

ARME

African Review of Migration and Environment

Revue Africaine de Migration et Environnement

Vol. 7, No 1, June 2023

Vol. 7, No 1, Juin 2023

Varia

African Review of Migration and Environment / Revue Africaine de Migration et Environnement / Vol 7, No 1 / June/ Juin, 2023



African Review of Migration and Environment

Revue Africaine de Migration et Environnement

Vol. 7, No 1, June 2023

Vol. 7, No 1, Juin 2023

Varia



p-ISSN : 2664-1232
e-ISSN : 2791-2698



© UPGC/ ARME, *African Review of Migration and Environment-Revue Africaine de Migration et Environnement*

Vol 7, No 1, June/Juin 2023

p-ISSN: 2664-1232

e-ISSN: 2791-2698

Dépôt légal : Archive Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire, 2eme Trimestre 2023

Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, June/Juin. 2023

This journal is a bilingual and bi-annual joint publication of researchers from Peleforo Gon Coulibaly University of Korhogo (Côte d'Ivoire) and Obafemi Awolowo University of Ilé-Ifé (Nigeria).

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/ DIRECTEUR DE PUBLICATION

Prof. Guehi Jonas IBO [Full Professor], Nangui Abrogoua University of Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), ibojonas@yahoo.fr

DEPUTY EDITORS/ EDITEURS ASSOCIÉS

Dr (MC). Kabran Aristide DJANE, Peleforo Gon Coulibaly University of Korhogo (Côte d'Ivoire), djanekabran@gmail.com

Dr. (MC) Adebusuyi Isaac ADENIRAN Obafemi Awolowo University of Ile-Ife (Nigeria), othniel.adebusuyi@gmail.com

ASSISTANT EDITORS/ ASSISTANTS ÉDITEURS

Dr. Kouadio Alexis LALLY, Peleforo Gon Coulibaly University of Korhogo (Côte d'Ivoire), lally_kouadio@yahoo.fr

Dr. Fabrice Constant KOUASSI, Université de Québec à Outaouais (UQO) (Canada), asskuassy@gmail.com

EDITORIAL BOARD/ COMITE SCIENTIFIQUE

Prof. Essane Séraphin, Université Félix Houphouët Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire
Prof. Gnabro Ouakoubo Gaston, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire
Prof. Noah Yusuf University of Ilorin, Nigeria
Prof. Lane Olutayo, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Prof. Da Dapola Evariste Constant, Université Ouaga 1 Joseph Ki Zerbo, Burkina Faso
Prof. Pierre Ozer, Université de Liège, Belgique
Prof. Pauline Côté, Université de Québec à Rimouski, Canada
Prof. Rich Ling, Nanyang Technology University, Singapore
Prof. Sall Mohammadou, Université Cheick Anta Diop, Sénégal
Prof. Jean Bernard Ouédraogo, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, France
Prof. Kone Issiaka, Université Alassane Ouattara, Côte d'Ivoire
Prof. Kone Inza, Université Félix Houphouët Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire
Prof. Kouassi Kouakou Siméon, Université Felix Houphouët Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire

EDITORIAL BOARD/ COMITE DE LECTURE

Dr. (MC) Sujoy Dutta, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India
Dr. (MC) Dime Mamadou dit Ndongo, Université Gaston Berger, Sénégal
Dr. (MC) Affo Fabien, Université de Parakou, Benin
Dr. (MC) Akiyo Offin Lié Rufin, Université de Parakou, Benin
Dr. (MR) Guehi Zagocky Euloge Dalloz, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire
Dr. (MC) Zadou Didié Armand, Université Jean Lourougnon Guédé, Côte d'Ivoire
Dr. (MC) Ehouma Koffi Ludovic, Université Felix Houphouët Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire
Dr. (MC) Amalaman Djedou Martin, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire
Dr. (MC) Konan Kouamé Hyacinthe, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire
Dr. (MC) Koffi Yebouet Stephane Koissy, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly
Dr. François Gemenne, Université de Liège, Belgique
Dr. Akoue Yao Claude, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire
Dr. Kesse Blé Adolphe, Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire

Les lecteurs (referees) sont des scientifiques choisis de par le monde selon les champs thématiques des articles.

Readers (referees) are selected scientists around the world according to the thematic fields of the articles.

