union of Port Workers in Morocco 2011).

By describing the port stoppage as “the first step of its kind in the ports’ sector,” the announcement implicitly contextualizes the event within a comparative framework. Indeed, El Hairech passes on to Moroccan dockworkers a global understanding of the port industry gained from his involvement in the ITF. Through leadership roles and trainings in the Americas, Middle East, Europe, and beyond, the ITF has given El Hairech a framework for articulating demands at once universal and particular. In this section, I explore how this global context links to the particular demands of Eurogate workers. Their main demands are for the right to trade union participation, direct contracts, breaks for Friday prayers and religious holidays, as well as sufficient, regular rest between shifts and weeks of work. They demand their dignity as global and Moroccan workers. The announcement frames the terminal operator as using the terminal closure to intimidate the dockworkers into dropping their demands and refusal to be disciplined. As I explore in the second section of this chapter on representations of stoppage, terminal management’s reasoning behind this decision becomes a source of debate in the Moroccan press. As described in the UMT announcement from El Hairech, however, responsibility for the disruption is not seen as purely a result of terminal management. Rather, there is a greater responsibility attributed to the port’s governing structures, which implicitly are seen as not governing. As would be articulated in further arguments by the dockworkers’ union, the Eurogate management’s ability to stop terminal operations evokes a paradox that must be

ameliorated between, on the one hand, the port as a project of national development, and, on the other hand, the port as a business of multinationals exploiting the bodies of the nation.

In this section, I begin with the perspective of El Hairech by describing our meeting in September 2011, before the stoppage began. I describe the ways in which he simultaneously embodies the experience of Casablanca dockworker, national dock union leader, and dock committee member of the ITF. These multiple positions frame his particular perspective on the Tangier Med Port and the problem it poses for dockworkers at its terminals and in Morocco as a whole. In order to explore the international dimensions of El Hairech's perspective and the Eurogate dockworker demands he helps frame, I turn to the ITF and its approach to "organizing globally." I consider how this global agenda is reflected in its approach to logistics, port reform, and dockworker campaigning. Then, I examine one of the key demands of the Eurogate dockworkers for job security. I consider how this demand is articulated in relation to Moroccan and international legal frameworks and the priorities of the ITF's Docker Section. I conclude by reflecting on what the stoppage meant for Moroccan dockworkers.

Said El Hairech: Casablanca Dockworker, Moroccan Union Leader, and Arab World Member of the International Transport Workers Federation

I met Said El Hairech in September 2011 at the Casablanca headquarters of the UMT. Walking there from the train station takes one through the old, French-built downtown of Casablanca near the city's port. The environment contains many material reminders of this area's role as the economic capital of Morocco built up by the French and expanded under Moroccan rule in the post-independence period. This area around the port is filled with all manner of industry and transport shops, parts stores, and insurance agencies with signs in French as well as

Arabic transliterations. The UMT building faces the hulking Peugeot showroom, just down the avenue from the Moroccan stock exchange.

The UMT building is dark, dusty, and cavernous. This is a building that has been around for generations of strikes and agreements from the end of the French protectorate to the present. Inside, I gave my name to the man sitting at reception, explaining that I had a meeting on the fifth floor at the ports syndicate. He went up with me in the elevator, in which the upstairs buttons no longer work, and led me to the office with the sign, in French and Arabic, “National Union of Port Workers in Morocco.” The office was made up of a large conference table with chairs and a desk, where El Hairech sat at the computer assisting two dockworkers still wearing their work vests. At the end of the room, was a portrait of the founder of the syndicate, Mahjoub Bensaddik. Hung to its left, closer to the windows, was a three-dimensional model of a container ship unloading at dock. There was a model of a boat on the windowsill and some prayer rugs on a chair. Visible through the soot-caked windows were the outlines of the Port of Casablanca and the tops of its gantry cranes.

El Hairech and I spoke in Moroccan Arabic. He had been the Secretary General of the National Union of Port Workers at UMT since the late 1990s. Before that, he was a dockworker at one of the container terminals in Casablanca. His primary job was as a driver of RTGs, the rubber tired gantry cranes used to move containers between different stacks in the yard. By 2011, when we met, he had been involved for 21 years in the dock world. Despite this experience, Tangier Med was a new kind of port with new kinds of problems for labor. Through national and regional meetings and seminars, El Hairech has been connecting experienced dock union leaders from Casablanca with the new dockworkers at Tangier Med. The latter at first knew little about their rights or conditions, according to El Hairech (personal communication, September 19,

2011). For instance, the UMT informed them that dockworkers salaries are higher in Casablanca than Tangier. This was true despite the fact that the terminal operators at Tangier Med were much larger companies.

El Hairech's comparison of the dockworker situations in Casablanca versus Tangier reminded me that Casablanca has not only historically been the economic capital of Morocco since the start of the French Protectorate in the early twentieth century. The industrialization of Casablanca and arrival of French unions also led it to becoming the union capital of Morocco. The UMT, founded before independence, drew on experiences of trade unions in France. In addition, the fact that the Port of Casablanca has been a center of trade union power since before independence means that dockworkers there benefit from a long history of organized labor strength. In Tangier and the northern region more generally, on the other hand, labor has been historically less organized and more precarious than in the industrial core of Morocco. At Tangier Med, the port authority and terminal operators sought to benefit from the "newness" of the terminals both in terms of hiring a new, inexperienced labor force and being outside of the established governance structures of ports in Morocco. El Hairech described the implications, particularly of the latter, for labor and job security by way of a diagram. First, he drew three boxes in a hierarchal relationship: on the bottom, a box for the Port of Casablanca; then a box above for the ANP, the National Port Authority; finally at the top, a box for the Ministry of Equipment and Transportation. To the right of these boxes he drew, in ascending order a box for the Tangier Med Port, one for the Tangier Med Special Agency, and in the top box, a question mark. He explained that in the Port of Casablanca, when there are issues between terminal operators and unions, the ANP has done arbitration between the sides. At Tangier Med, on the other hand, the Tangier Med Special Agency does not want to get involved. The ANP has

particular responsibilities imposed under the authority of the Moroccan Ministry of Equipment and Transportation. Then he asked me in Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, “Who holds Tangier Med accountable? Who is Tangier Med under the authority of?” (personal communication, September 19, 2011). El Hairech represents this lack of authority is with a question mark. The stakes for union organizing at Tangier Med thus are not only to assert the demands for working conditions on par with those at Casablanca, but to also point to the gaps in governance and arbitration resulting from creating a port outside of established state relationships.

