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Alja Naliwaiko

In the Nakasero Market, right in the centre of Kampala, there are approximately 200 boys and young men who belong to a group which, in Uganda, is commonly called "Bayaye". "Bayaye" is a derogatory term used on young people, nearly exclusively male with the reputation of being smokers of Marihuana and pick-pockets. Bayaye are associated with theft, robbery and organized crime. They are seen as the dregs of society, lost, not only in regard to the social and moral values of their society, but also, in a very real sense, are homeless, neglected young people who roam the streets of Uganda's capital. At best, they are seen as social cases, objects for charity organisations. As far as facts are concerned, very little is known about Bayaye.

This paper does not deal with Bayaye in general, but with that group of boys and young men who carry bags and wash cars for the customers of Nakasero Market. They wait for their customers at the North-Eastern corner of the old market building from where they have a good view on approaching cars.

I met these market boys as a customer because, like most expatriate foreigners living in Kampala, I used to shop in Nakasero. Like many expatriate foreigners I found these boys very helpful and rather different from what they are said to be.

These market boys do not only carry bags and guide customers around the shops, but also "do deals", as they call it, go on errands and procure things from hardware to simple car parts which are difficult to find. Some customers give the boys a shopping list and money and get their goods delivered either at home or, more commonly, at their offices. Not all of these tasks are given to all boys. As can be expected, a shopping list and money is given only to those who are known and are trusted.

To do research among this group I had two distinctive advantages; as a customer I had a quasi natural access to them and did not need to establish my role as a social anthropologist; nearly all of the boys speak English fairly well. A basic knowledge of English is an indispensable skill to be successful in the trade. After about half a year of observation and informal conversation I designed a questionnaire comprising 85 questions ranging from "Where were you born?" to "How would you like to be when you are 40 years old?"

I told some of the boys, I knew better, that I wanted to do some research on their group. After several discussions a number of them agreed to give me interviews. Though over the weeks their number increased, they were at times less willing to be interviewed than at others.

As to who was a market boy and, therefore, belonged to my sample I took on their own definition; those who watch cars and carry baskets. I interviewed only those boys who I knew to be around more or less regularly and who were pointed out to me by the others as belonging to their group. The sample includes two "borderline" cases, hawkers, (Abatembeyi), who still carry baskets for their long time customers, but whose main trade is to sell (without license) consumer goods in front of the shops at the market.

All together I interviewed 26 boys, and I have some data for 3 more. 4 market boys, all older ones, refused to be interviewed. The formal interviews were done from the middle of October 1987 to the middle of January 1988 in two different bars close to the market. I interviewed each boy separately, invited him to one soda and paid him the equivalent of having carried three bags. The interviews lasted for about 2 hours and were mainly done in English; at times I had to try my Luganda.

Though, probably some were flattered by the attention paid to them, I assume that the basic reason for their willingness to be interviewed was

the fact that I paid them money. But there was another reason which they themselves put forward to explain their cooperation: "We have to clear our names. You have to tell people that we are not Bayaye."

The interest to establish that the bag carriers of Nakasero Market are good, honest, trustworthy boys was furthered by a development on the market. In response to complaints about theft and harassment, the RCI of Nakasero Market had decided to clear the market of all undesirable elements. According to the RC Secretary for Information, such undesirable elements include Marijuana smokers, bag carriers, idlers and loiterers, non-licensed sellers and hawkers.

The RC planned to remove all those boys and young men who were not involved in legal and identifiable business transaction from the market and to leave only a selected number of bag carriers who would get a badge, an ID card and, eventually, a uniform. For this purpose the names of 60 boys who claimed to be bag carriers were taken down and those were advised to bring letters of recommendation from the RCs of their residences. As the RC Secretary for Information told me in January, seventeen of those boys registered had actually brought the required letter.

I had no connection with this exercise and actually learned about it from the market boys themselves. I do not know if and how many assumed that I was involved in the registration, but I think that through this exercise their motivation to say that the bag carriers are not "pure" or "real" Bayaye was greatly increased. So, if the market boys had any interest in my research as such, it was their interest to straighten their image. The purpose of the research was not to "rehabilitate" a particular group of market boys.

The aim of this research was to gather information in three different fields:

- a) empirical/statistical material on the social background of these boys;
- b) to find out if any rules operate among the boys themselves in relation

- to their customers and in relation to the sellers in the market;
- c) to learn about their general attitudes towards life and their expectations for their future.

In all these three fields the researcher depends on the willingness and the cooperation of his informants. But he depends on those in differing degrees.

When I planned this research a Ugandan friend warned me saying that the market boys would lie to me, not necessarily out of intent but out of habit. Another lady, acquainted with the subject remarked: "If you ask the same boy the same question on three different days, you are likely to get three different answers."

