

than anything preserved in the Tibeto-Burmic languages. Since 'mlecche' would be an impossible combination in Sanskrit, *mleccha* would be as close as a Sanskrit speaker could come to it'.<sup>339</sup>

Mleccha<sup>340</sup> occurs in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa<sup>341</sup> in the sense of a barbarian in speech. Here the brāhmaṇas are forbidden to use barbarian speech. The example<sup>342</sup> given of such speech is "he' layo", explained by Sāyaṇa as "he' rayah", "ho, foes". The barbarians referred to were Āryan speakers, though not speakers of Sanskrit, but of a Prakrit form of speech.<sup>343</sup>

An ancient tradition regards the Andhras, Pulindas and Śabarās as dog-eaters or Mlecchas.<sup>344</sup> The Jain Prajñāpanā records two divisions of the people of India—*Milikkha* and Ārya, and enumerates 53 people in the former group, some of which are the Saga, Javana, Sabara, Vavvara, Hoṇa, Romaya, Pārāsa and Khasa.<sup>345</sup>

The Mahābhārata<sup>346</sup> states that the Mlecchas dwelt in the Yavana, Cīna and Kamboja countries. In a dual between Karṇa and Śalya, Karṇa highly condemns the people of the Vāhika and especially of the Madra Country and describes them as the Mleccha, the dirt among the human beings.<sup>347</sup> They belong to unpius countries and are totally ignorant about the Dharma (righteous conduct).<sup>348</sup> At another place, it is stated that the Yavanas are the Mlecchas, though they follow their own ways (i.e. not following the Vedic Orthodoxy) yet they are full of knowledge and brave but the Vāhikas and the Madras are condemned as utterly foolish.<sup>349</sup> This makes it clear that the people not following the righteous conduct according to the Āryan beliefs, whether indigenous or foreign, were labelled as the Mlecchas. The Mahābhārata<sup>350</sup> shows that the coastal regions were the favourite resort of the Mlecchas and that they were dreadful. The Epic describes the Mlecchas as being impure because they were of bovine extraction and describes them as fierce and cruel.<sup>351</sup>

In the *Manu-Smṛti*<sup>352</sup> the king is advised to exclude at deliberation time, the foolish, dumb, blind, and deaf, birds, the aged, women; the Mlecchas (the impure), diseased and deformed. At another place in the *Manu-Smṛti* where the girls bearing the names after a star, a tree, (or) a river, one called