Before the meeting, I had found a mention of El Hairech on the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) website. I asked him about how the ITF has helped him with organizing at Tangier Med. He explained that, as a member of the ITF Dockers Committee, he has been sent on trainings from dockworkers around the world. When I told him that I had done background research for my dissertation at the Port of Long Beach, CA, he responded by saying that he had recently been to Long Beach as part of an ITF Dockers Committee visit. He also mentioned the usefulness of the Global Network Terminal Campaign’s database. He described how the database lets dockworkers share and compare information about conditions and actions at different terminals. He made the point that terminals are more or less the same in terms of their structures and kinds of work, but what is not necessarily the same are the conditions (personal communication, September 19, 2011). Through access to this information on dockworker conditions around the world, El Hairech does not merely think about the situation of a particular terminal in Morocco. Rather, he considers how these conditions compare or contrast with those of workers at terminals in Europe or elsewhere. Due to his experience in Casablanca, his leadership among dockworkers in Morocco, and his membership in the ITF, El Hairech approaches Tangier Med and its working conditions within multiple contexts. He sees the new

port within its local context of Tangier, its national context in relation to Casablanca, and its global context as a site in the ITF's Global Network Terminal Campaign.

The International Transport Workers Federation: Organizing Globally

As transport workers, we power the world's economy. We must not forget how strong we can be. We must organize across borders. We must link together to realise our strengths. Together, we must work for a world where workers' rights are guaranteed. That's what organising globally means (David Cockroft, ITF General Secretary).

The above quote comes from a short video produced for the 41st congress of the International Transport Workers Federation in Durban, South Africa 2006. The video is used as a learning tool by the ITF dockworker section to convey "the vital role of dockers' unions and how we're working with them across the world" (ITF 2006). The video opens with the argument that in order to combat the labor exploitation caused by economic globalization, "there is an absolute need for workers to organise globally, to campaign globally, and to support each other globally" (ITF 2006). The video subsequently describes how globalization has transformed the transport sector through the rise of logistics, just-in-time, and complex supply-chains. This has particular implications for labor, as the narrator explains over images of cargo and its transport "because companies are nervous that their supply chains might be disrupted, they will do everything they can to undermine union organisation" (ITF 2006). The video includes a series of testimonies from transport workers, including dockworkers, involved in organizing their colleagues in each of the ITF's geographic regions. The ITF General Secretary, David Cockroft, concludes the video by returning to the topic of "organising globally" as the best method for transport labor. This

global outlook is evident in the ITF's agenda for transport sectors generally as well as its particular strategies and campaigns for port workers.

The ITF organizes both within and between sectors and regions of transport workers. They focus on the rising challenges facing transport labor due to deterioration in “working conditions and the rights of transport workers. They identify the sources of these challenges facing transport labor as “globalization, deregulation, and liberalisation” (ITF 2015a). In response, they circulate practices of “campaigning and unionisation.” Through the scope of these practices, like the flows promised by mega-port infrastructures, the ITF aims for global connectivity between ports. Like the port promises, the scale making of the ITF extends around the world. Thus the ITF describes itself as “Representing transport workers worldwide,” providing “an international voice for the men and women working in civil aviation, inland navigation, railways, road transport, urban transport and tourism, as well as seafarers, dockers and fishers all over the world” (ITF 2015a). In providing support for workers in these nine sectors all over the world, the ITF fosters cross-sector and cross-regional connections. Unlike the connectivity of cargo flow, one that prioritizes goods movement, the connectivity of cargo workers prioritizes a labor movement as global as the supply-chains it enables.

The impact of new innovations in logistics on transport work is discussed further in a factsheet produced by the ITF entitled, “Logistics in Supply Chains.” Produced in English, Arabic, German, French, Chinese, and Spanish, the factsheet discusses trends associated with the “the globalisation of supply chains and the logistics revolution” (ITF 2014). The authors identify the key negative and positive implications of this for organized transport labor. These include arguing that, “the increasing length, complexity and time sensitivity of global supply chains makes them more vulnerable to disruption, potentially increasing transport workers’ bargaining

power” (ITF 2014: 2). In the ITF factsheet, the logistics hub and chokepoint are rearticulated as vulnerable places that transport labor can use to its advantage. The authors describe logistics chokepoints as “the point at which a whole supply chain is vulnerable to disruption due to, for example, industrial action... congested logistics facilities that are shared by multiple users are particularly vulnerable” (ITF 2014: 2). Through real or threatened industrial actions at logistics chokepoints and hubs, “the workers at these facilities can cooperate to exercise power over multiple global supply chains” (ITF 2014: 2). Starting by describing how the globalization of supply chains and the logistics revolution have undermined the previous bargaining power of transport labor, the ITF concludes its logistics factsheet by identifying the emergent sites for transport workers to leverage new supply-chain powers.

