



# **Names are Thicker than Blood: Kinship and Ownership amongst the Iatmul (British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship Monographs)**

*Andrew Moutu*

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This is an ethnographic study of kinship and the nature and behavior of ownership amongst the much-studied Sepik River Iatmul people.

Until very recently, anthropology has remained a Western analytical project for understanding and conceptualizing non-Western societies, and was often geared towards the pragmatics of colonial and post-colonial interest. In the spirit of social science, anthropology has formulated a rigorous method of research and a specialized language of description and analysis. Embedded within this approach are metaphysical assumptions about the nature of human society, culture, history, and so forth.

This volume provides the vantage point from which to rethink anthropology's central assumption about social relations by focusing on the way in which social relations are assumed and prefigured in the methodological approach in data gathering and in subsequent theorization. It presents an ethnographic study of the nature of personhood, name and marriage systems, gender, understandings of kinship, and concomitant issues of ownership amongst the Sepik River Iatmul people, a people well-known and of enduring importance to anthropology on either side of the Atlantic and in Australasia.

Written from the viewpoint of a Melanesian scholar who comes from a country that has been the subject of much anthropological thinking, this volume engages with and examines the foundational assumptions of anthropology.



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