Toute correspondance est adressée au :
Comité de Rédaction de la revue ARME, Département de Sociologie,
Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly de Korhogo BP 1328 Korhogo, République
de Côte d'Ivoire,

Email : arme8rame@gmail.com

Toute reproduction sous quelle forme que ce soit est interdite et de ce fait
passible des peines prévues par la Loi n° 2016-555 du 26 juillet 2016 relative au
droit d'auteur et aux droits voisins relative à la production du droit d'auteur
en République de Côte d'Ivoire

All correspondence is addressed to:
Editorial Board of ARME, Department of Sociology, Peleforo Gon
Coulibaly University of Korhogo, BP 1328 Korhogo, Republic of Côte
d'Ivoire,

Email: arme8rame@gmail.com

Any reproduction in any form whatsoever is prohibited and therefore
punishable by Law No. 2016-555 of July 26th 2016 on copyright and
neighboring rights relating to the production of copyright in Republic of Côte
d'Ivoire

SOMMAIRE / CONTENT

Pékaoh KOUASSI

Exploitation artisanale de l'or et itinéraire d'une économie souterraine : étude de cas à partir d'un site orpaillé de Sarakadji dans le Département de Soubré (Sud-Ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire) 3

SILUE Gnininchonfani Anselme, ADONGON Pascal Boris N'drin, MOUSSA Diakité & KOUASSI Yao Dieudonné

Contribution des paramètres climatiques à la production et la tarification de la tomate (*Solanum lycopersicum*), de l'aubergine (*Solanum aethiopicum* L.) et du piment (*Capsicum annum*) dans la région du Hambol 15

Boubacar Ba, Babacar Dramé, Coly Mballo

Les ressources territoriales horticoles : levier de développement rural à Kafountine (Ziguinchor, Sénégal) 40

Kokou Amenouvé AMEDEKA; Dangnisso BAWA, Laldja KANKPENANDJA & Tak Youssif GNONGBO

Etude des risques hydrodynamiques dans les quartiers périphériques de la ville de Lomé : cas de l'érosion et d'inondation dans le quartier d'attiégou au nord-est de Lomé (Togo) 66

YEO Mamadou

Côte d'Ivoire. L'expérimentation de la culture du soja dans la zone de Dikodougou/région de Korhogo (1978-1988) 91

GOKRA Dja André & YAO Kouakou Guillaume

Relations publiques, Médias sociaux et pacification de l'espace politique en contexte électoral en Côte d'Ivoire 111

KANGA Kouakou Hermann M, TRA BI Zamblé Armand & CISSE Kané Vassouleymane

« La télédétection, témoin de la sécheresse forestière dans la région de Tonkpi »
128

N'Cho Brou Hyacinthe, Diabaté Songui & Yapo Lucas Delmas

Problématique de l'exode rural de la jeunesse ivoirienne diplômée vers Abidjan et emplois modernes : Analyse Sociologique et Regards croisés sur un fait de société.
153

Angela Ephrem OSSORO

La femme altaïque et le travail dans le récit de voyageurs occidentaux au XIIIe siècle174

ATSE Achi Amédée-Pierre & YAO Kouadio Alfred

Restauration a domicile et restauration hors foyer : quel choix preferentiel de consommation alimentaire chez les populations de korgho (cote d'ivoire) en contexte d'urbanisation ?188

Yawouvi MANANI & Kokou APEGNON

Migrations et crises identitaires au Togo : Cas de Wahala (1902-1990).....211

Opeyemi Oyewunmi Ekundayo & Monica Fedeli

Sexual harassment attitude among selected Psychology undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria: Does educational intervention make a difference?231

TAPE Sophie Pulchérie

Facteurs environnementaux et problemes sanitaires a ayame (sud-est de la cote d'ivoire).....250

FAYE Valy

Les libano-syriens de kaolack : du colporteur à l'homme d'affaires.....267

Abdoul Aziz DOUBLA & Abdouraman TOM

Reconversion du foncier maraicher et menaces sur les eaux souterraines du bassin versant du mayo-tsanaga : cas de Meskine (extreme-nord cameroun).....287

**Krikou DIARRA, Abdoulaye NGOM & Assougba Kabran beya
Brigitte épouse BOUAKI**

Logic and Stakes of Street Garages in Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine: Borders and Conditions of Permanence.....308

**Ekundayo Opeyemi Oyewunmi, Uthman Tinuoye Jamiu &
Oke Joseph Oladunsi**

Religiosity as a predictor of Redeemer University Undergraduates' sexual behaviour: Does age, gender and family type have roles to play?.....322

**Logic and Stakes of Street Garages in Aubervilliers
and Vitry-sur-Seine: Borders and Conditions of
Permanence**

**Logiques et enjeux des garages de rue à aubervilliers et
Vitry-sur-seine : frontières et conditions de
permanence**

Krikou DIARRA

Chercheur associé

Centre ivoirien de recherche

Économique et sociale (CIRES) (Côte d'Ivoire)

Courriel : kridiarra@ymail.com

Abdoulaye NGOM

Enseignant-chercheur

Université Assane Seck de Ziguinchor (Sénégal)

Laboratoire de Recherche en Sciences Économiques et Sociales (LARSSES)

Courriel : a.n57@univ-zig.sn

Assougba Kabran beya Brigitte épouse BOUAKI

Enseignante-chercheuse

Université Felix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire)



DOI : [10.5281/zenodo.8256463](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8256463)

Abstract

The question of informal garages in urban areas is a complex and varied phenomenon due to its sociological implications. Based on a qualitative survey in the Parisian suburbs, the purpose of this article is to analyze the logic and stakes of the survival of so-called "wild" garages in the streets of Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine. Through semi-structured interviews and direct observation, the article reveals that these wild garages constitute a social response to circumvent institutional barriers in entrepreneurship in France, especially among a migrants' community. Furthermore, these street garages are ways for these migrants to integrate into the social space of their host country. Finally, the study shows that the popularity of these garages is conditioned by the social status, ethnic origin, social network, and professional experience of the migrants' group.