To collect reliable and correct information is particularly difficult in field, especially where the social background of informants is concerned. The interviewer can not easily check back or rely on his own observation; he is very much dependent on what the informant is willing to tell him. I was not told all kinds of heart-rending stories, as one would have expected. Ugandan friends who have worked with Bayaye had thought that most of them would tell they came from Luwero Triangle, because four years ago, so they said, most of those they dealt with gave Masaka as place of origin. Actually only four boys of my sample claimed to come from Luwero District and only one said to be a fugitive from Teso. Information obtained is also strongly influenced by the way the informants rate the researcher. What they tell regarding their attitudes might more be what they think the interviewer wants to hear than what they actually mean. Objectively I am their opposite in many respects, but unfortunately I do not know how they classified me.

As far as the rules of the game are concerned I feel more confident in what I present. In this field I could add my own observations and I could much more openly check back with other informants. Much of what I present here did not only come out in individual interviews but in group

discussions with several market boys. But it is possible that I do not present the full picture. There might be rules of which I am not aware of because they come into play outside the market.

That informants tell stories and outright lies is nothing particularly pertaining to market boys. Though I think that my findings are relatively accurate, they have to be treated with caution, be it only because my informants were not sure about my role in the registration exercise and their own interest in the research. And after all, it has to be kept in mind that they are on the market more or less illegally.

The only published material on Market Boys I had access to is a study by M.R. Farrant: "Market Boys of Kampala: A Survey." (Farrant 1970). In many respects Farrant's data are not immediately comparable with my material. I will, therefore, first briefly present his findings and will afterwards relate them to my information. I will then add other basic information I collected.

Farrant's survey arose out of a concern. "For some time a committee of the National Council of Social Services for Uganda has been concerned about what it saw as the problem of young people congregating on Markets and other public places throughout the city " (Farrant 1970:13). It was said that these children were begging and that they were involved in crimes, sometimes being instigated by adults. Further it was said that these Market Boys were homeless (Farrant 1970:13). Farrant interviewed 140 children (134 boys and 6 girls) in eight locations in Kampala: the Bus and Taxi Park, the markets of Wandegaya, Nakivubo, Katwe, Nakasero and Mulago and 9 children from the Katwe Community Centre, who were said to have been picked up from various public places (Farrant 1970:15).

Definition as to what children are to be considered as Market Boys proved difficult and so, quite in tune with his concern, Farrant states: "I have chosen to call the children with whom this survey deals Market Boys" (Farrant 1970:13).

Because Farrant feared that the children would not be willing to answer his questions if the interviewer would turn up with paper and pencil, his Market boys were interviewed informally and the interviewer took down notes afterwards. For this reason his survey deals with only six topics: age, ethnic/national origin, home situation, earnings, education. As for his main interest, delinquency, he asked: "Do any of the boys here ever steal?" He also enquired if adults are involved in criminal activities of the children either directly by investigation and teaching or indirectly by buying stolen goods from them. All his interviews were done in Luganda or Kiswahili.

Where Farrant lists his findings separately for each location, his data show differences according to where they were taken. It is, therefore, unfortunate that he records part of his material in toto, aggregated for all the places of interview. Where he recorded Nakasero separately, I used these figures.

Despite the differences in approach and method, I think it is worthwhile to compare Farrant's findings with mine because as far as earning a living is concerned on Nakasero Market we both have dealt with bag carriers. "The main source of income, especially from the two markets in the city centre, is from carrying customers' shopping bags" (Farrant 1970:17).

Age: The youngest of Farrant's sample was six years, the oldest 18 years old. Slightly over half of his Market Boys were from 12-14 years. For Nakasero Market, the boys were slightly older than in the other locations with a mean age of 13.9 years (Farrant 1970:15).

Origin: 15 of all Market Boys were Non-Ugandans. 80% of the Ugandans claimed to be Baganda (Farrant 1970:15). 20% of his sample were born in Kampala. 80% who were migrants claimed to have come to the capital less than 2 years ago.

Home Situation: 4% of the total sample said that both parents had died. 61% lived with one or two parents; 31% lived with either a sibling or a relative, only 7% of the total sample lived with a friend or alone. In Nakasero Market 53% lived with either one or both parents. (Farrant 1970:17)

Farrant found a difference between those born in Kampala and those who were migrants in regard to with whom they lived 91% of those born in Kampala lived with at least one parent whereas 50% of the migrants lived with a relative and 11% lived alone. (Farrant 1970:18).

Education: 1/3 of Farrant's total sample stated that they had never been to any school. 41% of all boys had gone up to P3, and 26% said to have reached P4 or more. Only 5% of the total sample claimed to be still going to school, but 18% said that they plan to go. Of those who had been to school 67% had left 2 or more years earlier. Except for one, who said to have been thrown out, all said that they left for lack of money (Farrant 1970:18).

Earnings: On Nakasero Market only 6% said that Market Boys begged, (The lowest figure of all markets) (Farrant 1970:16). The average earning week on Nakasero was 18.80 shs. For all markets the average sum was 13 shs. for boys under 17 years and 21.50 shs. for those above that age. But some of Farrant's informants said to earn more than the legal weekly minimum which was at that time 37.50 shs. 3/4 of all children said they spent their money for themselves, the others said gave it to their parents or relatives (Farrant 1970:17).