Ports are important infrastructures for both the globalization of supply chains and the supply-chain powers of labor. As a result of this potential of labor disruptions at increasingly important logistics infrastructures, international institutions like the World Bank have focused on restructuring these nodes through so-called port reforms. In recognition of the threats to unions through these reform packages, the ITF produces, disseminate, and trains workers in an alternative vision of port reform: one in which dockworkers are active participants. As part of this aim, the ITF began in 2004 to produce a port reform toolkit for educating and organizing dockworkers. “Strengthening union response to port reform: An ITF resource pack for port workers’ unions,” the most recent 2015 edition of the toolkit contains twelve factsheets designed to contextualize the different general components of port reform and offer group activities for unions to evaluate and strategize based on their particular situation. In general, the toolkit aims to provide unions with a framework for responding to global port trends and their implications for labor. These trends include the globalization of supply chains and the logistics revolution, but

also the privatization of port facilities and the flexibilization of port labor. In essence, this is a toolkit for facing the rise of the neoliberal port, one in which, increasingly, facilities are privatized and labor is outsourced. In order to not see the demands and actions of dockworkers within the sole context their port, the toolkit helps make sense of how these actors, their union, and the terminal relate to the emergence of the neoliberal port and its features including privatization and deregulation. In addition, the toolkit contributes a labor-oriented reading of the changes in port infrastructure in a clear departure from the management-perspective on these changes as discussed in the previous chapter.

The first three sets of factsheets and associated activities in the toolkit look at topics of globalization, privatization, and flexibilization in contemporary shipping ports. In “Global trends in ports,” the ITF authors write, “*Ports and port workers have always been involved in international trade, handling their country’s maritime imports and exports. What is different today?*” (ITF 2015b: 3). The answers to this question evoke the arguments mentioned above about the implications for transport work of the globalization of supply-chains and the logistics revolution. This has changed the role of ports, the authors argue, to be “increasingly focused on servicing global supply chains rather than domestic services” (ITF 2015b: 3). As in the previous chapter about Tangier Med’s aspirations to become a transshipment hub, these changes and the increasingly massive ships that carry them are pushing more and more ports to become either hubs or feeders for the increasingly complex networks of maritime logistics. Indeed, vessel size is mentioned in this factsheet as “arguably the most significant trend affecting the global container port industry” (ITF 2015b: 3), since it has direct impacts on the kinds of infrastructures and labor ports need. However, it is not the only change with major physical and social impacts for ports. For instance, containerization, as described by the ITF, “has changed the port industry

from a labour intensive one to a capital intensive one” (ITF 2015b: 3). Containerized shipping has decreased the number of dockworkers needed to service ships, changed the skills needed, and led to the creation of new logistics spaces for packing and unpacking (i.e.: stuffing and stripping) activities that were once conducted within port terminals. Finally, “the most controversial issue” in terms of global technological changes is related to automation. The cost required to build and maintain a fully or semi-automated terminal has meant that it has remained restricted only to those places where labor costs are highest, in Europe, North America and Japan (ITF 2015b: 3). The consequence, however, is that terminals in the Global South, labor must compete in terms of its efficiency, flexibility and cost with the more automated terminals located in the high-wage regions of the Global North.

The second factsheet concerns the privatization of ports, asking “Private port: best option?” (ITF 2015b: 5). While “managing port operations is traditionally a government function,” the ITF writes that ports are increasingly relying on private companies to carry out these operations and other services within port spaces with the aim of “making ports more efficient and offering more competitive services... [with] far reaching effect on workers and unions” (ITF 2015b: 5). In ports, privatization has led to the fragmentation of labor, as the various port operations are contracted and subcontracted to different companies (ITF 2015b: 5). Instead of referring to one, singular process, “privatization can take many different forms” (ITF 2015b: 5). The shift towards these models of privatizing port infrastructure, the ITF describes, is a result of pressure on governments from international institutions like the World Bank that say “it is inefficient for the state to run industries. Instead, it should be handed over to the private sector...” (ITF 2015b: 6). This argument has had particular impacts on port infrastructures since “private participation in port infrastructure often involves a dramatic decline in employment”

(ITF 2015b: 6). Indeed, the ITF's critical toolkit about port reform is meant as a response and alternative to the port reform materials produced by the World Bank. The ITF's factsheet on port privatization thus argues that "unions need to analyze in depth the arguments of 'greater efficiency,' 'greater productivity', and 'savings to the state budget.' In dealing strategically with restructuring, it is important to be aware of benefits as well as costs" (ITF 2015b: 6). The ITF calls on unions of dockworkers to determine and disseminate these costs as part of developing their own counter proposals. By way of example of the pros and cons of different privatization models, the factsheet includes three case studies. With this diversity of public-private forms in mind, unions are called on to identify the forms of port reform and privatization in their own country as well as the costs and benefits of these for dock labor.

In the third factsheet, "Labour trends in ports," the ITF further illustrates that port reforms aiming to reduce high labor costs produce high costs for labor (ITF 2015b: 9). Indeed, labor is often one of the central objects of cost-cutting port reforms because "labor costs can represent between 30-70 percent of the cost of operating a terminal, depending on terminal type" (ITF 2015b: 9). Therefore, the ITF urges workers to understand and strategically confront what is behind the port reforms arguments for "efficiency," "productivity" and "savings": the fate of dockworkers' very livelihoods. The ITF authors describe how the main methods of restructuring working conditions promoted by international financial institutions aim to undermine the job security of port workers and unions. For instance, they inform their dockworker audience that "The World Bank's port reform toolkit (2007) advises on how to downsize the workforce while avoiding conflict with unions" (ITF 2015b: 6). As a central part of port reform packages designed under guidance from such institutions, the effort to liberalize port services includes job cuts, lower wages, casualization, flexibilization, less collective bargaining, pensions at risk, and

fewer social benefits. When port reforms are announced, dockworkers are instructed to prepare strategies to confront these tactics on the legal level by using recourse to applicable national, regional, and international labor laws. As an example, a case study is provided of a successful campaign launched by the European Transport Workers Federation through the European Parliament against the European Commission's efforts to liberalize port services.