Keywords : automobile garage - informal - street - immigration - Ile-de-France.

Résumé

La question des garages informels en milieu urbain constitue un phénomène complexe et varié du fait de ses implications sociologiques. Sur la base d'enquête qualitative en banlieue parisienne, le propos de cet article est d'analyser les logiques et les enjeux de la survivance des garages dits « sauvages » dans les rues d'Aubervilliers et de Vitry-sur-Seine. A partir d'entretiens semi-directifs et d'observation directe, l'article révèle que ces garages sauvages constituent une réponse sociale de contournement des barrières institutionnelles dans l'entrepreneuriat en France. Ensuite, ces garages de rue, sont des modalités d'insertion des migrants dans l'espace social d'accueil. Enfin l'étude montre que la permanence de ces garages est conditionnée par le statut social, l'origine ethnique, le réseau social et l'expérience professionnelle du praticien.

Mots clés : garage automobile - informel - rue - immigration-Ile-de-France

Introduction

Informal automobile garages, also known as "wild garages," are becoming more and more common in French cities and suburbs. These garages are often located in public spaces such as parking lots, streets, or public squares, and are managed by people who are not professional mechanics or who do not comply with current standards and regulations (Sébastien Jacquot and Marie Morelle, 2020 ; Collectif Rosa Bonheur, 2017).

This phenomenon poses many challenges to local authorities, official businesses, and residents in general. This current issue raises an interesting paradox related to the relationship between supply and demand in the automobile repair sector.

On the one hand, there is a growing demand for affordable and accessible automobile repair services (Jacquot and Morelle 2019), especially in disadvantaged neighborhoods where social actors often have limited means. On the other hand, the supply of such services by formal garages is often limited due to strict regulations, high costs, competition, etc. As a result, informal automobile garages position themselves as a social response to unsatisfied demand by offering affordable services, but often at the expense of quality, safety, and the environment. This issue is not new in the social sciences and humanities. It has undergone numerous developments and has been the subject of several studies approached from the perspective of urban dimensions, work reconfigurations, skills involved, and links with clients (Collectif Rosa Bonheur 2017; Lefrancois 2014; Ndiaye, Mamou and Deboulet 2019; Jacquot and Morelle 2019).

This article aims to highlight the sociological implications of informal car garages from the point of view of the actors involved in this type of activity. It will examine the issues of functioning, regulation and impact that are closely related to these informal car garages. The article will also shed light on the reasons for the proliferation of these garages in the Parisian suburbs, particularly in Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine, the conditions of insertion of immigrants in these activities and the social representations associated with these types of activities. Finally, the article studies the social relations of production, hierarchies, and relations to norms in this field.

To achieve these objectives, we will convene the theory of social integration and the concept of social capital. Integration theory can be useful in understanding the informal labor practices of migrants in car garages. This theory focuses on how immigrants integrate into host societies in terms of economic, social, and political participation (Sayad, 1994).

In the context of this study, integration theory can help understand how migrants use informal labor to integrate into the labor market and earn a living. Institutional constraints and barriers to entry into the formal sector may prevent them from fully participating in the formal economy, but they may find ways to adapt and contribute to the informal economy by opening informal auto garages in the host social space. In sum, integration theory can help understand how migrants adapt to their institutional environment and how they find ways to participate in the local economy, despite the institutional barriers that may prevent them from doing so.

Regarding the concept of social capital in its Bourdieusian conception that we use here in our research, it is also useful for understanding the dynamics of informal garages. Social capital refers to the resources that individuals and groups can mobilize through their social networks (Bourdieu, 2016). In the context of informal garages, the migrants surveyed, use their social capital to find and expand their client networks but more importantly to enable their "survival" in an institutionally hostile environment due to constraints. Through their ethnic communities and/or kinship networks, these migrants manage to find clients and

partners (because of their know-how) to become legal by obtaining a work contract in formal garages and/or regularizing their residence through work. Finally, we can rely on the "double disadvantage" theory to account for the process of insertion of migrants in economic activities in the host social space. Indeed, a common theory in the literature on ethnic economics is that poor immigrants tend to become entrepreneurs through informal, unregulated enterprises. However, in the absence of resources essential to becoming entrepreneurs - such as skills or language - and thus doubly disadvantaged, they have no choice but to turn to the informal economy (Light, 1979; Light and Rosenstein, 1995). As far as our field is concerned, these migrants, already poor due to their immigrant status, also face institutional barriers to becoming legal entrepreneurs in France, such as the requirements for starting a business and the high costs of obtaining physical space to open a legal car garage. In addition, they may lack the necessary qualifications to become entrepreneurs and may also face language barriers.