Delinquency: All the sellers Farrant talked to were convinced that the boys were thieves, an opinion shared by all boys interviewed in Wandegeya Market. On Nakasero Market 79% said that the other boys stole. Nearly half of the boys claimed not to know anything about adult involvement in

criminal activities of the children. Of those who claimed to know something, in Nakasero Market 31.5% said that there was no adult instigation and 5.2% said that there was (Farrant 1970:15).

All in all Farrant sees a rather bleak future for the Market Boys of 1970. A little less than half of his informants said that they had tried to find work somewhere else before they came to the market but had failed. "This 'push' towards the market is matched by the 'pull' of the relatively large sums of money that can be earned there" (Farrant 1970:19). According to the boys, because of their growing numbers, it had become increasingly difficult to find jobs on the market. So, Farrant sums up, in a general situation of unemployment, these boys who lack education and skills and who are often too young to be employed legally, have no other choice than to become delinquent.

My figures give a slightly different picture which, all in all makes me see today's Market Boys future less bleak than Farrant did for his sample.

Age: The youngest boys of my sample said to be nine, the oldest claimed to be 20 years. But I suspect that three of those are older. 2/3 of the Market Boys are between 14-18 years, the mean age of my sample was 15.7 years.

None of the boys said to have started to work on the market before he was nine, one each came when they were 17 and 18 respectively. 19.2% began work between 9-11 and 38.5% between 12-14 and 15-16 respectively. Nearly 2/3 had been in the market for 2-4 years, a little over 20% were there for one year or less and only one of my sample had worked there for more than 8 years.

I think that the discrepancy between the mean ages and the length of stay on the market is brought about by two conflicting considerations

of the Market Boys. To carry the basket is neither considered a respectable nor a permanent job. So some of the older boys tend to make themselves younger than they actually are. On the other hand a certain amount of experience, of knowing ones way's is considered an asset, so that for the length of stay the adjustment, if there was any, worked in the opposite direction. Generally speaking customers, though they also value experience, prefer boys in their mid-teens, strong enough to carry but young enough, so as not to be viewed as too clever and too cunning.

Origin: One of the Market Boys (not a Muganda) cautioned me saying that for fear to be ridiculed, two groups do not claim to be Baganda. All of those I interviewed answered this question and those who claimed to be Baganda gave me the names of their clans as well as their fathers name. 15.3% of the boys were of foreign origin (2 Ruandans, 2 Tanzanians) who nonetheless had grown up in Uganda. Nearly 70% of the Ugandans claimed to be at least half Baganda (9 full, 4 half). Other ethnic groups mentioned were: Lugbara, Kakwa, Acholi, Iteso, Bagisu, Samia, Basoga and Batoro. In general the Boys said, and it sounded rather flattering that one can find members of all tribes among them. I do not know if they said that because, as a Muzungu, I am rated as being in favour of ethnic harmony. There is some teasing as to ethnic origin among them, but it seems to be little and rather personal. There was only one who mentioned that he wanted to marry a girl from his own region and as far as friendship is concerned, residence in town is much more important than tribal affiliation.

But there is one thing I found remarkable in connection with ethnic origin: 34.6% of the boys (exactly as many as claimed to be pure Baganda) came from mixed marriages i.e. their parents came from different ethnic

groups. I do not think that this is Ugandan, not even Kampala, average. There is no immediate connection of this fact with other data I collected and I assume its relevance lies on a different plan (see below).

Whereas only 20% of Farrant's boys said to have been in Kampala, 58% of my sample claimed to have been born here and, except for one boy, who claimed to have always lived in Uganda's capital. Nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of those born in a village came from a village close by, so that 73% of my sample were born in Kampala and its surroundings.

Again, whereas in Farrant's sample half of those born in a village had come to town less than 2 years ago, $\frac{2}{3}$ of my Market Boys had been to town for 6 and more years. I interpret these facts as an indication that migration to the capital in general has, for various reasons, slowed down considerably in the last years.

Living Arrangements: None of the boys in my sample lived with both parents and only 19.2% lived with one. This is different from Farrant's findings where 53% of his Nakasero Market Boys said they lived with one or both parents, but it is not surprising, if it is true, as 53.8% of my sample claimed, that one or both parents died. One claimed to be a full orphan. I am a little suspicious if these figures are correct, not because of the amount as such, but because there were some contradictions I could not clarify. Still I think it is well possible that about half of the boys have lost one parent. Nevertheless 42.3% of my sample live with close relatives (Siblings, grandmothers, father's brothers) so that altogether 61.5% live with one parent or close relatives.

23.3% live with friends, most of whom are or have been Market Boys and 15.3% live alone. This differs considerably from Farrant's findings where only 7% of his total sample lived under those arrangements. To interpret these figures correctly, two additions have to be made: All of those who said they lived alone were already young men and three out

of four live with a wife or a girl-friend. Most of those who live with friends live at the same time very near to close relatives. I found no statistical connection between those living with friends or alone and those who said that they lost a parent.