The Port Reform toolkit reflects "ITF's global role in securing dockers' rights" (2015c). As one of the largest of ITF's transport sectors, the Dockers Section represents 221 affiliated unions and their 350,000 members around the world (2015c). The section's first concern is "to fight for acceptable labour and safety standards" (2015c). This includes supporting members in the fight for dockworkers' union rights, health and safety, and job security. As part of fighting for these rights, the ITF Dockers Section has developed a campaign that focuses on the ameliorating conditions at global network terminals like those found at Tangier Med. The Global Network Terminal Campaign is one of the initiatives that most represents ITF's "organizing globally" agenda. This campaign responds to the rise of "Global Network Terminals," or GNTs, which currently are "operating in more than 50% of the world's ports" (ITF: 2015d). GNTs are container terminals operated by large, multinational terminal operators, namely APM Terminals (APMT), Dubai Ports World (DWP), Hutchinson Port Holdings (HPH), and PSA International, the former Port of Singapore Authority. The ITF saw a need to establish a "global dockers network" in response to the fact that these four terminal operators "now control more than half of the ports and terminals on the planet but trade unions are recognised in less than half of those" (2015d). The ITF's GNT campaign aims "to push GNTs into guaranteeing decent standards at every port and terminal, no matter where it is in the world" (2015d). In so doing, the campaign

attempts to even out the uneven, port geography of trade union recognition and rights between individual GNTs.

The GNT campaign's slogan is "Raising Standards for Dockworkers" (2015d). It aims to do this by setting minimum standard for union rights, health and safety, and job security that can be applied to all ports, starting with the GNTs (2015d). The main platforms of this campaign are a London-based campaign team and a members-only website for dockworkers to share information on their experiences at different GNTs around the world. The GNT campaign team offers assistance for members to campaign in their particular port or terminal. In describing the purpose of the website directly to port workers, the campaign team argues that participation in the website will provide more than just real time information about others ports and terminals: "It will also enable you to compare and contrast conditions and practices, as well as offer support to other groups of dockers, and rally support when you need it" (2012d). These benefits come with the obligations of membership. Network members are instructed to inform the campaign team about the current situation at their port and terminal, to circulate the GNT campaign agenda with their fellow dockworkers, and to "co-ordinate any necessary action at terminal to support the aims of the GNT campaign" (2012d).

Tangier Med is the first of a new generation of Moroccan ports to follow the model of granting concessions to these kinds of GNT operators that require them to build and maintain their own infrastructure in exchange for extensive authority over their terminals. The discourses of the Eurogate dockworker demands reflect the set of standards agreed upon by the GNT campaign. Network members, like El Hairech, mediate between the campaign team, particular port sites in their country, and dockworkers around the world. This global iteration of the dockworker is evoked by the logo for the GNT campaign: a standardized, steel container, in the

ITF colors of green, blue and white, and labeled “GNT.” Through this image, the campaign takes the material that connects dock work in container terminals around the world and transforms it into a symbol of the globally networked dockworker. In the final part of this section, I look at the way these dockworker demands articulate between the global concerns of the ITF Docker Section and the national context, both legal and political, of Moroccan labor.

Eurogate Dockworker Demands: The Right to Job Security

When I met with El Hairech in September 2011, I asked him about how the port’s security concerns impacted dockworkers. He responded that, for him, the issue of security for dockworkers regards the security of their jobs rather than the security of the port more generally. By framing this as an issue of job security rather than one of opposing management retaliation towards organizing, El Hairech echoes the discourse of the UK-based International Transport Workers Federation (ITF). The ITF sees the job security of dockworkers as important “to the safe and efficient running of ports” (ITF 2015e). This is because their work “is heavily reliant on communication” and “this is greatly improved by having a regular, organized workforce who are familiar with each other” (ITF 2015e). For the Eurogate dockworkers, the firings of many of their unionized colleagues at various points in the dispute between management and labor became the basis for one of the central demands about job security. One of the most regular articulations of this demand before, during and after the port stoppage was on a banner with the slogan, “Our struggle continues until the return of all the dismissed workers” (Ar. *niḍalna mustamarr ḥatta ‘awdat jami’ al-maṭrudin*). Written across a background of Tangier Med’s Eurogate terminal in operation, this banner referenced its solidarities through the logos of the UMT, ITF, and Global Network Terminal Campaign’s Morocco chapter (Fr. *GNT Maroc*).

This demand for the return of their fired brothers has been one of their most persistent and most continually rejected by management. Indeed, this was one of the rejected demands described in in the National Union of Port Workers press release that led to Eurogate’s decision to close the terminal (see National Union of Port Workers 2011a). Dockworkers’ demands for job security were based in national and international laws that sought to protect trade union activity and limit subcontracting. For El Hairech and the National Union of Port Workers in Morocco the insecure situation of dockworkers at Tangier Med needed to be brought in line with that of the older ports of Morocco. In the press release, the National Union of Port Workers argued that the stoppage reflected the strong, anti-union policies of the terminal and is therefore an affront to all Moroccan workers and to the future of trade union activity in Morocco:

Since this action was intended to intimidate and humiliate the workers, and pummel and fight against honest trade union work, we declare to the national public our full readiness to defend our dignity, no matter how, because we consider it a question of defending the dignity and pride of all Moroccan workers who see in a situation like this their history of struggle and their rejection of all forms of exploitation and subjugation (National Union of Port Workers 2011a).