In this situation, therefore, migrants find themselves doubly disadvantaged and are forced to turn to the underground economy to subsist. This common theory of the ethnic economy is indeed applicable to their situation, as they have few choices to survive in a difficult economic context. However, working in the informal economy also carries risks and uncertainties, including security and legal repression.

Review of the literature

Authors Sébastien Jacquot and Marie Morelle, argue that the informal activity of street mechanics must be considered differently because of its social uses. They suggest replacing the terms "mechanics" or "wild garage", which have a negative connotation, by "street mechanics", which is more acceptable because of its social uses. According to the authors, street mechanics is important informal activity for popular economies and for immigrants who do not always have access to who do not always have access to formal employment because of their status.

In this sense, Yankel Fijalkow and Vincent Renard (2010), in their articles on "and urban restructuring in Île-de-France: an informal economy in transformation informal economy in transformation", addresses the issue of informal garages in Île-de-France by placing them in their socio-economic and urban context. The authors show that informal garages are a complex phenomenon that is closely linked to urban planning. They point out that these street garages are often located in disadvantaged areas where there are few employment opportunities and where the population is facing economic difficulties. At the same time, these garages provide essential outreach services to residents of these areas. The authors also show that policies to close these garages can be counterproductive, as they may result in the loss of these neighborhood services and the displacement of informal activities to other urban areas.

1. Methodology

This article is based on data from a series of investigations conducted in the municipalities of Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine between February and March 2023. Data collection was done in the streets of these municipalities, used for the occasion as an "informal garage". In times of need, we were led by our network of acquaintances to these social spaces. From this consumer relationship with the services offered in these social spaces, we moved to an investigative relationship to systematically conduct surveys among these "informal garages" operating in these social spaces and consumers of the services offered. In addition to these participants, we were able to interview residents in both municipalities. Using the principle of saturation (where responses become redundant), we limited ourselves to twenty-seven (27) structured interviews as follows: Seventeen semi-directive interviews with garages of all specialties (general mechanics (9), automotive electrician (4), painter (2), tinsmith-bodybuilder (2).

Ten semi-directive interviews with residents in the municipality of Aubervilliers (7) and Vitry-sur-Seine (3). The collected information was processed using data processing adapted to the qualitative perspective of the study. This involved the thematic content analysis of the data. The semi-directive interviews with the "mechanics"¹¹⁹ focused on the conditions for entering the activity, social production relationships, and knowledge of the regulations and norms related to this type of activity. As for consumers and residents, the surveys focused on the social representations associated with these activities in these municipalities and their relationships with this type of activity. Thematic content analysis was used to identify analytical categories related to the ideological resources for legitimizing entry into these so-called "wild"¹²⁰ activities, social production networks, the socio-historical evolution of these informal garages in the municipalities of Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine, and the social representations associated with these activities. In this way of proceeding, we obtained the results below.

2. Results

2.1. Institutional barriers and the shift to informal sector

It is true that French regulations pose a barrier for these migrant "mechanics" who operate in the informal¹²¹ sector on the streets of certain Parisian suburbs, notably in Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine for this study. Some of the

¹¹⁹ Here in this article, garages of all specialties will be referred to as mechanics, especially since each specialist in these spaces has more than one skill. In addition to their specialties, they also occasionally perform general mechanical work for minor repairs (brake pad replacement, oil change, tire change, etc.).

¹²⁰ We alternate the use of the terms "wild garage" and "informal garage" in this text to refer to the same reality

¹²¹ In disregard of the regulations and legislation in force

institutional barriers that push these migrants towards the informal sector include the tenacious conditions for starting a business in France by already socially disadvantaged migrants' group. For example, the high costs of obtaining physical space (premises) to open a legal automobile garage seems overbearing.

Firstly, creating a business in France generally requires the applicant to satisfy a certain number of requirements, including regularity of residence and, most importantly, qualification¹²². In the case of creating an automobile garage, the candidate must necessarily hold a Certificate of Professional Aptitude (CAP) in automobile maintenance or another degree in automobile repair¹²³. In addition to this procedure, several prior declarations and/or requests for authorization must be submitted depending on the activity carried out. These are mainly formalities related to classified installations for the protection of the environment (ICPE). Below is a non-exhaustive list:

Table 1: Summary table of activities related to mechanics, formalities, and conditions.

