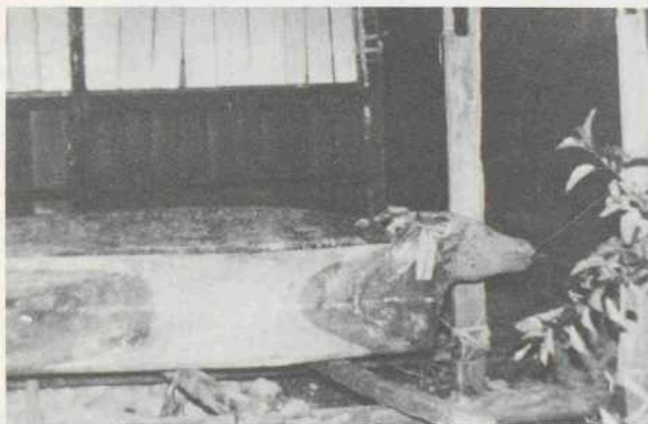


slightest smell in the room the coffin being hermetically closed with a sort of putty made of *gutta percha* mixed with fine fibres from the bark or leaves of a tree. I asked when the burial was likely to take place but the attendants answered that they did not know; the time was uncertain; they first must have luck in some way or other, either a good rice harvest or, what was most probable, a successful head-hunting expedition. A head or two must be secured somehow since it was a chief who was dead.»



1
Slong in
Village Graveyard.

The Second Stage

The *lungun* remains in the graveyard for several years, some informants say for at least three years. While the flesh of the corpse decomposes, the *liau* is believed to return to the grave regularly. Therefore, food offerings are prepared by the relatives and suspended under the roof over the *slong*.

After this period, a ceremony is held, called *kenyau* or *nulang*, at which the spirit (*roh*)⁴ of the deceased is called again and offered food from a pig which has been sacrificed for the occasion. Then the coffin is opened, the skeleton removed and broken up, the skull separated from the bones, and the remaining flesh removed from the bones by washing with coconut water by persons specially designated for the task (*penulang*). Both bones and head are then wrapped in cloth and stored in one of the funerary urns (*antang* or *guci*). For the ordinary dead, the latter are then buried in the ground or placed in one of the mortuary chambers (*rinak*) in the cemetery owned by the family. The bones of *manti* or *pengawa* members are stored in more valuable *antangs* and kept in the house of the family or with the *kepala adat* until the *kwangkei* ceremony.

Kwangkei, The Third Stage

Ideally after seven years the final ceremony is held at which the *roh* of the deceased is taken to join the ancestral spirits in heaven; but in practice, it may take several years more before the family has gotten enough money and food together to shoulder such a large feast.

Sacrificial animals such as chickens, pigs and at least one buffalo have to be raised or bought; specialists have to be hired to carve *blontang*, *selimat* and *tepla*⁵; a ritual specialist, *wara*, has to be hired to perform the necessary ritual and incantations and

4
Roh is the generic term for a death spirit covering both *liau* and *kelelungan*.

5
Blontang is the carved sculpture to which the sacrificial buffalo is tied; *selimat* contains the