I attribute the high percentage of those living with friends or alone, 38.6% of my sample compared to Farrant's 7% to the fact that the boys of my sample were older. I also think that the Market Boys I dealt with a rather enterprising and independent lot.

Formal Education: In this field I found a remarkable difference between mine and Farrant's sample. As the figure below shows, the average educational level of sample is higher than that of Farrant's sample:

<u>Farrant's sample</u>		<u>My sample</u>	
No school	33%	13.7%	
P1 - P3	41%	13.7%	P4 - P7 38%
P4+	26%	72.4%	S1 - S4 34.5%

In the above, I recorded these figures as I was told, but, with one exception, I think the statements are correct. For those of my sample who had gone to school the average attendance was 6.5 years of those who had gone to school, half had left up to two years ago, the other half had left between 3 - 5 years ago. Like in Farrant's sample, except for one who said he had been thrown out, all others claimed to have left for lack of money. The remarkable difference between mine and Farrant's sample can be explained by several factors: It might be that the general level of education in Uganda today is higher than it was 18 years ago so that the difference for all of Farrant's three levels can be attributed to this general fact. Part of the difference for P1 - P3 and P4+ can be explained by the fact that the boys of my sample were older i.e. had more time to go to school than Farrant's sample had. To account for the difference between mine and Farrant's sample in regard to having been

to school at all and having attained a relatively high level as in my sample, I propose two further explanations: it seems that a certain amount of formal education is of help for today's market Boys to be successful and the income a successful Market Boy can earn today is attractive also for High School Students (which in part again explains the higher age of today's Market Boys)

The difference between the two samples in regard to formal education was reflected in another aspect: 5% of Farrant's total sample maintained that they were still going to school. Of the boys I interviewed, $\frac{1}{3}$ claimed to be still attending and to work on the market only half days, on Saturdays and in the holidays. According to their own statements, there was one each who went to P2 - S1 and two who said to go to S2 and S3. Of the $\frac{2}{3}$ who said to work full time, 38% of my sample asserted that they would go to school but could not make it due to economic constraints. Of Farrant's sample, only 18% said that they planned to start or continue education.

One simple explanation for the differences in these assertions could be the fact that my informants were more prone to lie to me. I do not know how Farrant's Market Boys rated their Uganda interviewers, but I could imagine that today's bag carriers assessed a middle aged Muzungu lady as being very approving of formal education. Furthermore, some boys said that they hoped to find a sponsor for their school fees while working on the market, and, to them, I might have been somebody to approach on that issue.

On the other hand, there were more Market Boys around during the holidays. I did not see all faces all of the time of the day and some of those claiming to go school showed me their last school report or a valid I.D. card from school.

As far as the eagerness of those who had left school to go back is concerned, I estimate that about half really would go, provided their overall material situation would not deteriorate. If they could cope with the discipline at school, I could not judge.

Earnings: Like Farrant's Market Boys, all boys of my sample said they were in the market because of the money they earned there. As for their income I asked two questions: "How much money do you earn on an average day?" and "Do you remember how much money you earned last week?"

Since there were good and bad days on the market and because many of the boys seemed to spend part of their earnings right away for food and drink, both questions were not easy to answer, even if one wanted to be honest and did not suspect the Tax Office right around the corner. All boys answered the first question and only few said they could not remember what they earned previous week.

Despite all possible inaccuracies, a pattern emerged out of the answers. Half of the boys claimed to earn from 150/= - 300/= a day, the other half gave their income as 400/- - 600/= a day. This same pattern, a cluster at the lower and one at the upper end of the scale mentioned, appeared for the weekly earnings: One half gave 800/= - 1,200/= a week the other gave 2,000/= - 3,600/= a week.

At the time my research was done the pay for carrying one basket ranged from 50/= - 150/=. Washing a car was said to bring between 20/= - 70/-. But there were some customers who either handed all the change they got after each transaction over to their market boys, and some who gave out all what was left in the purse at the end of shopping. The practices were confirmed by the customers I talked to.

Market Boys had some other sources of income besides the actual bag carrying. Though I think that some of the boys were boasting and

did not really earn as much as they claimed I believed that today bag carriers at Nakasero Market earn between 800/= and 2,000/= a week. I also think it is possible that one or two had an income of around 3,600/= per week.

These figures show, first of all, that to work as a Market Boy is remunerative a job, certainly more remunerative than most jobs which are in reach for the boys of my sample. Carrying the basket is certainly more remunerative than most jobs in the formal sector.

The monthly minimum wage today is 465/=. To compare this with the Market Boys income of between 3,200/= to 8,000/= is slightly misleading, because nobody, by whatever standards, can today live from a minimum wage. However, the father of one of the Market Boys earns just that, as his son told me.