The dismissals were described in more depth in in a subsequent, Arabic-language pamphlet produced by the National Union of Port Workers about the Eurogate labor situation. These dismissals included the firing of the members of the union office created by the National Union of Port Workers at the Eurogate terminal in June 2011 as well as many of the worker representatives to the union. These dismissals included both dockworkers with permanent and temporary contracts, the latter included “more than 150 workers of the labor contracting agency, TSP” (National Union of Port Workers 2011b). In a subsequent press release on October 24, 2011, the National Union of Port Workers made a more explicit legal case for demanding the reinstatement of these workers. This document argued for, “Respect for trade union labor, and to that end, annulment of all the retaliatory decisions taken against trade union members and

representatives during the height of the conflict between the two parties” (National Union of Port Workers 2011c). However, Eurogate management’s disinterest in protecting trade union rights made “clearly evident its bad intentions through the intentional targeting of organized labor and disrespecting of workers’ rights and freedoms” (National Union of Port Workers 2011c).

For the union these “rights and freedoms” are not optional for foreign companies operating on Moroccan soil. Rather, as Moroccan citizens, dockworkers are guaranteed these by the Moroccan Labor Code and International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions “related to the freedom of work, trade union activity, and the right to organize and negotiate” (National Union of Port Workers 2011c). In terms of the ILO, the relevant convention is 135, entitled “Workers’ Representatives Convention.” This convention states in its first article that, “Workers’ representatives in the undertaking shall enjoy effective protection against any act prejudicial to them, including dismissal, based on their status or activities as workers’ representative or on union membership in union activities, in so far as they act in conformity with existing laws or collective agreements...” (ILO 1971). Ratified by Morocco in 2002, the dockworkers demand that the convention now be upheld.

In addition to the international legal basis for the dockworkers’ demand for respecting trade union activity, there is also a Moroccan legal basis for this demand. In the October 24 document, this is described as “No discrimination between workers, as put forth in article 09 of the [Moroccan] Labor Code” (National Union of Moroccan Port Workers 2011c). This article specifically references the article in the national labor code protecting workers from any and all discrimination related to participating or not participating in union activities. The first paragraph of the article states that, “It is prohibited to offend in any way the freedoms and rights related to the trade union practices inside of a business, as conforms to applicable laws and regulations, as

well as it is prohibited to offend the right to work with respect to the employer and employees of any business” (Morocco 2004, art. 9). As seen here, the law protects both employers and employees, unionized or non-unionized, from trade union activity-related discrimination. This article in the Moroccan Labor Code goes on to say that it is also prohibited for there to be employee discrimination according to various qualities including trade union affiliation (Morocco 2004, art. 9).

The dockworkers union argues not only for the applicability of these laws to their situation but also for the port authority to be the one responsible for making sure they are enforced (see National Union of Port Workers 2011a). This was further emphasized in an open letter to the port authorities of Tangier Med in November 2011. Written under El Hairech’s leadership, and drawing on his comparative knowledge of the larger port environment in the Arab World, the letter made the case for the port authorities to cease remaining on the sidelines and instead take a larger mediating role in order to resolve the conflict between Eurogate labor and management. The argument in this letter starts by repeating the previously published claims and questions about dockworker rights. Then the letter moves on to focus on the issue of national economic integrity, the port’s role, and the implicit attack of the terminal operator on Morocco’s economy. The dockworker leaders argue that terminal management, by refusing the workers’ demands related to terminal closure and rejecting dialogue with these Moroccans, is making a direct attack on the country, the success of the port, and its workers.

While previous arguments on the part of the union had stressed the degree to which the terminal operator was violating Moroccan laws and regulations, this letter shifts to focus on the how the Eurogate company is threatening the national economy. They write:

Today, we in the National Union of Port Workers in Morocco do not demand only that you intervene in order to enforce the law, but, we call on you, as Moroccan workers concerned with the economy of their country to take into account how this has been tampered with through shutting operations at a project which we consider the project of the century (National Union of Port Workers 2011d).

By holding Morocco's most significant infrastructure hostage, the terminal operator is accused of taking Morocco's economy hostage. El Hairech and the union leadership address the port authorities less as elite managers and more as fellow citizens. Dropping the conventions of Moroccan business hierarchy, they argue that their objective is ultimately the success of the national economy rather than simply regaining their legally guaranteed rights and freedoms. In this argument, the port is situated as the central platform for the present and future of this economy. The readers of this open letter, both the authorities and, implicitly, the greater public, are implored to consider how the national economy has been "tampered with" through the reaction of the terminal operator to workers' lawful demands. Written on November 10th 2011, the terminal closure had by then lasted for nearly a month and its larger economic ramifications could not be ignored despite the lack of official statements on the part of the port authorities or government.

By describing Tangier Med as "the project of the century," the union leadership sought to clearly align itself with the port's success and thus the objectives of the port authorities. They stress that this port is first and foremost a project of national economic development to which the terminal operator's profit motives must be subjugated. It is this demand on the part of the union that cuts to the core of the otherwise unstated paradox of the Tangier Med Port as a national project of global service. On the one hand, the port is time and again promoted to Moroccans as a project for national development. On the other hand, the port is organized and operated to maximize private, foreign profit. This organization includes the use of euros as the main

currency for port transactions, the exclusion of the ports' terminals from Moroccan customs jurisdictions, and prioritizing transshipments rather than local cargo. However, the union urges the Moroccan authorities to side with Moroccan dockworkers, since only the former can intervene to stop the stoppage. They argue that, "This affair does not stop with the number of workers who have demanded justice but also extends to the fate of the port, on which the country's economy has been wagered" (National Union of Port Workers 2015d).

