Chapter 7

Aptitudes of these heathen, and their superstitious rites and ceremonies

They are morally depraved, being great thieves, as already stated. They also act as couriers and envoys for the mortal enemy (of man) and of that precious jewel which, according to Tertullian, only blushes and runs if it remains hidden, that is, the Truth. This the prophet\(^{(a)}\) as greatly longed to find in the streets and the marketplace as he wished to dislodge from the human heart the diabolical usury of wickedness and the many forms of double-dealing. As I have stated, they are skilled at agriculture, (for instance,) the raising of livestock such as cows, goats and hens. They are equally skilled at fishing, using what are called camboas (fish-traps), made of tara, or palm branches, or mangrove withes. The mangrove is a tree which resembles our willow in that it grows along the banks of rivers, but it is quite different in its foliage, which is more like the large leaf of our wild lentisk, the tree from which baskets are made in Portugal at the season of the olive harvest. To continue, these trees are not as thick as ash-trees but are very much taller, and they have a great variety of uses. The fruition of the tree is surprising, for the further it grows, the growth resembling that of a cane, so the further it bends towards the ground. Thus it serves the trees not only at times as a support but also as its seed. Mats are woven from (the foliage of) these trees, though the mats are not as tightly constructed as ours, for the withes are a thumb-width apart. In length they are about 12 palm-spans, and they use them to block up the channels which at high tide carry water to and from inner points, so that when all the water has left at low tide they can collect a great quantity of fish. For this reason fish are very cheap here.

The land is not lacking in 'acorns' (?) which serve the heathen here as olive groves and vineyards serve us in Europe, for they draw from the clusters of flowers (an oil) which is different from that produced by the chaveo in the winter season. Winter begins here at the time of our summer and lasts into part of autumn; /f.24v/ and in their summer season the bunched fruit of the chaveo serves them in the same way. These two are

\(^{(a)}\) See Isaiah, 59 \(\text{v.14}\), Ibi veritas in plateis \(\text{v.15}\) actually quia corruit in platea veritas, 'for truth is fallen in the streets!', where it means that only evil and profanity occupy the public streets and truth everywhere is lacking, Veritas in oblivione, etc \(\text{v.15}\)
different: the flowering cluster resembles that produced by our palms in Europe, but the second sort is a bunch completely made up of fruit in little cells and armed with sharp spikes. Apart from being arranged like an army rearguard carrying pikes, there is nothing in Europe with which it can more suitably be compared than a skinned pomegranate with its white and red seeds, if there were a pomegranate the size of a medium Calcutta pumpkin and shaped like a pyramid or sugar-loaf. But the fruit is bigger than a pomegranate seed, each being the size of a fine olive with a large stone. The skin of the chavoo is something like that of an olive, and when it is eaten a pith resembling our esparto muido (thin grass) is left in the mouth.

From this bunch, I repeat, whose support is almost as wide as an extended hand and is fibrous, a special wine is drawn. This is less pleasing when it is fresh than when it is kept from day to day, being very ruddy. From the outer pulp an oil is made, a more healthy oil than ours, although red in colour. It is not only in regular use for the table and for lighting, but the heathen use it for the ointments they commonly apply. They make these themselves, especially from the kernel of the nut. No less do they make use of the eye of the palm tree, from which they draw palm-cabbages which are very tasty and sweet; and they use the foliage and branches to enclose their houses and to make ropes. They also value the little nuts of the cibes, eating the outer pulp but keeping the stone which they plant in the earth, and from the kernel, which is very tasty with a taste like that of an apple, there grows a little palm looking like a medium-sized turnip, when cooked tastes like chestnuts. The foliage of this tree, as well as being used for ropes and various other things, provides the material for the large number of baskets which are as much a feature of Banhu country as they are lacking among the peoples of Sierra Leone. Some people think differently, but we can accept what they say only if they are referring to the baskets used in the Serra to winnow (?) rice, which I shall mention in the proper place.