Activité	Formalités	Conditions
Réparation et entretien de véhicules et engins à moteur	1- Demande d'autorisation 2- Déclaration suivie de contrôles	Surface de l'atelier supérieure à 5 000 m ² (1) ou à 2 000 m ² (2)
Fourniture et pose de vernis, peinture ou apprêt	1- Demande d'autorisation 2- Déclaration suivie de contrôles	Quantité de produits utilisés supérieure à 100 kg par jour (1) ou à 10 kg par jour (2) *

¹²² Professional qualification is regulated by Decree No. 98-246 of April 2, 1998, regarding the professional qualification required for the exercise of activities listed in Article 16 of Law No. 96-603 of July 5, 1996, relating to the development and promotion of commerce and crafts. The crafts activities concerned include, among others: maintenance and repair of vehicles and machinery: automobile repairer, bodywork technician, motorcycle repairer, agricultural, forestry and public works equipment repairer. Construction, maintenance, and repair of buildings: jobs in the primary, secondary, and finishing building trades. The installation, maintenance, and repair of networks and equipment using fluids, as well as equipment and materials intended for the gas supply or heating of buildings, and electrical installations: plumber, heating engineer, electrician, air conditioning technician, and installer of water, gas, or electricity networks, etc. <https://www.cma94.com/fr/creer-ou-reprendre-une-entreprise/metiers-reglementes.html> consulted on 20-02-2023.

¹²³ Chamber of Trades and Crafts (CMA), Ile-de-France

Activité	Formalités	Conditions
Travail mécanique des métaux et alliages	1- Enregistrement des installations 2- Déclaration suivie de contrôles	Puissance des machines supérieure à 1 000 kW (1) ou à 150 kW (2)
Utilisation de fluides réfrigérants	Obtention d'une attestation de capacité	Sans condition
Dépannage et remorquage sur autoroutes	Obtention d'un agrément des pouvoirs publics	Sans condition

Source : le coin des entrepreneurs.fr

The cost and availability of premises that would allow the exercise of such an activity are for most respondents "mission impossible", especially since these migrants, mostly in irregular status of stay and living by their wits, cannot have the necessary financial capital and legal wherewithal to meet this condition. In this regard, one respondent says:

"(...) it's difficult to have your own garage here. If you don't have papers, you can't do anything in France. Even when you leave, they will ask you for a lot of paperwork, to open the business account they will ask you for papers... to declare it's paperwork. Now who will give you a warehouse to make your garage if you don't have the means... it's mission impossible. We can't do it, we don't have papers..." [Mustafa, 42 years old mechanic, 18.02.2023]

This viewpoint is corroborated by Mohammed, an Ivorian-born electrician who believes that,

"It's the state that doesn't facilitate our integration. Otherwise, if things were made easier for us, we would pay taxes, but as it is, we are forced to work under the table like this. Otherwise, if we could, we would all open our own garages... you see, in Abidjan, it's easier because the city council doesn't make things as complicated as they do here... « [Mohammed, 31-year-old electrician, 18.02.2023]

In other words, the survey respondents are pushed towards the informal sector, where they can circumvent certain institutional barriers, they face. Although the risks are multiple (legal, security, etc.), this practice allows migrants to enter the labor market. It is a subsistence activity as argued by Sébastien Jacquot and Marie Morelle (2020).

2.2. Modalities of insertion into street garages in Aubervilliers and Vitry-Sur-Seine

The conditions for the insertion of immigrants into informal garages can vary depending on different factors, such as the countries of origin of the migrants, their legal status, their technical skills in automobile mechanics, and their relationships with other members of the immigrant community (Serra and Díaz, 2016; Grange and Tadié, 2017). However, some common conditions can be observed, such as the need to quickly find employment to support the needs of the family and send money to the family left behind in the country of origin (Collectif Rosa Bonheur, 2017). Indeed, the difficulty in finding regular employment due to institutional barriers, resources, and/or qualification problems leads these immigrants to orient themselves in most cases towards informal sectors. Their insertion strategies are focused on community and/or kinship networks. The knowledge of members of the immigrant community who have already worked in informal garages and who can help facilitate entry into this type of employment is a social resource that these immigrants mobilize in this process of insertion into activities where access conditions are rigorously regulated (Sébastien Jacquot and Marie Morelle, 2020).

"(...) I knew in Abidjan a friend who worked in front of the hostel. So when I came, I came to help him. That's how I started buying my equipment and people started to know me. So I often repaired cars for acquaintances" [Ali, 29 years old mechanic, 22.02.2023].

