

insatiable solidarity stands in opposition to the Ankave's determination that everyone should mind their own business (even if a neighbour is only a few minutes away) and to their strong penchant for long stays in the forest (Bonnemère 1996; Godelier 1986; Lemonnier 2006). When an individual garden is cleared, an Ankave man and his wife take on this forest work alone. Cooperation is almost exclusively the affair of the couple, and even then the husband and the wife carry out complementary tasks. Of course there are some contexts in which cooperation is just as intense among the Ankave as it is among the Baruya, particularly in warfare and male initiations. But for horticulture, hunting, or the manufacture of objects, the Ankave and Baruya worlds are at opposite ends of the spectrum.

Figure 13.1.



Far from being only a physical means to protect alimentary plants from the pigs, and to delimit family plots, a Baruya fence materializes and demonstrates crucial social relations: those between men and women, between male co-initiates, and between brothers-in-law.

Since no characteristic features of gestures, tools, or technical knowledge account for this disparity in the way they organize their work, it must be attributable to other domains of social reality where radically different practices are observed between different Anga groups: namely, initiations, marriage, and ways of working together. This is what a study of cultural technology is able to demonstrate.

Looking at a Baruya fence from a technological point of view—describing the artefact as well as its manufacture, comparing these observations with those from other Anga or New Guinea gardens fences, and placing the particular artefact and its associated technical activities into a comparative study of Anga social organizations at large—reveals that the collective effort of fencing a Baruya garden is a reaffirmation of a certain number of social relations as described earlier. In other words, these impressive ramparts against pigs are not only assigned the concrete task of establishing an impenetrable barrier between pigs and tubers. In them and through them, a whole portion of the Baruya social order is produced, with the emphasis first and foremost on cooperation but also an emphatic display of male solidarity, as a group opposed to the women. Further, there is absolute reciprocal confidence and mutual assistance of the co-initiates, and, lastly, a focus on concordance and collaboration in work between brothers-in-law, who, according to the marriage rule, have ‘exchanged’ ‘sisters’.