Although I have already mentioned their skill in agriculture, I add a point here which I should not pass over, as it will interest persons living in these parts. The Banhus (b) are very fat: they are also very brave and very unconquering in peace and war. They are the best

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(b) The Banhu, a working people, well fitted for the business of managing families.
workers in this Ethiopia and very eager to acquire and own chattels. live in districts ruled by the Cassangas, for at almost every step in lands there are many kings. With respect to social intercourse and in particular to the management of private affairs, their way of bringing children(c) is the usual way among the other heathen, and the same apply to all their superstitious practices. Each man has many wives, the number being in proportion to their means, more or less. As well as carrying normal duties in the upkeep of the family, such as spinning and so on, these women are keen traders and travel from fair to fair to gain a livelihood. (Hence) on the number of his wives depends the greater or lesser importance of the household of each man, whatever rank he holds. Normally there are fairs every day, for each village has one every seven days. These women manure the land with the mud or dung they throw on it and they weed and harvest the staple crops and pound them in mortars. Usually dress in cotton cloths, coloured or black, which they dye with local dyestuffs.

The king and gentry and all the well-off wear common Moorish smocks with very full breeches, richly pleated, resembling knee-length drawers with many pleats - but this comparison is not exact, for this form of breeches is seen nowhere else, and when they are laid out they look like coirão. Women wear cotton cloths which they earn themselves, as they do cloths normally. Their matrimonial contracts, wrongly so-named since they are not true marriages, carry no natural or civil obligation. Gentry give villagers some cows or anything else of value in exchange for the daughters they receive from them. Those girls are treated as servants and lack the standing of a wife. Their fathers are not regarded as fathers-in-law, brothers as brothers-in-law, or their alleged husbands as sons-in-law, and the servant herself is not considered a daughter-in-law. Their role is only to serve sensuality(d), a role which the disgraceful and evil custom

(c) They buy children so that those with money can adopt them.

(d) In his "Economica" Aristotle recommended continence to husbands away from home, giving as a moral example Ulysses, who, long absent though married to Penelope, was tempted to sin by Circe, daughter of Atlas, but not even her promise of immortality, though he believed it, could overcome or break his fidelity. Today absences are sought and only hell can reckon the extent to which men yield (to temptation).
of the heathen bestows on them. The Portuguese and men of all other kinds who live a permissive life of corrupt morals here make a point of employing these (respected) names for the fathers and brothers of the women whom they keep as nominal servants, to the damnation of their own souls./f.25v/ This polite and politic language conceals another description as shocking to a true Christian as the behaviour is unworthy of him.(e) But though they want to present their behaviour in a good light for the eyes of the world, by excusing themselves in terms of their need to have their households looked after, this never succeeds in the eyes of God; instead it is only the seal hanging from the writ of their eternal condemnation.(f)

This shows us the area of opportunities created by the presence of these servants, and this common practice causes so much disgust among those who fear the Lord that they are scandalized when they hear these terms, on account of the discredit their use in this way throws on the holy sacrament, both among the savages and among those who are descended from them and from Portuguese blood. Although the latter have been brought up in the Christian religion, their attachment is wavering, because just as their Portuguese ancestor came from outside so does their attachment in matters of faith, and they commonly drift back to their primary principles. And this breeds in the heathen a thousand causes of disorder and total confusion. First, these gentry can sell these women if they commit adultery;)

(e) "Per vos non blasphematur nomen Dei !" "For the name of God is blasphemed ... through you ...", Romans 2:24. Through these in-laws and these bad Christians who by their heathen practices may be named heathen.

(f) Mel. Scandalo Exod., 25. He who makes a well and does not cover it must pay up if a donkey falls in. How many souls fall because of those who set a bad example!

(g) The Banhus can (even) sell servant girls because of maleficio (evil spells).
But it often happens that they sell them (on this excuse) simply because of some moment of displeasure, the heathen being capricious. They accuse them of these offences publicly and falsely, and innocent persons thus lose the mainstay of life, which is liberty, a jewel so precious that here on the earth below it can only be taken away in exchange for the richer profit of eternal life and the service of the Lord.

However, if the servant woman is of noble birth and she is living with a commoner, any time that she wishes to leave him and take another master, she can do so. Hence it is common for these ladies to unite themselves with men of lower standing, in order to give themselves more scope for sensuality and more free licence to lead a dissolute life, in little or no subjection, since their goodwill, its presence or absence, controls the supply of favours to their boors. Because of this, these men present perfect illustrations of the henpecked husband, for instead of being, in relation to their wives, the head, they are not even the feet but only the slaves of the feet, their wives' feet; since these women order them about with kicks and make them perform more turns than a child does whipping his tops.\(^{(h)}\) Nor is this surprising, as these men — at whose marriage the Lord is not present — are only straw husbands, not real ones, and hence they are controlled by the relationship they have established with the women.