I also asked if what the Market Boys earned was a good income. 1/3 replied "no" often adding "it is not enough"! 2/3 said "yes" often with the addition "for what I do" or "for the fact that I never worked anywhere else". With two exceptions, all those who said their income was not enough belonged to the group whose earnings were low.

On the other hand, compared to what one needs to live in Kampala these days, the earnings of the Market Boys are not exorbitant. So, when I asked them what they would do if they suddenly owned a large sum of money, the immediate answers touched on to modest wishes: besides clothes, and shoes, Saucepans, cups and some furniture was mentioned.

The figures quoted for income also show that there were marked differences among the market boys. My general observations also confirm this. In general, those boys who worked only part time earned less than the others. Those who attended school in the morning were particularly disadvantaged, because the most generous customers, like the Bazungu

housewives, shopped at that time of the day. I think that there was a tendency among schoolboys to skip school on Fridays because, like Saturdays, this is a particularly busy and rewarding day on the market. I could also imagine that those boys who used to go to school in the afternoon and who used to work in the mornings were tempted to drop out of school in case the school schedule changed. In general I believe that the money they might miss lured schoolboys out of school. As one school report stated "X is always absent. He is an impossible child. He is not interested in school at all". As this same school report stated, X nevertheless was promoted to the next grade. But also among those boys who work at the market full time income varies considerably. My figures show that a relative fluency in English is linked to a higher income. Statistically the reverse comes out even more clearly: those with poor English earn relatively little. The Market Boys themselves say that one of the skills a bag carrier needs to be successful is the ability to talk well and to talk in English. The reason is that in general foreigners pay better than Ugandans and to deal with them one needs to speak English. "To know how to deal with Bazungu" was given as prerequisite for success.

The boys spend the money they earned on food, clothes and rent (or part of the rent, depending on the living arrangements). Except for two who said they spent all their money on themselves. All others claimed to give part of their earnings to those they live with. One said he supported a parent he did not live with. 4 of them who were schooling said they were sponsored by a Muzungu. The others who still go to school claimed they paid their school fees. Two of those who are not at school themselves, pay the schoolfees for a brother, a claim confirmed by the respective brother.

For recreation all of the Market Boys went to Video shows and nearly half went to Discos.

Ten boys (38%) told me that they saved money. Half of those kept the savings at home or with a friend or a neighbour. Two saved with a seller on the market and three boys said that they had bank accounts.

Residence: 58% of the Market Boys lived in Kibuli. 17% lived in Bwaise. The others lived in Rubaga, Old Kampala, Mengo, Kamwokya, Nakawa and Kansanga.

The predponderance of Kibuli is so strong (one of the boys said "we all live in Kibuli") that, for a time, I thought the bag carrier trade is a Kibuli racket.

The residential pattern among Market Boys is explained by two factors: as I will show in some details below, a newcomer had to be introduced by a boy who already worked as a bag carrier, normally a brother or a friend. Since friendship was nearly exclusively based on residence, those who already work in the market brought boys from their area and the residential pattern emerged. This mechanism also explains the relative strength of those who lived in Bwaise. Those who lived in Kamwokya were introduced by a former Market Boy who lived there. For those who lived in Rubaga, Mengo, Old Kampala the connecting link seemed to have been the Africa Foundation. Those two who lived in Nakawa and Kansanga came on their own and managed to make it. For the dominance of Kibuli an additional factor comes into play: Kibuli is one of the poorest quarters of Kampala. As the boys told me, only temporary jobs were available.

Occupation of Parents: Here I have data for 26 boys which I record as told.

Fathers: 1 no answer

8 businessmen (ranging from shop owner in Luwum Street to selling sodas at Nakivubo Stadium)

5 workers

4 farmers (from big coffee farmer to farmhand)

3 mechanics or engineers

2 soldiers

2 civil servants

1 painter

Mothers: 2 no answers

9 business women (again ranging from shopowner to selling groundnuts)

5 housewives

1 teacher

1 tailor

1 typist

As far as income was concerned, there were wide variations in the different groups. If anything the occupation of parents show that the social and economic background of my sample varied widely.

Religion: 58% of my sample said they were Catholic, 31% said they were Moslem, only 2 boys were protestant and was a pentecostalist. Of those who lived in Kibuli, $\frac{1}{3}$ were Moslem, the others were catholics.

Leadership: Here I asked: "Are Market Boys more respected than others?" and do the Market Boys have a leader?" The answers I think were telling: 23% said that there are no respected Market Boys, sometimes adding that Market Boys can not be respected. 77% answered in the affirmative and some gave names of those who are respected by the other boys. They explained that respected were those who were either in the market for a long time and had experience or those who behaved well, who had good

habits. Only 4 boys (19% of those who answered in the affirmative) connected respect to strength and "a big figure", but one of those gave this reason with a certain amount of mockery, indicating that those with a "big figure" just demanded respect. As for leaders, the answers were nearly reversed: 27% said that there were, named some and gave experience as reason. 70% said that there are no leaders. Nearly all of those seemed to consider this question as being almost improper. "Because we are not recognised we cannot have a leader" reasoned one boy. "Leaders can only come from the market office or from the RC, not from us" said another. And consequently, all except one named the RC as leader.

