

## **Combining Rationales from Bolivip The Person and Property Rights Legislation in Papua New Guinea**

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Marriage involves each partner adapting their ways. Extended networks of relatives are drawn together by anticipating the kind of joint-person that may emerge from the combination. As such my discussion here is prompted by the long-arranged marriage between two rationales of ownership. I am interested here in the new joint-person to be created by Papua New Guinean ideas of ownership, and those of international intellectual property legislation (such as the World Trade Organisation sponsored Trade-related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement, and the UN sponsored Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)).<sup>1</sup> I use some examples of how Papua New Guineans combine rationales of ownership in order to look at this new legislative combination. Of course, Section 9 of the Papua New Guinea Constitution exclusively lays out the sources of law by combining statute law with the underlying law. The underlying law is itself already a combination of rationales: that is, of indigenous Papua New Guinean customs, and the common law of England as it stood at Independence in 1975 (Kalinoe n.d.).

As a British social anthropologist, I am drawn into the marriage through participating in a research project which involves collaborations with Papua New Guinean anthropological and legal scholars, as well as with a particular