But so that we can /f.26/ conclude this subject in a more pleasant strain, I propose at this point to ask a question which that glorious saint, St Basil, posed in an ingenious form, and to which he made a reply of some subtlety, suitably worthy of the genius of so great a saint. It fits in appropriately here. In his book De Virginitate (About Virginity), St Basil asked: "Why did God, when he wished to nurture in the hearts of the two sexes, that is, in man and woman, the seeds of affection, give the woman the advantage, by making her much less passionate towards the man than he to her? Why was he not pleased to treat both equally?"\(^{(i)}\)

\(^{(h)}\) Marianus, on Penitence.

\(^{(i)}\) Said Adam on seeing Eve: "Propter hanc, etc" /\("Because of this..." ? misquotation of "She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man", Genesis 2:23// He does not take a woman (?): he remains silent, because God willed that man should be attached to woman. The married man is both master and slave.
In reply to the question, the saint said: "This was in recompense for the subjection which God has imposed on the woman by making the man the head of household affairs, and by making her so subordinate in this respect that a discreet and prudent woman at whose espousals there was no lack of wine, that is, of flowing grace, will not so much as raise her eyelashes without her husband's consent. And this is why she keeps her hair long, it being the reins by which the man takes her in hand and steers her through the mysterious journey of life." (j) For St Paul said "Vir est caput mulieris" ["Man is the head of woman"], a gloss on 1 Corinthians 11,3-10, and the apostle recommended women to be punctilious in their subjection and seclusion, while he wished them to devote themselves to this because of the disorders which normally result from being seen (publicly). Such (public exhibitions of themselves) are what St Bernard called "the plague of the soul". This was the case with Dinah, as we learn from the Scriptures ["Dinah...went out to see the daughters of the land..."], Genesis 34:1. Hence it is that God allows women slippers, which they consider a luxury but which are really restraints on their feet. The most fashionable slippers are fetters, so that they cannot move in them. (1)

(j) And master of the woman. Genesis 2 [ : 16]: God gave man the command: "Ex omni ligno" ["Of every tree (of the garden thou mayest freely eat...""] and then he formed woman. He wished that she should learn from her husband.

(k) "Filii enim sanctorum sumus, et non possimus ita conjungi, sicut gentes quae ignorant Deum", Tobias 8 [ : 5]. For we are sons of the sanctuary and cannot therefore be thus united, as are the heathen who do not know God.

(l) Exodus 4 (?). The Egyptians made a law that women should walk barefoot. Plutarch says that this was so that they could slip out without embarrassment, to see or be seen.
This is what the Lord intended in the law which said: "Three times in year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God" [Exodus 23:17, or Deuteronomy 16:16]. The text is silent about women, in case some of them should become pilgrims for less devout reasons.

But because man, enjoying his dominant status, has aspired, as they say, to even higher things, the Lord turned again and made him subject to the woman in the matter of passion (m), this being a servitude incomparably more terrible than the subjection of the woman in regard to obedience. The man became the woman's slave, she the loadstone, he the needle, so that when man brought the whole world beneath his feet (n) he left it in the hands of woman. For he has raised her to have such charm and exterior graces that by her eyes, her conversation, her laughter and her tears, and the /f.26v/ appropriate bashfulness, she gains everything (o) Woman, who owes so much to the Lord for having given her so many advantages in this respect, His primary design of her, ought to show him a thankful heart while she exactly observes her obligations as a wife (p) since God made her for this expressly. As the glorious Augustine said, this is why He did not take her from the head (of the man) lest it fill her with pride, or from the feet, lest she be treated as a slave, but from the side, the Lord thus symbolising that indissoluble contract of their divinely-ordained association, that great mystery (of matrimony). Many women, less honest

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(m) Virgo in Haebro dicitur alma, id est, escondida. [In Hebrew virgo 'maid' means 'soul', that is, what is hidden.] It appears that seclusion was not so necessary in early times. Rebecca went to the well alone, Genesis 24 [16], Rachel kept her flock with the male shepherds, Genesis 29 [9].

(n) It befits a woman to be long-suffering and patient. See Rharia, Frei Filipe, p. 1,272 (?).