Rules among Market Boys: As far as I could observe, the Market Boys of Nakasero are neither a well structured nor a homogenous group. Actually it seems to me that there are several subgroups, each one centered around one boy, who is more respected than the others and is regarded as a kind of spokesman by the others of the respective subgroup. These subgroups are, to a large part determined by residence and friendship but these two are again intertwined. 88.5% of the boys said that the best friends are neighbours and again pointed to neighbourhood as to why these boy/boys are friends. Moreover residence and friendship determine, to a large extent as to who can work as a bag carrier.

Though most boys claim that anybody could come and start to work as a Market Boy, they also say that it is better to be introduced by one of them. Otherwise it is very likely that the new comer is chased away by those who already work there. Of my sample, only one said to have come completely on his own and that he managed to fight his way. Another one was introduced by a Mzungu who used to shop there, but he also had to fight at the beginning. All the others were brought by a brother (16%) or a friend (77%) who were or are Market Boys. In both

cases the new comer is introduced as the brother of the one who brought him. The right to work as a bag carrier is transferred along real or assumed family ties. Through this mechanism the composition of the group is not accidental. Since, as we have seen, the Market Boys have no leader of their own, there is no urgency to enforce this or any other agreement among the boys. Therefore, what I call "rules" are rather behavioral guidelines. They work in action and their observance or non observance depends on the situation. In this sense, the rules are fluid and the measuring stick in regard to them seems to be the calculations of each boy if he gets away with what he does.

On the job, the central question for the Market Boy is, who is going to help the customers with their shopping? The Market Boys themselves say that the one who sees or reaches a customer first, has the right to the job. But at the same time they all admit that the last word lies with the customer, who has the choice.

Consequently the boys compete with each other for the attention of the customers, particularly for those who are new on the market or who are expected to be generous. As they themselves say, they try to appeal to the prospective client by talking nicely. In this informal competition, the reference to "I came first" is an attempt to limit discretion. It is an effort to cut down chance by introducing another principle. I got the impression that "first come" is stressed more when dealing with Bazungu. They are regarded as the most rewarding customers and so any advantage a boy might have over the others is brought into play. But I also think that Bazungu are seen as being more susceptible to a formula than Ugandan clients.

Open competition for customers is restricted to a certain extent by the only "institution" I found operative among the Market Boys: the personal customer, "omulumu gwange", my job.

All boys said that they have personal clients who regularly shop with them. 56.6% say have 4-7 own jobs, 30% claim to have between 10-20 personal customers and 13% said that they own 2-3 jobs. 69% say that Bazungu and Africans regularly come to them; 8% said that their personal customers are all Africans and 23% said that all their regular clients are Bazungu. One is said to be working only for Bazungu and this out of principle.

Most of the boys (77%) have another boy who replaces them when they are not around or are already working for another customer. Normally the boy who is the replacement is a good friend. He is somebody, as the boys say, whom the owner of the job trusts. One could also assume that, since the replacement is a boy who is trusted by the owner of the job, these boys always work together for all the regular customers of the first. One could also expect that the two boys work together as a team i.e. that boy B replaced A on his jobs and vice versa. Sometimes this is so, but in $\frac{2}{3}$ of the cases, neither custom, or rather the once found choice, nor reciprocity are the principles behind the selection of a replacement.

The boys themselves claim that not everyboy is suited for every customer and, psychologizing so to speak, they say that they select their replacement with regard to the customer. It is tempting to view the boys as "Naive" psychologists, and in many respects they are. but I think concern for the customer is not the leading motive behind replacement selection. It is rather the concern for, what the boys regard as their most important asset, their own job.

For the owner of the job (omulimu gwange) first of all is a source of regular income. But quite a number of customers are economic assets in several other ways. One quarter of the boys said that they would

approach their personal customers if they needed somebody to lend them money. The other boys said that they would ask their friends, particularly other Market Boys, and siblings on that issue. And actually most of those who said that, had done so and successfully. Personal customers, and in particular those who are Bazungu, deliver other goods as well. Many bring back clothes, shoes and goods like watches or calculators for their Market Boys when they return from holidays. When they leave Uganda, some give their boys a present, like . . . a radio. Two Market Boys who own a bicycle, got it from one of their personal clients. The regular customer is also the one normally approached to help with school fees to pay for his Market Boy. I do not want to be misunderstood: most personal customers do no more than pay for the actual carrying of the basket. When asked if he would take a regular job one boy said: "I cannot afford to leave the market, because then I would not get all the other things I now get from my customers".

