

## **ASIEN 123 (April 2012)**

Abstract

### ***The Holy Way, Inc.: Papuas heilige Pfade in Politik und Wirtschaft***

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In times which are marked by an impetuous need for natural resources, a vastly ignored „end oft he world“ now turns into an attractive global hub, where “East” and “West” are in confrontation with an amazing plurality of localities, commonly compiled by the toponym of Papua. The article focuses on new alliances between Papuans and the larger world and follows an Evangelical Church in Papua, i.e. the ‘Holy Way, Inc’, on its mission to Israel, which nowadays serves as a role model for an imagined Papuan nation. Jean and John Comaroff’s theoretical thoughts on the commodification of culture and the incorporation of identity into emerging ethnic federations, which understand themselves as identity-based commercial enterprises are particular suitable to survey current developments in Papua. For, also in Papua, neo-liberalism advanced the emergence of political economies, which are characterized by the subordination of identity politics to the interest of capital. Both processes mentioned by the Comaroffs, that is, the commodification of ethnicity and the commodification of religion is at play here. However, it is in the form of Divinity, Inc. that a significant number of Papuans strive to reposition their ethnic identity.

**Keywords:** Legal pluralism, identity politics, political commodity, decentralization, matriliney, Minangkabau, Indonesia