(o) From these come the peaceful home and family. If husbands are disagreeable and bad-tempered, women should take water in the mouth while speaking to them.

(p) Woman's display: "Pro suavi odore faetor, pro zona funiculus, pro crispante crine calvitium et pro facia pectorali ciliicum" [For scent a fetid smell, for a belt a string, for waving hair baldness, for the breast a harsh cloth].
than Rebecca, of whom we are told in Genesis, chapter 14 \[24:65\], that when she saw her husband Isaac, she took a veil and covered herself, are so forgetful in their vulgar haste that they strike at the honour of their head (, the man), desiring contrary to all idea of right that the head should lie at their feet and, what is worse, that his self-respect should lie under their feet. Yet the honour of man is so precious that it cannot be compared with the most fine gold or the most valuable jewels from the East.

Now let us discuss the houses (of the Banhus). They are of wattle and clay, covered with thatch, in the shape of a pavilion. As has been stated, each house has a wall around it, and each wife has her own house, or nearly each. In their judicial ordeals, which are for the investigation of crimes, these people make use of the abominable ordeal of 'red water'\(q\). This ordeal is as commonly employed among the heathen of Ethiopia as testimony by multiple witnesses is with us. (But) Kings are first given information this latter way, certain of their followers acting as messengers in order to please kings and fulfill their role as flattering courtiers, a role welcomed and very common at a court. Everything is in excess (there), except for the man who deals in truths. These carriers of news hold such a view of the covetousness of their lords that they present as without doubt what in fact is full of doubt, or even has no semblance of truth. (Confident assertion) on the part of these men is rewarded among the Banhus where things are easily accepted. But if the matter cannot be so clearly understood, it is common for them to make use of this infernal water in their judicial processes - in place of our witnesses, as I said. 'Red water' kills the wretch who drinks it if, as generally happens, the official who administers it wants it so, or if the accused is such a lonely individual that he lacks friends to save him with

\(q\) Red water. This appears to allude to the waters, mixed with other things, used by the Hebrews and called proof-waters: they drank these to afford proof of certain occult offences. And they said that Moses used them to learn about those guilty of worshipping idolatrously the calf, when he broke it into powder and gave it to them to drink with certain curses. See Rabbis Sefardam in Coment. Sup. Exod. : "The guilty had their lips coated with gold dust and died, the innocent drank it without hurt". Exodus 32 \[20\]. Apart from this water, there is another kind given to obtain proof of adultery which is given to women suspected of this; and any woman who has fallen swells up. This was zeal carried to extremes.
antidotes in the form of emetics as I mention in Part II, when I discuss the judicial system of the Sapes. They attack the household /f. 27/ of this forsaken wretch and confiscate all his goods. And this provides one of the most common justifications put forward by traders in these parts for acquiring and possessing, without the necessary conditions for true ownership, a large number of those chattels for which Guinea is renowned. Since this is a poor justification offered in bad faith it is not in keeping with the intention of His Holiness, or with that of His Majesty in the decrees which he has published concerning freedom in this trade, a matter full of pitfalls and truly a labyrinth for consciences. More generally it is a matter threatening eternal condemnation for souls, because of the carelessness and negligence often manifested on the part of the commercial agents when considering the justice or injustice of the causes of enslavement in individual cases, a requirement pressed on the Most Christian kings by the Supreme Pontiff. They also make use of the ordeal by red-hot iron. In less serious cases the iron is heated and placed in the palm of the hand, with some very slight pieces of grass under the iron. The accused takes several turns around a set area and if he is not burnt and withstands the heat he is immediately absolved from the charge. The Lord sometimes permits the devil to perform this (trick) to punish the heathen for having corrupted the dictates of natural law by their multiplicity of vices. This is what St Paul says about these savages: "They have known and know God: all confess Him but they neither glorify nor honour Him as they know He deserves: chastised they remain blind, without understanding what a great God they are called on to serve, and they have turned to objects of creation and worshipped these instead of God". Although these (Banhus), like the people in the text, are aware and state that there is a God, because vice keeps them in darkness they live like madmen, running hither and thither and resembling the players of Blind Man's Buff. In their wars these Banhus use various amulets, and they often employ a bekerin as a magician to prepare for them magic medicines which are made from certain herbs, in the same way as in Moorish geomancy. And if these are not successful, they make new ones.