2.3. The socio-historical evolution of "wild garages" in the Paris region

In the 1960s and 1970s, North African immigration to France experienced significant growth due to the need for labor in the industrial and construction sectors (Gérard Noiriel, 1988; Bekouchi Mohamed Hamadi, 1984; Philippe Bernard, 1993; Laure Pitti, 2006). Many immigrants also worked in car garages, often as mechanics, which is referred to in the literature as "skilled workers" (Laure Pitti, 2006). Authors such as historian Laure Pitti (2006) or, before her, sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad (1977) saw this North African labor force as the driving force behind the automobile industry in France. With the economic downturn of the late 1970s and, especially, the implementation of restrictive policies (M'bodje Mamadou, 2019) - controlling immigration and access to employment for foreigners - migrants turned to informal activities (especially outside regulatory frameworks), which could be described as underground economy or resourcefulness (A. Medhi, 2013 cited by Diarra Krikou and Youssouf Méité, 2023). "Street" or "parking" garages emerged as a solution to this impending employment crisis but also as an opportunity for the middle classes to reduce the maintenance and repair costs of their vehicles in a difficult economic

context¹²⁴ (Collectif Rosa Bonheur 2017; Abou Ndiaye, Khedidja Mamou, and Agnès Deboulet, 2019).

The Maghrebi immigrants have been particularly affected by unemployment and have often created their own informal garages to support themselves and their families. Slimane, an Algerian retired street mechanic, reveals that:

“he worked at Renault in 1970, but when he returned to work after getting married in Algeria in October 1977, he was laid off. He couldn't find work in France due to the crisis, so he bought some tools and started fixing cars informally (source? Citation is necessary). People trusted him because they knew he worked at Renault, and he could earn around 450 francs per day and double that on weekends. Tahirou, a resident of Vitry-sur-Seine, also mentions that his father started fixing cars informally after losing his job and it helped them pay for expenses and even schooling” [Slimane, 78 years old, retired mechanic, resident of Vitry-sur-Seine- 22.02.2023].

In the 2000s, informal garages continued to proliferate due to increased competition in the automobile mechanic sector and the rising cost of living. They also attracted lower-middle-class customers who wanted to save money on car repairs. Over the years, informal garages have faced issues related to regulation, safety, and the environment. Local authorities have often tried to shut down these garages, but with the influx of Sub-Saharan migrants, these informal activities have intensified in some popular neighborhoods and around migrant communities. These informal garages are considered legitimate in the eyes of the population due to their socio-economic functions, which contribute to their permanence in these popular neighborhoods.

In conclusion, the socio-historical evolution of informal garages in the Paris region is closely linked to the economic, social, and political changes that have taken place in France in recent decades. The rise in unemployment, immigration, cost of living, and increased competition in the automobile mechanic sector has all contributed to the growth of these informal garages in the Paris region, as with most informal activities in urban spaces. Abou Ndiaye et al. describe them as "activities

¹²⁴ The oil crisis of the late 1973 had a direct impact on the automotive industry, leading to downsizing in several economic sectors, including industry. The effects of the crisis continued in the 1980s with a significant increase in unemployment for both nationals and immigrants. In this regard, in an article published in 2019, Mr. Bodje Mamadou pointed out that during this period, "we can observe the harshness of the Marcellin-Fontanet circulars of 1972, put in place to control immigration, in the same line as the law of August 10, 1932, the first immigration law favoring French workers (national preference) with the objective of limiting the number of foreigners employed in companies." The informal sector became a strategy for "survival."

that draw a geography of resourcefulness in popular neighborhoods." (Abou Ndiaye, Khedidja Mamou, and Agnès Deboulet, 2019, pp 1)

2.4. Social representations associated with informal garages in Aubervilliers and Vitry-Sur-Seine

Social representations associated with informal garages can vary depending on everyone's perspective and experiences. In the discourse and social representations of the survey respondents, these informal garages are often considered illegal because they do not comply with the standards and regulations in force for automotive garages. This perception is associated with an image of risk, insecurity, and danger for customers. In this regard, a resident in Vitry-sur-Seine confides the following:

"(...) Well, I think these garages are a problem for the neighborhood. They pollute the environment with their exhaust fumes and waste, and they often illegally occupy public space. In addition, they can be noisy and cause disruptions for local residents. Moreover, I have difficulties finding a parking space near my business, and I discovered that it was because an informal garage had occupied part of the street to make repairs on cars (...). This has caused me a lot of stress and delay in my work." [Fatima, 37 years old, resident of Vitry-sur-Seine, 17.03.2023].

In the statements of the respondents, the issue of economy and low costs is mentioned. In fact, informal garages are perceived by consumers of the services offered as a cheaper alternative to formal garages (Sébastien Jacquot and Marie Morelle, 2020). This perception is often linked to an image of resourcefulness, tinkering and/or low-cost repairs. Prices are not fixed, but negotiated, and at times, kinship and/or acquaintances are used as a resource to get the "right price," the arranged price. The following excerpts are representative of this perception that consumers of these garages have of their activities:

"Here we can negotiate (...) it's my cousin, I can bargain here, while in a garage it's not possible with the VAT to pay, it's too expensive. Here it's family, it's between us, we always agree, there's no problem, everyone comes here, even white people...it's everybody here, we have the good plans (...)" [Sévérin, 62-year-old customer, Aubervilliers 17.02.2023].

