Categorical Value

Strong notions of private property rights. Three features are outlined below:

A. The organisation of cannabis production and distribution is referred to by my informants as chain work:
   - "Me now, I am the grower, then we have the peddlers and we have the main sellers and buyers, that is chain work. I am the grower, I have a middle man, which I can link with and sell it. You see? This is the chain work" – Nigerian crime syndicates have a similar organisational logic, known as adhocracy: the ability to fuse people with different skills together, work on a project and then quickly disband.

B. The organisational form bare similarity to adhocracy.
   - For instance, some informants bemoaned how everyone is referred to as a "chairman" these days: "Chair? Who? There are many chairmen these days!" – Authority is less centralised and more distributed, there is no strict hierarchy. Informants continually contrast adhocratic forms of organisation, with bureaucratic ones, delimiting the boundaries of what we otherwise refer to as the informal economy:
   - "Everything is stiff [...] movement is not easy [...] cannot mix well" – such are the problems of getting a citizen’s ID card and finding a job in the formal economy.

C. During price negotiations between pushers and buyers, the discussion is about price, but does not correspond to price as read off the intersection between supply and demand:
   - "One pk[iue. % of a kilo] is 50,000, two pk[es are 100,000, three pk[es are 150,000]" – Nigerian crime syndicates have a similar organisational logic, known as adhocracy: the ability to fuse people with different skills together, work on a project and then quickly disband.
   - "Me: “So how does the price of one p[kg of] cannabis sativa change?” – informants make a distinction between economic practices that, whilst knowingly illegal, are either licit or illicit. "We de sten o" (We are straining!) is a common phrase indexing the hard, physical labour associated with cannabis cultivation. Strain is contrasted with the work of those who are involved in "soft touch": pickpocketing or burgling homes. Whilst the contrast between strain and soft touch reasons hard physical labour as licit, the distinction rests on respect for private property against its infringement in theft. There is a strong notion of private property rights associated with cannabis cultivation. Rather than property being conceptualised as an externally imposed rule, it is instead something practiced.
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   - "These gangs, these kl[ics] ... fight people quick ... you are advantaged." – Refraining from violence holds the meaning of becoming a part of the system. Routinely they refer to the use of physical violence as being 'advantaged', of gaining an unfair advantage:
     - "write ... ADVANTAGE ... you don’t offend someone but they hit you, they are advantaging you".
     - "these gangs, these kl[ics] ... fight people quick ... you are advantaged": Similarly the term ‘boff’ arises in situations where one should not retaliate and take action, for example against a corrupt police force:
       - "You justbool, do nothing": Violence is costly. The practice of refraining from violence holds the cannabis market in a delicate position between being criminalised and yet remaining licit.