

About the Collection

International Tangier: Early 20th century Morocco and the Western Mediterranean

The images in the collection [International Tangier: Early 20th century Morocco and the Western Mediterranean](#) depict sites in Tangier and throughout the western Mediterranean roughly between the waning years of the 19th century and 1930s. They are scanned from a large collection of approximately 2,000 medium-format glass plate negatives in the collection of the [Tangier American Institute for Moroccan Studies \(TALIM\)](#). They are believed to be photographs by [Paul Servant](#), a longtime resident of Tangier. The negatives were donated to TALIM by art collector, philanthropist, and sometimes resident of Tangier, Donald Angus (1908-2001). He had acquired them sometime in the 1970s in a local market.



Though some of his photographs did appear in print during his lifetime, [Servant](#) is not believed to have been a professional photographer.

The images in the collection provide important and rare visual documentation of life in the western Mediterranean during the early 20th century, a period when nearly every aspect of society was in flux. The city of [Tangier](#) is particularly well documented. In addition to portraits and photographs documenting the daily life of the city's inhabitants, the images in this collection also capture key moments in the city's urban growth such as the construction of the port, railway, and some of its landmark buildings. Other photographs were taken in locations throughout Morocco. Still others were taken during travels in Algeria, France, and Spain.

Images such as these are invaluable to researchers interested in the region's history, yet only a handful have ever been published or exhibited. This collection is made available in order to facilitate access to the entire collection for researchers, while also making a major step towards the preservation of the original negatives. Glass plate negatives are fragile and prone to deterioration. They must be handled as infrequently as possible and with great care when that happens. Best practices protocols mandate the creation of surrogate images, and cold storage of the originals. In order to meet the demands of both preservation and access, the [Aga Khan Documentation Center at](#)

MIT (AKDC@MIT) is working with TALIM, the Program in Middle Eastern Studies and the Career Education Office at Wellesley College to digitize and catalog the negatives for consultation on Archnet. Currently all the negatives are publicly available, cataloged according to the information provided. We are now working to expand and, in some cases, correct or revise available information.

It should be noted that this collection builds on the progress of previous endeavors. While no documentation of the dates, subjects, or locations of the photographs came with the negatives, in the mid-1970s a group of self-described Tangier "old-timers" compiled a set of hand-written notes attempting to identify the images taken in and around Tangier. While helpful, they describe only a small portion of the negatives, and can be quite difficult to decipher.

For decades the negatives were stored in wooden boxes at the Legation, during which time many were badly damaged by environmental factors. In the summers of 1989, 1990, 2004, and 2005, Beatrice St. Laurent, Professor of Islamic Art at Bridgewater State University, cleaned, properly repackaged, and made preliminary identifications of the negatives. She also began the process of digitizing the images. Her efforts were supported by grants from Bridgewater State University, the American Institute for Maghrib Studies, and Wellesley College. Susan G. Miller, Professor of History at the University of California, Davis, also provided preliminary identifications for the entire collection.

In the summer of 2014 AKDC @ MIT launched an ongoing collaboration with the [Program in Middle Eastern Studies](#) and the [Career Education Office](#) of Wellesley College to continue the digitization of the negatives. Over the course of three summers between 2014-2016, dedicated interns Talin Ghazarian, Aathira Chennat, Tessa Kellner, Jülide Iye, and Amina Ziad completed the digitization of the negatives, and began cataloging them for Archnet. The first images from the collection were made available on Archnet in November 2014. Images were made available in installments. By the end of summer 2016, all images were available on Archnet, catalogued according to the information available at the time.

Negatives scanned between 1998 and 2005 are represented by images that have been restored and tinted in Photoshop. Negatives scanned since 2014 were cleaned to the extent possible, but are presented here representing the actual condition of the negative. No cropping or other alteration has taken place. From October 24 to December 15, 2016, an exhibition sponsored by the Aga Khan Documentation Center at MIT, the Program in Middle Eastern Studies, and Career Education at Wellesley College will present a digitally restored selection of images scanned since 2014, juxtaposed against more recent images of the same sites. A virtual version of the exhibition will be included on Archnet.