"These are our cousins...in other garages to change a brake pad and do an oil change it's 120 bucks...here I negotiated 70 with my cousin...you see? And the work is well done..." [Nassim, 31-year-old customer, Vitry-sur-Seine 07.02.2023].

But alongside these perceptions related to lower repair costs, some respondents mention the issue of solidarity, mutual aid, and/or fighting against exclusion towards these garages, which are often perceived as people from the working classes, immigrants who are trying to survive in a difficult economy.

"I come here because, in addition to being cheaper, we can talk, we are all Ivorians. There is no barrier between us. We talk and discuss, and the work is done in a good atmosphere, no one is upset. In real garages, there is no human warmth, you drop off your car, you come back after paying...there is no conversation, it's money first, but here it's the person first, we talk among ourselves..." [Oumar, 27-year-old customer, Aubervilliers 27.02.2023].

But despite these "positive" perceptions, it remains true that some respondents perceive these informal garages as offering lower quality services compared to official garages. This perception can be linked to an image of improvisation, lack of professionalism, singular experiences, but also a lack of guarantees.

"We know the risk of coming here...there's no guarantee. Often, they proceed by trial and error...so it's risky. I had a bad experience, I had a BMW, and for a problem of a drop in engine speed, the guy made me spend money by changing parts that weren't the reason. So, I lost time and money. It was in a garage in Montreuil that people did a good diagnosis with a device to see that it was a problem with the coil and spark plug...so I don't repair my car there anymore." [Cédric, 51-year-old resident, Vitry-sur-Seine 08.02.2023].

2.5. Social relations of production (functioning, structuring, hierarchies, relationships with norms, etc

The social relations of production in informal garages can vary depending on various factors such as geographical location, socio-economic conditions, and the characteristics of the "mechanics". Indeed, in the observed social spaces, the garages operate informally and flexibly, without a formal hierarchy and without a clear "normative framework". Practitioners work autonomously, without specified rules regarding management and quality control. The only rules that govern these workspaces are those related to rules of etiquette and/or "good neighborly practices".

"(...) here, we respect each other, there are no bosses or bosses here...we all look for each other. So, there is no history between

us, we don't step on each other's toes. Everyone has their own clients...if I can't do a job, I call a friend who can, and that's how we help each other out here. I don't do electrical work, so when I have a customer for that, I call Lasso...that's his job...He also often gives me customers..." [Ousmane, 25 years old, mechanic, Aubervilliers 11.02.2023].

Social relations between social actors in these spaces are structured around family ties, friendships, or relationships of trust, among colleagues, but especially between these practitioners and those who consume their services. Like any kinship relationship, this implies the existence of a "symbolic authority that embodies the figure of the 'father' (elders) who is the guarantor of the group's cohesion, the one that the respondents designate as their 'old fathers'."

"It's old Kassim who is our old father here...he's not the boss, but when there are problems, he intervenes, he's a bit like our spokesperson, he often checks because people do oil changes and then they leave the engine oil on the road, that's not good, the town hall is against that, so he's here to ask us to pick up our garbage when we finish working..." [Michel, 36-year-old sheet metal worker, Aubervilliers 15.02.2023].

In the same vein, when questioned, the "elders" Kassim confides this:

"We do this, but it's illegal...I started here with an Algerian friend in 1987, but it was to help the neighbors because I myself was in a garage in Montreuil...so it was on Saturdays and Sundays that I tinkered in front of the foyer, and then the young people who came on the water started coming in large numbers because they had a trade before in Abidjan...but when they work, they don't clean the engine oil, that's not good...so it's me who polices them, otherwise the town hall will create problems for us, and also when there are problems between young people, I calm them down, I'm a bit like their dad but not their boss..." [Kassim, 67 years old, elder, Aubervilliers 15.02.2023].

Although these informal garages do not have a formal hierarchy, there are implicit power relations between the oldest and the newcomers. These social elders, by virtue of their experience, contribute to maintaining peace among members of the endogroup. It is a kind of moral guarantee whose legitimacy to act as such is accepted by all as self-evident due to his age and/or experience gained in this activity.

