



Map 2

FREDERIC DREW, in 1875, was the first to call attention to this peculiar attitude, and likened the Shin view of the cow to the Moslem view of the pig.

They look on the animal with abhorrence and avoid contact with it. When cows calve, Shin avoid touching the calf by hand, and direct it to and from its mother's udder with the aid of a forked stick. Some Shin will place a cow and its newborn calf into the care of a neighboring Yeshkun (the Yeshkun do not share the Shin view of cows) until the calf is weaned. Should a Shin inadvertently brush against a nursing calf or a dead animal with his garments, purification is required. The Shin refuse to drink cows' milk or products made from such milk; they will not even touch a vessel which contains cows' milk; they do not use leather obtained from cows, nor do they burn cow dung as fuel. Cattle are used for plowing, but people have as little as possible to do with them.

Supernatural sanctions support the Shin avoidances. A goddess is indicated in one account as responsible for the prohibition of cows' milk. Other accounts mention fairies or demons who would be angered by the drinking of cows' milk. Though the Shin have been converted to Islam, the ancient Shin deities have not disappeared. They persist as mountain spirits. For this reason, hunters and herdsman who venture into high places are in special danger, and observe with greater stringency the restrictions on touching cow and calf, and on beef and milk (SCHOMBERG 1935: 165). Should they violate the restrictions, one account states, the spirits would consider them impure and they would perish<sup>11</sup>. Other dangers, to which even townsfolk are presumably subject, are lameness and blindness.

1878: 29, 34-35; J. BIDDULPH 1880: 37, 112-13; G. W. LEITNER [1893], Appendix VI: 1, 2; A. DURAND 1900: 202-03, 210; G. MUHAMMAD 1905: 94, 111; A. H. FRANCKE [1907]: 36; Imperial Gazetteer of India. Provincial Series: Kashmir and Jammu 1909: 108; H. A. ROSE 1911-19, 3: 406; R. C. F. SCHOMBERG 1935: 165, 167, 209; D. L. R. LORIMER 1935-38, 3: 257a. - I write in the ethnographic present, but many of the accounts are from the last century, and portray traditional Shin life, which has since changed considerably.

<sup>11</sup> G. MUHAMMAD (1905: 111) wrote that followers of the goddess Sri Kun who lived in a certain village in the District of Astor, were "strictly prohibited from keeping cows,