

**Approaches to the Study of the Middle East and the
Mediterranean**

A Symposium in Honor of Paul Vieille



March 14, 2014

Levis Faculty Center

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

10:00-10:10 Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Hadi Salehi Esfahani

Department of Economics, UIUC

Valerie Hoffman

Director, CSAMES, and Department of Religion, UIUC

**10:10-10:45 Stages in Paul Vieille's Life and Career with an Emphasis
on the University of Illinois**

Evelyne Accad

Department of French, UIUC

10:45-11:00 Paul, the Elephant, and Illinois

Beth Renee Stafford

Independent Libraries Professional

11:00-11:40 *Peuples Méditerranéens* à la Paul Vieille

Emanuel Rota

Department of Spanish, Italian, & Portuguese, UIUC

**11:40-12:20 Languages in Contact and Clash: The Sociolinguistic Legacy
of *Peuples Méditerranéens***

Zsuzsanna Fagyal-Le Mentec
Departments of French and Linguistics, UIUC

12:20-13:40 Lunch

13:40-14:20 Areas and Ideas

Asef Bayat
Department of Sociology, UIUC

**14:20-15:00 Paul Vielle's Influence of the Study of Rural Sociology in
Iran**

Eric Hooglund
*Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, Lund University, and Editor, Middle
East Critique*

15:00-15:20 Break

**15:20-16:00 When Life Will No Longer Barter Itself: Foucault and the
Iranian Revolution**

Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi
*Departments of History and Sociology, University of Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign*

16:00-16:40 The Plotted Adventure: A Senegalese Migrant in Istanbul

Mahir Şaul
Department of Anthropology, UIUC

16:40-17:00 Closing Remarks

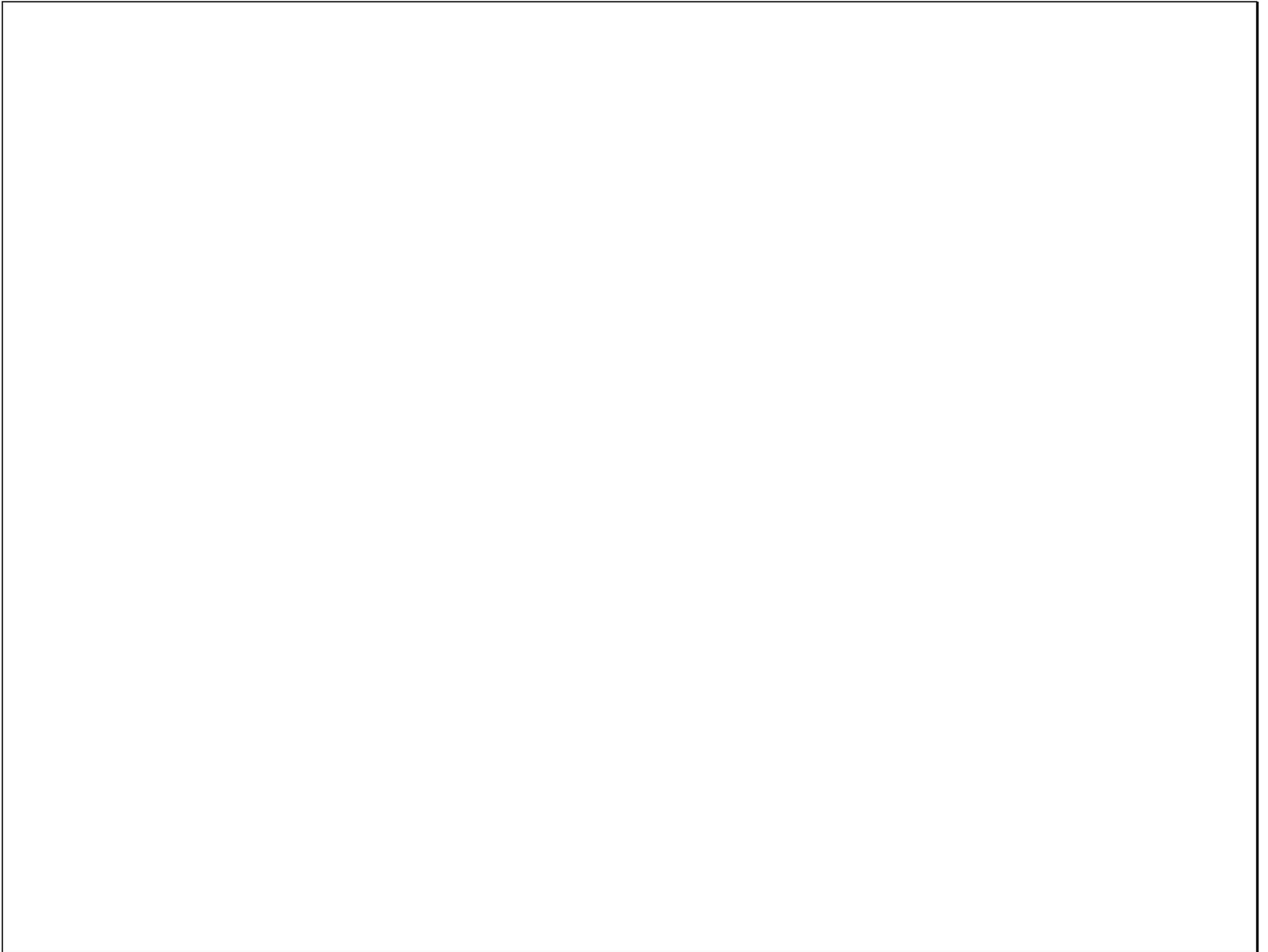
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Paul, the Elephant, and Illinois

