

Chapter 7: Meri Tultul¹

One thing I have always felt to be wrong about this book is that it makes no mention of one quite extraordinary Kuma woman, a woman at Kudjip who was a *tultul* when I was in New Guinea. I had no idea of writing a book about women when I went to New Guinea, or I would certainly have obtained her life history. As it was, I met her briefly on two occasions. I did want to find out how a woman could become a *tultul*, but in those days there was a very bad road to Kudjip and only one vehicle at Minj which was always in administrative use whenever I wanted to go west. Consequently I walked to Kudjip and also rode there on the back of a motorbike, but never had any appreciable time there. When I was certain my trip later this year would come off I resolved to get this woman's life history and include it in the book. Now I learn that she has died. I am informed that the Nazarene mission at Kudjip has collected a lot of information about her; I only hope it is the kind I want, the kind that may explain how she could become a government official.

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1 This is the only material relating to the subject Marie intended to cover in this chapter.

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