As the name already implies omulimu gwange is perceived as a kind of property, and is treated as such in several ways. In case the owner of the job is unable to attend to his customer and the replacement helps with the shopping, this boy has to give the owner of the job a certain amount of the money he so earns. (10 out of 50/=; 30 out of 100/= were the sums named). If the customer does not find his boy nor the replacement and takes somebody else, this last one will hand over the basket, normally without a word, (at least not in front of the customer) as soon as the owner of the job turns up. In case the boy who has helped out has done already a lot of work, the owner of the job has to give him some, for this work, but he will keep some, even if the job is already finished, for his "right" as in the case of the replacement.

It is also regarded as slightly improper if the customer brings things for boys other than his Market Boy and his replacement. Naturally,

is not cheating but making profits. In practice, I found that this kind of cheating is common and it is sometimes done in cooperation with a seller. When I asked what happens if a customer is cheated in this way, only few said that they would tell the customer. Most said that nothing happens, provided the one who makes profits this way shares part of it with those who happen to be around.

If and how much the Market Boys cheat depends very much on how they rate the customer. As is to be expected, it is mainly done with Bazungu, who do not understand Luganda and who are not well versed in prices.

On the other hand, real stealing is not common with Market Boys who work as bag carriers, at least this is my impression. I think that most Market Boys know that their trade depends on a certain amount of trust, that at least they have to appear to be honest. And most seem to know how far they can go so as not to spoil their trade.

Image of self and expectations for the future.

Emin Pascha says that in 1878 the servants of foreign visitors who went to shop on the market right behind the Kabaka's palace were given escorts by the King of Buganda, (Emin Pascha 1983:115). I think that most of the Market Boys I interviewed would love to see themselves as these escorts. After all, those who regard themselves as particularly respected are said to call themselves "Diplomats".

Reality is different: "We are all Bayaye" said one boy. "We are all Bayaye, but we bag carriers are not real ones." "We are not pure Bayaye because we try to work" said another.

As for self image these quotes point into a rather sad direction as does the following statement: "The batembeyi call us Bayaye, but we have to call them their names."

the boys would say that every customer is free to do as he pleases (and I do not want to keep anybody from bringing as much as possible for all boys). I once brought a pair of shoes for a Market Boy who was not "entitled" because "I was not his job." Though he paid for the shoes, this boy nonetheless told the others that he had known me for long time from Mulago Hospital. I think he made up that story to establish an older relationship and one which originated outside the market, to justify his "privileges". The immediate effect was that many others came and asked me to bring something for them. And this, though not in line with the principle, is in line with the practice.

The concept of omulimu gwange restricts competition but it does not rule out competition forever. Though the job is perceived as a form of property, this property is not safe and unthreatened and it has to be guarded well.

Quarrels over customers are common. About 80% of the boys say that the others do not respect their jobs. If a boy wants to work for the customer of another one just for that day, he usually tells the customer that neither his boy nor the replacement is around. But several of the boys said that others had taken away their jobs and one boy told me that he himself enticed a personal customer away from another Market Boy.

Answers as to what happens when a customer is permanently taken away from his original owner vary. Most say that one cannot do anything because, after all, it is the customer who has the choice. Some said that they would fight and not only with words to get their customers back. One said he would try to negotiate and may be pay. If this would not work, he would try to steal the other customers from the one who took his. One said, that normally witchcraft is employed in such a case, but he was not willing to go into details. If a boy intends to steal, so to say, the personal customer of another Market Boy, he

will tell him that his own boy cheats him. The accusation of cheating is nearly never done openly, i.e. when the so accused is around. The accusation of cheating aims at the central point in the relationship between a Market Boy and his personal customers. According to the boys their clients come back to them and does not shop with another boy because they trust them and regard them as honest. "They know, I cannot steal them" said one of the boys. The customers I talked to confirmed that but some had reservations: "He is reasonably honest, he tries his best," I was told. The best opportunity to make the accusation of cheating is the boy who is the replacement. Without arousing suspicion, he can talk to the customer alone when working for him. He might even be able to prove his charge by getting things cheaper. I do not know how common it is that a replacement lures away a customer. But I assume that the prevention of this special kind of theft is one motive behind the pattern of replacement selection. By choosing different boys, the owner of the job spreads the risk. Another, and I think equally important motive why most owners of jobs choose different boys is a kind of favouritism. To become a successful Market Boy, one has to be popular, I was told, not only with the customers, but also with the other boys. Popularity, I believe is in itself a safeguard against "trespassing" and it also helps, so I think, against all kinds of accusations. Among the Market Boys the handing out of favours or of money are both methods to become popular. (One boy said that his best friend is the one who once gave him money just so, for free).

In a general way, the accusation of threatening is common. Most Market Boys say that there are others who cheat and some say that some of the others boys steal. The common method of cheating is to tell the customer a higher price than is actually asked for and keep the difference. In principle the boys disapprove of cheating and only few said that this

I enquired why only boys and no girls work as bag carriers on the market. "For fear" said one. Another explained: "It is a job which people minimize, so girls cannot do it." And one even said: "Those girls who are Bayaye like us go to Club Clouds to look for customers."

