



Fig. 91 The *puja* items after the end of the ceremony

is only performed by the head of the family or in his absence the priest. *Shraddh* is a very private ceremony and no one else attends.

The *pinds* that are offered to the deceased, seven round balls, are made of dough consisting of flour, barley, *til* (sesame seed), honey, *ghee*, and milk; the libation consists of milk and *ghee*. The *tarpan*, which is a special libation, consists of water, barley, rice, sandalwood, and *Ganga jal*, Ganga water. To offer this in a peaceful manner is most beneficial to the satisfaction of the dead. The offering is usually done by means of a spoon-like implement inside a copper bowl, though gold is also used. A rhinoceros-horn *tarpan* vessel carved in Nepal is very rare and precious. The figurines ornamenting it depict gods and goddesses (Fig. 92).

In return for this *puja* honouring and remembering the *pitr*, the deceased shower their blessings upon the family for its growth, welfare and prosperity. During this period no meat is cooked in the homes and food is strictly vege-



Fig. 92 Showing a very rare *tarpan* libation vessel made of rhino horn, which is decorated

tarian, with special sweet dishes like *maalpooas* and *kheer* prepared daily. They are first offered to the revered Dead (Figs. 90 and 91) and subsequently eaten as *prasad*. No significant work is executed, let alone initiated during this period.

With this chapter, the description of recurring events, which are observed by the Kotah family every year, comes to an end. We now continue with a selection of those non-recurring, single events that are observed only once in the lifetime of a family member.