Beth Renee Stafford

Independent Libraries Professional

Google Print Library/Google Book Search starts in 2004, using collections of U. of Michigan, Harvard, and two more libraries. Librarians at U. of Michigan Library question what would happen if Google loses interest or goes away and in 2007 propose that a consortium of research libraries undertake to pool their resources to address the possibility.

Librarian/computer geeks at UIUC and Indiana U. brainstorm about characteristics essential for any database large and robust enough to accommodate online resources of a consortium of research libraries. Thinking in terms of which animal such a database might resemble, they decide on the elephant. In 2008 the Consortium of Institutional Cooperation (CIC) establishes the Hathi Trust.

The complete run of *Peuples Méditerranéens* is already available in the Hathi Trust, and eventually all of Paul's work will be. We also plan to preserve all of Paul's works (published and unpublished) in the University Archives here in Urbana, since he was on the UIUC faculty.

Abstracts

Stages in Paul Vieille's Life and Career with an Emphasis on the University of Illinois

Evelyne Accad

Department of French, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

One can locate at least four stages in the life and intellectual reflection of Paul Vieille, all punctuated by ruptures/transformation with always a central reflection on culture in the anthropological meaning of the word, and a belief in the capacity of the popular, rural and urban classes to initiate new ways, in France, in Iran, around the Mediterranean basin. This is the conducting thread of his thought closely linked to his sense of justice but also to the role of intellectuals from various perspectives.

Areas and Ideas

Asef Bayat

Department of Sociology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Currently in the academia, there is such an unfortunate divide between the area studies and social science disciplines that make us forget that what is known as the "universal" social sciences have in fact a regional (European) origin. Europe was the place where the great thinkers of the 19th Century such as Adam Smith Durkheim, Weber, or Marx contributed knowledge to what is known today as economics, politics, and sociology. I will argue that in order to bring the social sciences back to their proper status, we need to revive that original tradition of marrying areas and ideas, history, and theory. Without falling into the trap of particularism, our aim should be to bring the social sciences into intimate conversation with area studies, to contextualize and historicize knowledge, in order to enrich social theory. To illustrate the point, I deploy my own limited experience of working within both Sociology and Middle Eastern Studies.