V. Conclusion

Earlier in this chapter, I examined how the port authorities, terminal operators, and shipping managers saw the dockworkers' intransigence as an effort to jeopardize the Tangier Med Port. Through these managerial perspectives, and the coverage that reinforces them in Morocco's business press, the dockworkers appear overly focused on their own benefit and the interests of their particular, local union. They appear anything but global in their sensibility when compared to the port's global cargo flow priorities. However, the actions and demands of the Eurogate dockworkers are not the result of the priorities of one set of workers and their particular Moroccan union. Rather, they are priorities that have been shaped by connections between dockworkers at multiple scales of logistics infrastructure. Eurogate dockworkers, under the leadership of the UMT, have become more and more connected to dockworkers elsewhere in Morocco and around the world. In the near future, I plan to return to Morocco to follow-up with El Hairech and his dockworker colleagues about how labor at the Tangier Med terminal and Moroccan ports more generally has changed in the years since the completion of my research in 2012.

In this section, I describe how Eurogate dockworker demands are situated within global dockworker discourses and solidarities. Through this context, the global network terminals at the Tangier Med Port become new infrastructures of the transnational dockworker movement. Rather than mere platforms for cargo, the terminals are recognizable sites of struggle within the ITF's Global Network Terminal Campaign. While these global connections are absent from most Moroccan media, the Moroccan dockworker and his conditions of labor at the Tangier Med terminals are articulated within global discourses of labor exploitation and circulate digitally on the global network of dockworker solidarity. Solidarity emerges out of the shared exploitation that becomes visible through these digital networks of infrastructural labor. While the inexperienced dockworkers at Tangier Med were expected by their terminal operator and port authorities to only know their own conditions, these dockworkers ended up becoming part of shared networks of experience and campaigning.

When I first visited Tangier Med in 2008, port executive Benjelloun told me that Moroccans will be grateful for the opportunities the project will provide. By 2010, dockworkers had begun to organize, and in the aftermath of the 2011 stoppage, Benjelloun was one of several port actors to be pushed out for their lack of response to the disputes at the terminals. Indeed, Benjelloun would disclose at an event I attended in December 2011 for local business leaders in the Tangier region that, "We are a young port authority... we were taken by surprise." His expectation that Moroccan workers would be grateful but invisible and anonymous is still reflected in the image of dockworkers on the Tangier Med Port's website: photos of nameless men at work cycle between other images of the physical infrastructures of the docks. The port authority promises a port in which dockworkers are largely invisible and anonymous behind the flows of cargo they enable. The International Transport Workers Federation renders visible what

is behind the efficiency claims of new ports like Tangier-Med and their private, foreign-operated terminals: increasingly similar conditions of labor exploitation. In the stoppage produced out of the industrial dispute between these globally networked terminal operators and dockworkers, the visibility of the port's social conditions eclipse its official, material promises.

CONCLUSION

Towards an Anthropology of Logistics

In this dissertation, I examine the social life of logistics at the Tangier Med Port in order to show how infrastructures for global commodity circulation become embedded in regions (chapters 1-2), development aspirations (chapter 3), and worker connectivity (chapter 4-5). Through these projects, I reveal the multiple, planned and unplanned ways commodity movement is made in a specific context. The Tangier Med Port is a significant site for such a study because it was built at both the historic crossroads between Africa and Europe and a major contemporary bottleneck in world trade. Through my analysis of the port's key actors and projects, this dissertation is an initial effort to establish the anthropology of logistics in order to deepen the ethnographic understanding of how circulation, infrastructure and globalization interact in contemporary contexts.

I focus on the formal practices, licit stoppages, and internal tensions of freight circulation within the Tangier Med Port and its region. My reasons for choosing these topics of inquiry include the lack of ethnographies on the formal work of commodity circulation across borders, the politics of maintaining access to a high-profile infrastructure, and the time constraints of fieldwork. My next research project will expand on my interest in everyday logistics by following the transnational circulations of dockworkers, truck drivers, and migrants that I encountered during dissertation fieldwork. These are ideal groups to follow in order to understand how freight logistics is co-constituted with other, informal practices of circulation. In the rest of this conclusion, I expand on the contributions of my dissertation and my plans for future research in the anthropology of logistics.

Contributions of the Dissertation

By studying the discourses and practices of logistics at one key bottleneck in global commodity circulation, I contribute to the anthropological literature on circulation, infrastructure, and globalization. Firstly, I respond to the absence of logistics in the anthropological literature on circulation, which often takes for granted the physical movement between sites of production, consumption and exchange. Secondly, I contribute to the anthropology of infrastructure by conducting an inquiry into the specifics of logistics infrastructure, a type rarely studied by ethnographers and yet increasingly critical for supporting contemporary life. Finally, I build on critiques of placeless flows of capital in the study of globalization to pay attention to the ways in which logistics infrastructures are shaped by intersecting contexts and particular places. I contribute to this critical literature by showing how logistics, a key technology of contemporary capitalism, actually operates.

Dissertation Part I: The Regions of Logistics

In the first part of this dissertation, I describe the regional context of logistics. In chapter one, I analyze the contested urban, national, and global meanings of the port region. Through an analysis sensitive to the past, present and future of these meanings, I show how the perspectives of Tangier inhabitants and port administrators reveal contrasting regional, imaginaries of logistics. In chapter two, I examine the port region through the social worlds of trailers and containers. I show how these objects of physical movement connect the port to a larger region of socio-technical practice. Both chapters use region as a way of analyzing themes of circulation, infrastructure, and globalization in the social life of logistics. Chapter one explores the regional pasts and future of circulation, while chapter two follows circulation's regional present. Through

documenting these multiple ways in which region and circulation are embedded, these chapters show how logistics is part of an infrastructural region. Finally, chapters one and two refuse simple scalar oppositions between local and global by instead describing the multiple articulations of scale by actors in an historic port region and emerging logistics zone.