(r) Paul: "Qui cum Deum cognovissent, non sicut Deum glorificaverunt, ideo obscuratum est cor eorum, etc"...when they knew God, they glorified him not as God...and their foolish heart was darkened", Romans 1:21
Whenever they decide to go to war or assault (an enemy) they follow the traditional practice of the heathen. They have special chinas, which in their total ignorance they consider valuable in their moments of need, and to these they make sacrifices which are as brutish as they are themselves. For they always offer the chinas the nastiest things, such as the heads and feathers of cocks, and their blood or that of other animals. Over these they pour palmwine, which is white, and they chew cola and sprinkle and daub it over the sacrifice. They fill themselves with the better bits, such as the meat, whose bones they throw back to the interceding idol, and with wine and other things. They believe that once this ceremony is held, they have achieved their end with the idol, so that when they know misfortune, it can be eliminated by superstitions ritual (?). But in relation to what is good they deceive themselves, inasmuch as they do not attain it, but believing sincerely that their abominable sacrifices ascend to God, they depart complacently, as if they had attended a (holy) jubilee. If after they have performed these ceremonies to petition for something from God they do not obtain it, they apply to their witches and give them what is necessary to perform a cramene. These priests go and offer this to the idol, and when the idol is asked about the messages they convey to it, the devil sometimes replies. But he never speaks clearly, only making a loud sound, um, um.

In medical matters, some of them are expert herbalists, and hence they perform cures like doctors and surgeons. Some cures are so striking and are performed so rapidly that they are of interest to those most learned in the art (of medicine). This can be seen in the case of those given a wound measuring a palm-span in breadth from a spear of the kind they have, a wound which is cured in 8–10 days, without suppuration, by means of a wonderful herb. The disorders which arise from sensuality they flatten like hosts (?), the outer appearance being that of a living thing(?); and those they treat are instantly better. But if an illness is unknown to them and they will not run the risk of treating it, they obtain from the sick man something to give to the china, since they have persuaded the people that (when they are sick) witches are devouring them. By this trickery these priests make the man believe that they will go to the idol and will demand that it does not permit this to happen, by causing

(s) The worst (part) for God.
that person (? the witch) to feel regret and sorrow for the ill he has done, so that he then leaves the victim alone. But if the sick wretch dies, they say that witches ate him up. No-one dies here, for to die is to be "eaten up". "They have eaten him" means "they have killed him". They do not attribute death to God, for they say that as God is good and the author of all good things, including life, it is not God who takes it away. They accept a thousand lies about the soul, believing and asserting that it wanders about on earth; and if anyone bears a resemblance to a dead person they say that he is the dead man’s soul. They are so imbued with this idea that they consider (certain animals) as rational transformations of the human body, such as the tame snakes which make their way about houses and are useful in the way cats are with us, also monkeys, big elephants, in fact any animal they fancy.

As for leopards, I will describe a remarkable thing that happened some ten years ago at Bichangor and which was witnessed /f.28/ by whites. A woman of this town, leaving her house at dawn, met a leopard which there and then killed her and carried her to the bush a musket-shot outside the town. When the citizens saw the traces of blood and found the woman missing, they followed and found her in the mouth of the animal which was feeding on her flesh. On seeing this they rushed back to the town and sounded the war-drums, the bambalous. These are hollow trunks of trees resembling our beehives, with a sort of opening on one side to make the notes. The people immediately assembled in large number as if they were preparing to join battle. In this fashion they all went to the area of bush, with their weapons at the ready they surrounded the animal. It disregarded all of them and refused to come out. They had to ask our people for a gun, which they fired to wound it. At this, it emerged amongst those surrounding it and they scattered to save their lives. But since there were so many of them waiting to kill it, the ferocious beast hurt some of them badly before it was killed. They took the body to the town and laid it in a public place, and then the maximin (t) arrived, the dignitary who corresponds to a viceroy or chief officer among whites and whom the king stations here for this purpose. After the leopard had been

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(t) Maximin means Massajum.
placed on a wooden litter like a bier, to bury it, the maximin had questions put to it by a witch, here called a jabacouze, begging it to tell them the truth: whose was the soul it bore within it? What answer could there be from a creature now lacking all feeling and never having other than the life of the senses (?)? The savage maximin persisted: "Since you refuse to confess and answer, I order you never more to return to the world in the form of a brute so given to ill-doing and so voracious as to eat human flesh. If you are overcome by the desire to return, let it be by taking another body; but if it is that of an animal, in no case let it be that of a leopard. Unite yourself to one with a better nature, one more humane. And so that you are moved to pity, contemplate the loss you have caused: give it your full consideration." As if the devil and those who are his would have any pity! To such an extent do the heathen deceive themselves! The maximin finished his speech, and they then carried off this untamed animal for burial, with great funereal pomp.