Languages in Contact and Clash: The Sociolinguistic Legacy of *Peuples Méditerranéens*

Zsuzsanna Fagyal-Le Mentec

Departments of French and Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The languages of the Mediterranean provided a constant source of fascination in Paul Vieille's editorial work for *Peuples Méditerranéens*. Papers in several volumes dealt with languages of the north and south-western Mediterranean as both living repositories of cultural

traditions and vehicles for new ideologies. In this paper, I discuss a small sample of an impressive collection of insights into language and gender, language and minority language identities, and language and immigration published in *Peuples Méditerranéens* over the course of several decades. I will show that these writings, often assembled in multi-disciplinary thematic volumes, foreshadow current interests in sociolinguistics in the social dynamics of language contact and globalization.

When Life Will No Longer Barter Itself: Foucault and the Iranian Revolution

Behrooz Ghamari

Departments of History and Sociology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Michel Foucault wrote a series of journalistic essays on the Iranian Revolution. At the time of their publications in 1978-79, these essays generated heated discussions in intellectual circles in France. Many argued that Foucault was merely captivated by the allure of the revolutionary movement and was fascinated with its highly ritualistic rhythm. Later it became clear that before his departure to Iran, Foucault intensively studied Iranian and Islamic history during the course of which he had a series of conversations with and had read the work of Paul Vieille, one of France's leading historians and sociologists of Iran. In this paper, I will discuss Foucault's unconventional reading of the Iranian revolution and will, through some anecdotal evidence, show that Vieille echoed Foucault in rejecting the perception that called the events in Iran an anti-modern revolution.

Paul Vieille's Influence of the Study of Rural Sociology in Iran

Eric Hooglund

Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, Lund University, and Editor, Middle East Critique

The paper for this presentation assesses the impact of the research in Iran by French sociologist Paul Vieille on the development of rural sociology as an academic discipline in Iran. I first review Vieille's general research in Iran during the 1960s, examining his theoretical outlook and methodology. Second, I explore his collaboration with the Institute of Social Research (ISR), established in 1955 as a faculty of the University of Tehran but actually located in the old Tehran Teacher's College near Baharestan Square. Third, I discuss his intellectual influence on the evolution of sociology in Iran generally, and specifically on Ehsan Naraghi and Nader Afshar-Naderi, two scholars who were instrumental in developing a rural studies division for

ISR. These scholars trained a generation of Iranian researchers to carry out fieldwork in Iranian villages and among the pastoral tribes, which still comprised a moderately large minority of the rural population during the 1960s. Fourth, I assess how the disciples of Paul Vieille influenced my own approach to studying rural Iran when I collaborated with ISR scholars during the early 1970s. I conclude the presentation with a reflection on the enduring legacy of Paul Vieille's research for Iranian rural sociology.

***Peuples Méditerranéens* à la Paul Vieille**

Emanuel Rota

Department of Spanish, Italian, & Portuguese, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Paul Vieille's analysis of the role of peripheral states in the age of economic austerity provides a direct invitation to continue his work today, when the model center/periphery seems in crisis, but austerity is more than ever the keyword of our time. By inviting scholars to think about economic and social conflicts on the international arena, Vieille embraced the Mediterranean as a crucial area to imagine the history of the future of the peripheral states. My paper reconstructs Vieille's analysis of the role of austerity in shaping the future of the Mediterranean peoples and shows its relevance to understand the current economic and political positions of both the Southern and Northern shores of the Mediterranean.

The Plotted Adventure: A Senegalese Migrant in Istanbul

Mahir Şaul

Department of Anthropology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Migration from sub-Saharan African countries to Turkey is both a development furthering the global transformation of our times and a symptom of its happening. Often iconized in Europe in the ambiguous paths of photographs taken from the Lampedusa Island Emergency, or drowned out by archetypal accounts of danger and asylum, for Istanbul where sub-Saharan migration is concentrated this recent migration evokes different feelings. It is also a reconnection with historical trans-Mediterranean human and cultural flows that had ceased at the turn of the 20th century. The personal side of the migration reveals forethought and planning as well as bravery and fortitude. The presentation will focus, after a brief introduction on the general parameters of this migration, on one Senegalese man who works as a solo commercial guide in Istanbul, laying out elements of his biography, his daily life in migration, and his hopes and aspirations.