I examine the regional pasts and futures of circulation in chapter one, entitled, “Locating the Tangier Med Port: Coordinates of Life and Logistics on the Moroccan Mediterranean Coast.” I show how the emergence of the port and logistics zone is embedded in contested understandings of circulation’s regional past and future potential. On the one hand, Tangier natives see circulation as having a valorized past in this region. On the other hand, administrators of the Tangier Med Port view this past negatively because of its basis in illicit and untaxed economies. These administrators instead valorize the future circulation of this region expected from the creation of the port. From these regional pasts and futures, I shift to the present practices of regional circulation in chapter two, entitled, “Trailers, Containers, and the Social Worlds of Port Use in the Tangier Med Hinterlands.” This chapter follows the regional movements of globally standardized trailers and containers. The region of circulation in chapter two results emerges from the movement of things between an emerging port and its wider logistics zone, while the region of circulation in chapter one is bounded by conflicting discourses of inhabitants and administrators.

Dissertation Part II: The Development Aspirations of Logistics

In the second part of the dissertation, I turn my attention from overlapping regions of logistics to the port’s development aspirations for logistics. This part of the dissertation is comprised of chapter three, entitled, “‘Putting Tangier Med on the Map’: Following Aspirations

for Port Responsibility and Logistics Expertise.” In this chapter, I focus on how the port is part of a larger national project of logistical modernity and how this vision excludes many aspects of what actually happens in the port region. I start in the offices of the port authority, where actors use articulations of responsibility and expertise to qualify the port as both a modern infrastructure and a vehicle for modernizing Morocco. Unlike older infrastructures of commodity circulation in Morocco, the port is described as modern because it supports circulation that is responsible and expert. Outside of the port authority offices, I find that “responsible” circulation implies meeting environmental indicators instead of social ones. I observe that “expert” circulation is based in an exclusive understanding of logistics expertise that is inaccessible to most Moroccans. The aspirational discourses at the port authority exclude concerns deemed too “Moroccan” in order to qualify the Tangier Med as a uniquely modern infrastructure for transcending the perceived temporal incongruity between Morocco and the Global North.

This chapter draws together two approaches to studying globalization anthropologically. First, there is the approach of studying the analyses of elite experts in their office. Second, there is the approach of studying elite aspirations in terms of the obstacles they are faced with in particular terrains. Using this combined method for studying the aspirations of the most symbolic project of the current Moroccan regime offers insights into the role of infrastructure in development and globalization in Morocco. The development aspirations of the port and its wider logistics zone are examples of the Moroccan phenomenon that Cohen and Jaidi (2006) refer to by the phrase “globalization as development.” Logistics infrastructure in this chapter is described at once as a symbol of the modern nation, a means of national development, and a platform for global services. Outside of these office-based discourses, the actual terrain of the port region reveals what is ignored or omitted by these aspirations.

Dissertation Part III: The Connectivities of Logistics Work

The last part of my dissertation examines multiple conceptions and practices of connectivity at the port. I do this in chapters that, respectively, analyze the contrasting connectivity of transshipment coordination and organized dock labor. In chapter four, I explore the promised connections of Tangier Med as a transshipment hub. Entitled, “The Practical Connectivity of Global Logistics,” this chapter proposes the concept of practical connectivity to make sense of how these connections are mediated through the everyday work practices of local projects of global logistics. In the fifth chapter, I contrast the shifting visibilities of labor and infrastructure during and after a major work stoppage at the port’s container terminals. Entitled, “Port Stoppage and the Shifting Visibilities of Infrastructure and Labor,” this chapter describes how these terminals became more than platforms for moving cargo once they were reframed by Moroccan dockworkers as platforms for the global labor movement. The connective practices of transshipment coordinators and dockworkers in these chapters reveal the different possibilities of cargo movement for two communities of port workers.

Chapters four and five reveal the multiple meanings of “global” in the social life of logistics. In chapter four, I examine “global” as referring to the “world-world” traffic of transshipment: cargo shipped to an intermediary port in order to be transferred to a vessel heading to other ports of destination. I compare the use of “world-world” in port marketing literature with that of cargo coordinators in the maritime and distribution industries. While the port is marketed in terms of a quantified ranking of port connections, I focus in this chapter on what I termed “practical connectivity”: the actual activities of cargo coordination that mediate the connections between the port and others. These activities reveal how port connectivity is an

ongoing project of mediation rather than an accomplished fact of flow. I continue this attention to connective activities at the port in chapter five. I examine the “Global Network Terminals” (GNTs) at the port: container terminals increasingly found in ports around the world and managed by a small group of multinational terminal operators. I contrast how the “global” of the GNT is evoked by terminal operators, who prioritize efficient cargo movement, with the “global” of organized dockworkers, who prioritize just treatment of cargo handlers. Rather than following commodities as if they flowed or circulated without workers, I study the practical connectivity of mediating these movements and shaping emerging supply-chain subjectivities.

Parameters of the Dissertation and Future Research Plans

In this dissertation, I focused on the formal practices, licit stoppages, and acknowledged tensions of freight circulation within the Tangier Med Port and its logistics zone. These parameters were the result of both my research design and the experience of fieldwork. In terms of research design, my study was shaped by the time constraints of fieldwork and my desire to remedy the dearth of ethnographic literature on the formal work and infrastructure of organizing commodity circulation across borders. In terms of the actual experience of fieldwork, I focused my research in particular ways in order to maintain access to the institutional sites of a high-profile infrastructure project and private companies. My presence as a researcher in these sites required the complex navigation of top-down, institutional access, including formal introductions and the granting of entrance passes. Without selectively setting the scope of my research to topics acceptable to such sites, it would have been difficult to conduct research at them repeatedly over my long period of dissertation fieldwork between 2008 and 2012. In my next research, I plan to move past these institutional barriers in order to follow the transnational

circulations of three groups of port actors into the less formal dimensions of cargo logistics. These groups are migrants, truckers, and dockworkers. While I encountered actors from each group during my dissertation fieldwork, my next research will allow me to return to their circulations in more depth.