The heathen communicate with each other by whistling, this being so generally done that /f.28v/ the whistles carry the meaning of things just as nouns and verbs do with us. (u) Women use a hooting noise. Bambalous are also used to signal what they want announced in a very public way within districts or among neighbouring villages, and these serve the same purpose as do sentinels and beacons, so that as soon as the sound of the bambalous is heard this is the signal for all to listen (to the message). Since previously I only spoke of the bambalous in passing, I now wish to provide in some detail an accurate account of this form of instrument. There are various sorts, some larger and some smaller, (all) in shape and

(u) The Papel, Bijago and Balanta heathen do the same. Also by bambalous, as stated below. The Bagas do the same by hooting, a man calling y,y, and a woman three times, y,y,y. The Bagas of Furna call out to their friends uxo, which means 'they love', and as a sign of love they call to them like dogs, playing the fool like João Palha. Uxo means 'friend' in the Bijago language.
size like one of the pair of trunks which form a load (on pack-horses). They are of wood and quite hollow within. At the top there is a slit two palm-spans in length which corresponds to a well-placed sound-opening on a musical instrument, and sometimes this runs the length of the bambalou. The width of the opening is about that of a hand. The bambalou is sounded with two sticks, like a drum, and in this way they announce whatever needs to be communicated in any matter of peace or war concerning the villages so that those far-off can hear it. And there is an immediate reply from the person in charge of the bambalou in the next locality. When a war breaks out, within an hour it is known over a distance of 20 leagues. If there are settlements all the way the information is passed along more easily, even if the houses lie a league apart, since each tells the next. They use these bambalous to solemnize funeral ceremonies. This will suffice for bambalous.

Before we discuss burials I want to conclude my references to the trad of the land by mentioning an important commodity, wax. Some 8-10 leagues inland there is much trade in this, in response to the demand from the whites who go there, and from different places they obtain about 200 quintals, which is the total reaching Cacheu from Banhu territory. As stated above, this territory also supplies a variety of foodstuffs, etc.

Although these heathen in their burials follow the normal custom of the other heathen in almost all aspects of the ceremony, let us now say something about them in conclusion. When a sick man dies, they straightway ask him not to flee away but to reveal who ate him. In the excess of their malice and ignorance they do as their ancestors did. Do they hate any of their fellow citizens? Four of the heathen then carry the dead man on a wooden grating like a bier, and sometimes they add the cloth the man wore when he died. They quickly make their way around the village, from one side to the other and through the open places. And whenever the ministers of the devil stop, it is said and falsely believed that /f.29/ the people in that spot ‘ate’ the dead man. Then they take him to be buried in the forest, carrying away with the body all the precious possessions it was found he had, such as cloths, etc. The wretch whom the bier accused (by stopping) has to pay. His house is attacked and a host of his children are enslaved. Spite is (thus) one of the heads under which those who are sent to our Spanish lands [i.e. the Indies] are acquired, although this has been so strongly condemned in the bull promulgated by His Holiness in the year – on the subject of the purchase of Brasilians.
At the wakes of the heathen, the main business is feeding, and without wine there are no tears. On these occasions a great deal is eaten, but the flesh only of birds, goats and hens, except that the flesh of dogs is always also included, a delicacy much esteemed by these savages. Lastly, each guest contributes according to his means. After the burial they place upon the grave some hens or only their blood and heads, they pour over it some palm wine, and they stand on it a pan of rice, which is much appreciated by both the domestic stock and wild animals. When (the relatives) come the following day to see if the dead person has fed and find the pan empty they leave overjoyed, for they believe that he has eaten the food. But if they find anything left, they sadly return home, saying that there must be some evil or hatred around, since he has chosen not to eat their food. The ceremony continues for several days and whether the outcome is good or bad they then cease to provide the food. Only the animals lose by the discontinuance of this abominable provision.