As for self-esteem and assessment of Market Boys as a group, the boys do not differ from the wider society.

So it is not surprising that 66% of the boys claim that they only work because of the money, but do not really like it, because, as they sometimes add, it is not a real job. And it is also not considered a permanent one. $\frac{1}{3}$ of the sample said that there is no age limit, and that there are two market boys who are already big men. $\frac{2}{3}$ of my sample said that after a certain age, which they gave as between 20-25 years, one can no longer work as a bag carrier. If this is so, because it is not a decent job, fit for a man as some said, or for the more practical reason that customers do not trust boys which are too old, the age of my sample supports the second view. Even if some of the boys adjusted the age, none is older than 25 years.

With regard to the future of Market Boys I asked several questions. One has to note here that most of those who claimed that there is no age limit, answered the very general question as to what they think Market Boys do, when they get older.

The answers varied: They go back to the village, or back to school, they become soldiers, they become sellers or even shopowners, some find work with a Muzungu or go into industry. One suggested that they become pick-pockets. I assume that most of those answers are based on experience but since most Market Boys know at least one former Market Boy I asked more specifically: What do those you know do now? Some, I learned, left the market in 1985 to join the NRA.

Some former Market Boys now deal in used clothes, sell books on Kampala Road, or sell newspapers. One has a stall on the market and one became a shopowner. One, who was said to have made it, was now a driver with the World Bank. In short, the answers to the specified questions showed that most former Market Boys stay in trade and most of them work as self-employed. Only few had found employment, because, as one boy put it: "Jobs are rare."

Quite a number of Market boys say that they need a job and look for one and ask their customers to find a job for them. So I asked my sample, how they would react if offered a job. Two of them were not sure what they would do. Of those who answered 37.5% said they cannot take up a permanent job now. Except for one, all of those said that they want to finish school first. 62.5% said that they would take the job. Of those 60% claimed that they would take any regular job, even if the pay would be less than they earn now, but I must admit that I do not believe all of them. 40% of those willing to take the job expressed some reservations, either to the nature of the job (f.e. not as a gardener) or in regard to salary. Since going back to the village was mentioned quite often when asked in general about the future of Market Boys, I enquired if they see farming as an option for themselves. I did not ask, "Would you like" or "Would you want to become a farmer?" I just asked "Would you become a farmer?". 38.4% answered in the negative. I doubt that most of the 61.6% who said that they would become farmers would really like to be. Many of them, consider farming as their last resort and from the remarks they added on that point, I got the impression that if they would have to go back to the village, they would rather try to become traders than farmers. This I think is not surprising. Nearly 60% of the boys were born in town and the majority

58% of the boys claim to go to the village more or less frequently.

Answers as to how often they go varied widely.

I think that basically today's Market Boys are an urban oriented group. This was confirmed by their answers as to what jobs they wished for themselves. Only two wanted to become farmers (and I believe only one of them). Nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ wanted to become drivers or mechanics, 18% aimed for engineering, aspirations fitting young males. 13.6% wanted to become shopowners. All in all 55% aimed for lower middle class jobs. To become a teacher, a lawyer, a doctor, or other professions which need academic training was only mentioned by those who claimed to be still going to school. I also found that the general outlook of the Market Boys is rather conservative. When I asked how they would like to be when they are 40 years old, few said "I cannot know", but 88.5% answered. "I would not like to be like today", "not be seen how I am now" was the general feeling. A house, a good job, a family and children were mentioned by all who answered. Two wanted to have built a nice house for their parents. Several wanted a house in the village with the family living there and a job for themselves in town. One emphasized that he wanted to marry a girl from his home area. All these hopes for the future are not only conservative, but, so I think, also in tune with traditional values.

But there is one slight inconsistency. Answers to both last mentioned questions show that the aspirations of the Market Boys point to jobs and employment. In reality most of them go into trade, mainly self-employment. When I asked them, what they would do if they would suddenly own a large sum of money, the single item mentioned most (by $\frac{1}{3}$ of my sample) was, to start a business. I think that this inconsistency is due to what one could call situational adaptation.

I think that in fact carrying bags on Nakasero Market is a stage in life which functions as a kind of apprenticeship. First of all the boys are on the market to earn money, but it also seems that quite a number of them manage to save money. Most of the hawkers (Batembei) on this market started as Market Boys, I was told. Furthermore stay in the market gives the bag carriers the opportunity to meet prospective employers, or, so they hope. But stay in the market provides the boys also with connections in the trading community.

Given that my findings are reasonably correct, as individuals the Market Boys are rather conservative and do not markedly differ as far as views and values are concerned with the wider society. Neither in their hopes for the future nor in their leisure time activities do they differ from young Ugandans interviewed 18 years ago (Wallace & Weeks, 1972: 359)

Though it is well possible that some, for whatever reasons, might become delinquent, I do not think that the group as such is deviant. I do not think that as a group the Market Boys who work as bag carriers on Nakasero Market are a subculture or a contraculture in Yingers' sense.

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