In the first part of my dissertation, I mention migrants and truckers in limited ways when describing the overlapping regions of logistics. I note how migrants use the locations and objects of logistics as part of their own forms of cross-border transportation. In chapter one, I describe how the port was built at a location between Africa and Europe that has long been significant for aspiring migrants. In chapter two, I describe how migrants know the difference between national and international trailers. However, I also began to follow in more depth the question of migrant transportation networks and how they overlap with freight transportation. I presented initial observations on this topic for an international freight conference in 2013, where I was the only anthropologist in attendance. I have gathered preliminary data from my affiliation with a local NGO that provides support for aspiring and deported migrant youth and their families in Morocco. This includes an informal interview one young Moroccan man, a veteran of trying to cross from Morocco to Spain, who explained to me the difference between trying to stowaway on ferries at the old Port of Tangier and the new Tangier Med Port.

In chapter two, I describe how truckers start their entry into the port zone by checking their vehicles for human cargo. I use the example of a ride in a Moroccan tractor-trailer to illustrate the routes that connect the port with its wider region of logistics. Indeed, I took several truck rides between the port and regional logistics sites during which Moroccan drivers told me about their experiences trucking transnationally into Europe and further afield as contractors in the Gulf. These drivers also casually described the connections between licit and illicit

movement through the port and into Europe, including how this is done and who has been caught. They told me about the Moroccan and European drivers in the local Tangier prison for charges of attempted smuggling. I plan to return to the intriguing insights offered by these migrants and truckers in my next research that will follow illicit forms of movement beyond the logistics zone of the Moroccan Mediterranean coast.

In the last chapter of my dissertation, I write in-depth about one, significant period of work stoppage at the port's docks. The majority of this chapter is based on secondary sources on the dockworkers and my observations of the stoppage while working at the SeaShip maritime shipping agency. Despite creating a connection to the dockworker community through one of its most prominent leaders, I subsequently felt it necessary to refrain from conducting more interviews and observations because of my relationship with the maritime shipping agency. Aware that I was connected to the dockworker community, the director of this agency repeatedly asked me to use my neutral position as a researcher to gather information for him on the dockworkers. I not only refused but also recognized that it would be in my best interest ethically to put off further, primary research with dockworkers until I was no longer associated with either the port authority or the maritime shipping agency. As a result, the last chapter of my dissertation should be read as a first step in addressing the emergence of global dockworker subjectivity in Morocco.

My future research plans include mapping the space of the port in terms of the wider circulations of these three kinds of ports actors. I also plan to conduct an oral history with dockworkers about the process of organizing the terminals at the Tangier Med Port. This includes studying in more depth how the European dockworkers active in the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) have shaped the emerging supply-chain subjectivities and

global solidarities of Moroccan dockworkers through trainings, social media, and campaigns. In terms of truckers, I plan to continue conducting participant observation by going on rides and conducting interviews. Through archival research, I plan to place this data in context of the longer history of Moroccan trucking abroad into Europe and the Middle East. Finally, I will study migrants by working in collaboration with a local NGO that provides social services for Moroccan migrant youth that intend or have tried to reach Europe. I will conduct individual and group interviews about experiences with freight transportation. Both migrants and truckers who cross into Europe offer a way to study the “corruptions” of logistics space that feature in recent anti-corruption efforts at Tangier Med and other Moroccan ports in response to pressure from the European Union. I will also speak to and observe logistics planners who coordinate transport through the Strait of Gibraltar and other narrow crossings in order to understand how migrants are figured into calculations of the risk of delayed and destroyed shipments at these bottlenecks.

My dissertation focuses on understanding how logistics is emplaced at one Moroccan infrastructure of global commodity circulation. In my next research, I will study the embodied logistics of Moroccans who move, and move with, these commodities. I will follow Moroccan dockworkers moving containers within global networks of organized labor, Moroccan truckers hauling goods via ferries to European roads, and Moroccan migrants pirating these movements by hitching themselves to containers and trailers. My objective is to see what these actors can reveal about the political, physical, and technological frontiers that they must cross in their transnational circulations. I aim to understand how these actors negotiate (1) the different border regimes for migrants and trade, (2) the ever-shifting frontiers of automation, and (3) the physical terrain of narrow crossings between land and sea. I am also interested in how these actors are figured into logistics planning as forms of risk since striking dockworkers, fatigued truckers, and

irregular migrants can all cause costly damages and delays in freight movement. By focusing on the transnational circulations of Moroccan dockworkers, truckers, and migrants between logistics infrastructures in Morocco and Europe, I plan to highlight the intersections of human and cargo logistics in border crossing.

In the first part of the conclusion, I review the contributions of my dissertation on the social life of logistics to the study of circulation, infrastructure and globalization. In the second part of the conclusion, I describe the parameters of this study and how I intend to expand them in my post-dissertation research on embodied logistics. Both my dissertation and subsequent research help to establish logistics as a new and significant object of ethnographic research. I envision the development of the anthropology of logistics as contributing an ethnographic voice to public debates on the future of freight movement. While ethnographers are active in larger conversations on migration, logistics topics continue to be dominated by the non-ethnographic perspective of quantitative researchers and industry representatives. Contributing an anthropological perspective to these debates is timely given that the logistics of freight and the routes of migrants are increasingly overlapping in the border regions of Europe, the Americas, and elsewhere. Our attention to borders and boundaries as anthropologists must therefore go beyond facile assumptions about the difference between how things and people move across borders and boundaries. The anthropology of logistics provides one possible means to challenge and transcend these assumptions.

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