Currently the organization of the virtual collection reflects the organization of the actual slide collection as it is stored. Images are presented in sub-collections corresponding to the numbered boxes containing the slides. Slides are then numbered consecutively inside each box, corresponding to the numbers on each slide. Some boxes are devoted exclusively or predominantly to a theme or location. Where this is the case, it has been indicated in the list below. The contents of other boxes are much more varied. In those cases, it is also indicated.

Archnet Content Manager Michael A. Toler is currently conducting a detailed review of the metadata on all images, synthesizing all available information and conducting further research. The organization of the collection is likely to change once that is complete. Classifying the collection by theme, date, location, or subject is likely to facilitate its use more than the organization by box number. User feedback is very helpful in this process. *(I am particularly grateful to Manuel Laborda for his systematic review of the image cataloging.)* We welcome your comments corrections, and clarifications on the metadata provided, as well as suggestions for how the collection might be best organized to facilitate its use.

October 10, 2016

--[Michael A Toler](#), Ph.D., Archnet Content Manager

Contents of the collection by box number:

- [Ruedi Images Box 1](#)- 118 images of Tangier and environs
- [Ruedi Images Box 2](#)- 74 images of Tangier and environs
- [Ruedi Images Box 3](#)- 85 images mostly of Tangier and environs, isolated photographs of Algeria and Europe
- [Ruedi Images Box 4](#)- 88 images of Fès, Essaouira, Rabat, Salé, Marrakech, and other places in Morocco
- [Ruedi Images Box 5](#)- 84 images, many of Tangier and environs, including numerous photographs taken during an auto rally. Additional photographs of Oujda, Fés, Tlemcen, and a few locations yet to be identified
- [Ruedi Images Box 6](#)- 82 images of landscapes and military activity, including three portraits believed to be the photographer in uniform. Most locations undetermined
- [Ruedi Images Box 7](#)- 73 photographs in the environs of Tangier, including Cap Spartel and the Old Mountain
- [Ruedi Images Box 8](#)- 116 images. Approximately two dozen images of planes, airplane hangers, and aerial views. Over a dozen images of train stations and railways under construction (including the Asilah Station), and the first trains to arrive in Tangier. Additional images of churches, Villa Harris, the Great Mosque, and the Marshan water tower under construction

- Ruedi Images Box 9**- 70 images of locations in and around Tangier, including some photographs of athletic events, buildings under construction, and photographs taken on ships. Some unidentified locations
- Ruedi Images Box 10**- 132 images of Tangier and environs, including photographs of sites in Algeria, Europe, and other locations not yet identified. Also includes portraits, landscapes, and photographs of tourism posters
- Ruedi Images Box 11** - 126 images mostly of Tangier and environs, including aerial views, photographs of ships, and social/sporting events. This box also includes a handful of photographs taken in other locations in Morocco and Algeria, as well as some unidentified locations
- Ruedi Images Box 12** - 107 images including portraits and photographs taken in Algeria, France, and onboard ships. Many undetermined locations.
- Ruedi Images Box 13** - 132 images, mostly of the port beach, and waterfront. Some images on or around Boulevard Pasteur and other locations in Tangier.
- Ruedi Images Box 14** - 86 images of ships, the waterfront, and port
- Ruedi Images Box 15**- 103 images of Chefchaouen, Gibraltar, Tetouan, Spain and undetermined locations
- Ruedi Images Box 16**- 83 images of various sites in Algeria, Morocco, and other undetermined locations. Many damaged images.
- Ruedi Images Box 17**- 91 images of various sites in Algeria, Morocco, Spain, etc. Many images of construction in Tangier
- Ruedi Images Box 18**- 131 images of various sites, mostly in France and the Alps. Many undetermined locations
- Ruedi Images Box 19**- 121 images, most of ships at sea.