3. Discussion

Some of our survey results reveal that this sector of activity is mainly dominated by migrants, most of whom are in an irregular situation and who use these street garages as a means of subsistence. Their permanence in the urban space in our case in the communes of Aubervilliers and Vitry-sur-Seine lies in its socio-economic functions which besides were evoked in other the Lille region by the consortium of researchers "rosa bonheur, 2017a; 2019". In this respect, street garages are a means of keeping a certain part of the population in an irregular situation busy and contribute to the fight against the phenomena of banditry and delinquency among young people. If, at the level of the social representations of the respondents, these garages are illegal places, as we have underlined above in the presentation of our results, the fact remains that they allow many motorists to repair their cars, most often at low cost. Some studies, notably those of Alain Tarrius (2000), carried out in other French cities, show that immigrants are very present in the underground economy in Marseille

Conclusion

In conclusion, informal automobile garages on the streets of Aubervilliers and Vitry sur Seine raise complex and varied questions. On the one hand, they offer low-cost services to a population that cannot always afford to have their vehicle maintained in official garages. On the other hand, these informal activities raise issues of safety, unfair competition, and urban planning. It is therefore necessary to find solutions to regulate these activities while considering the needs and realities of the populations concerned. The sustainability of this activity mainly resides in the social representations associated with entrepreneurship, but also and especially in the socio-economic functions of these street mechanics in social spaces of implantations.

Further research is needed to better understand the socio-economic dynamics and social representations associated with these informal practices in other localities to try to find sociological consistency. Public authorities can also play a key role in encouraging alternative initiatives, such as the creation of solidarity garages or the regulation of existing informal activities, to better meet the needs of populations while ensuring their safety and well-being.

References

- BEKOUCHI HAMADI Mohamed, 1984, *Du bled à la zup. Problématique culturelle des immigrés dans l'agglomération mantaise*, Paris, L'Harmattan
- BOURDIEU Pierre, 2016, *Sociologie générale*, Vol. 2 : Cours au collège de France (1983-1986), Paris, Éditions du Seuil, coll. Raisons d'agir.
- BERNARD Philippe, 1993, *L'immigration* éditions, Paris, Le monde
- COLLECTIF Rosa Bonheur, 2017, « Les garages à ciel ouvert : configurations sociales et spatiales d'un travail informel », *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 1(216-217), p.80-103.

- COLLECTIF Rosa Bonheur, 2019, « La mécanique à ciel ouvert. Un travail de subsistance dans les quartiers populaires », *Métropolitiques*, <https://metropolitiques.eu/La-mecanique-a-ciel-ouvert.html>, Consulté le 02-02-2023
- DIARRA Krikou & MEITE Youssouf, 2023, « L'émigration des ivoiriennes au Maroc : une migration de sédentarisation ou de transit ? », *Cahiers de l'IREA*, 48, p.81-104
- GASTAUT Yvan, 2004, « Histoire de l'immigration : état des lieux et évolution de la recherche », *Hommes & Migrations*, 1248, p.129-141
- GRANGE Amelie & TADIE Jean-Yves, 2017, « Les garages "sauvages" en banlieue parisienne : un phénomène pluriel à la frontière de la légalité et de l'illégalité », *Espaces et sociétés*, 168(4), p.107-125.
- GIRITLI Nygren Katarina et LIANG Xuayan Rachel, 2019, « Informal Garages in Sweden: A Socio-economic Study of Garages that Operate Outside the Official Regime », *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 20(1), p.55-69.
- JACQUOT Sébastien & MORELLE Marie, 2020, « Changer de regard sur l'informel dans les quartiers populaires. De la mécanique « sauvage » à la mécanique de rue », *Métropolitiques*, <https://metropolitiques.eu/Changer-de-regard-sur-l-informel-dans-les-quartiers-populaires.html> Consulté le 01-02-2023
- LAURE Pitti, 2006, « La main-d'œuvre algérienne dans l'industrie automobile (1945-1962), ou les oubliés de l'histoire », *Hommes & Migrations*, 1263, p.47-57.
- LIGHT Ivan, 1979, « Disadvantaged minorities in self-employment », *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 20(1-2), p.31-45.
- LIGHT Ivan et ROSENSTEIN Carolin, 1995, *Race, Ethnicity, and Entrepreneurship in Urban America*, Walter de Gruyter Inc, Berlin.
- M'BODJE Mamadou, 2019 « Éléments d'histoire de l'immigration en France (1880-1988) » <https://www.ritimo.org/Elements-d-histoire-de-l-immigration-en-France-1880-1988>, Consulté le 15-02-2023
- NDIAYE Abou, DEBOULET Agnès et MAMOU Khedidja, 2023, « La mécanique de rue : vertus cachées d'une économie populaire dénigrée », *Métropolitiques*, <https://metropolitiques.eu/La-mecanique-de-rue-vertus-cachees-d-une-economie-populaire-denigree.html>, Consulté le 02-02-2023
- NOIRIEL Gerard, 1988, *Le Creuset Français - Histoire De L'immigration XIXe-XXe Siècles*, Paris, Seuil.
- SAYAD Abdelmalek, 1977, « les trois âges de l'émigration », *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 15, p.59-79.
- SAYAD Abdelmalek, 2014, « Qu'est-ce que l'intégration », *Homme & Migration*, 1182, p.8-14
- TARRIUS Alain, 2000, *Économies souterraines. Le comptoir maghrébin de Marseille*, Edition de l'Aube, 2000.