THE MLEG CFAS IN EARLY TECHNICAL LITERATURE

The early technical literature consists of the works on polity, grammar, dramaturgy, legal texts and those on prophesication. The texts on astronomy and astrology also belong to this category.

The Dhātupātha, though traditionally ascribed to Pāṇini, seems to be of a comparatively later date and cannot be ascribed to a period before the 2nd century B.C. There is a lot of controversy with regard to the date of Pāṇini. Broadly speaking he lived in a period between the 7th and the 4th century B.C.

Of the grammatical texts, the Mahābhāṣya is undoubtedly of a greater importance not only because it deals with the exposition of the aphorisms of Pāṇini, but also for the fact that we have some clues with regard to the date of its author. Patanjali appears to have had witnessed the reign of Puṣyamitra Śuṅga.

The Mahābhāṣya as such can be tentatively assigned to the middle of the 2nd century B.C.

Of the texts on polity, the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya is traditionally ascribed to the Maurya period. There are, however, views that the texts cannot claim as high an antiquity as the 4th-3rd century B.C. Kautilya refers to earlier authors on
polity, but their texts have not come down to us. It is not clear to what extent Kauṭilya borrowed ideas from his predecessors. He refers to those points only in which he begged to differ from the earlier writers on the subject. In any case, as will be seen below, the Arthaśāstra happens to be one of the earliest works to determine the position of the Mlecchas in the social hierarchy and indicate their geographical distribution.

By legal texts we mean the Sūtra and Smṛti works. The Sūtras of Baudhāyana, Āpastamba and others contain the earliest attempts at laying down the principles of criminal and civil law. They have been versified in the works known as Smṛtis. Some of the Sūtra works seem to have had been written down between the 5th and 3rd century B.C., but there are texts which belong to a comparatively later period. The Smṛtis are further codifications of the rules regulating the society. Of the Smṛti texts the most important one is that of Manu, which seems to have had been written sometime between the 1st and 2nd century A.D. There are a number of Smṛti texts which can be placed in the post-Gupta period. As such they have not been included in this chapter.

The Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata is the earliest treatise in Sanskrit on dramaturgy. The text cannot be placed later than the 3rd century A.D., though it bears traces of a tradition of more than hundred years.
Two more texts have been explored by us, one on prognosis and the other on erotics, viz., the Aṅgaviṃśa and the Kāmasūtra. The Aṅgaviṃśa is a Jaina text in Prakrit and has been ascribed to a period about the 2nd-3rd century A.D. There is, however, controversy among scholars with regard to the date of the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana. Attempts have been made to prove that it is a product of the Gupta period. Internal evidence, however, indicates an earlier date of about the 2nd-3rd century A.D. for the text.

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In the Dhātupātha, ascribed to Pāṇini, the term Mlecha has been used in the sense of a language. It means a word spoken indistinctly and barbarously.

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Among the political thinkers of the age, the author of the Arthasastra, deserves mention. He distinguishes between the Mlechhas and the Āryas. He tells us that the Mlechhas could sell or mortgage the life of their offspring without any punishment. To an Ārya it was a punishable offence. According to him, the Śūdras were also Āryas. The higher the caste to which the offender belonged, the greater would be the punishment for committing the crime. To Kautilya, an Ārya under no circumstances would be a slave.
From the context it appears that the Mlecchas often took to slavery. The sale of children was a common practice with the Mleccha parents. It definitely points to their economic misery and servility.

Kautilya further enjoins that in a newly conquered territory the king (Vijigisau) should not allow the born thieves and the Mlecchas to live in one place together. The land, on the border of which there are many forts accommodating bandits and Mleccha forest tribes, is with permanent enemies. The author of the Arthaśāstra suggests the employment of the leaders of Mleccha and forest troops for the assassination of a weak king. Their services were procured by an effete ruler in crushing the enemies.

Prescriptions have been made for the employment of various Mleccha jūtis in the espionage service. A. Parashar, on the basis of a passage of the Arthaśāstra, suggests that "the Mlecchas were trusted enemies inside the king's palace". The actual import of the relevant passage seems to be that a king should appoint a person as a spy who would also receive wages from the enemy. These spies are to be taken from the various Mleccha races, humpbacks, dwarfs, dumb persons, etc. They were to live inside the house of the enemy. Spies of the Mleccha
tribes were notorious for their capability of injecting poison into the person of the enemy. 13

Kauṭilya thus uses the term Mlecha for a people or peoples who were to be distinguished from the Aryas. 14 We may infer that their manners and customs were totally different. It may be assumed that the Mlechhas, according to Kauṭilya, lived in the bordering areas and posed a constant threat, along with the bandits, to the security of the bordering provinces. Socially, they were inferior even to the Śūdras. 15 Culturally, they were non-Aryans. The code of conduct meant for an Aryan was not applicable to the Mlechhas.

It has been argued that the Mlechhas constituted at least a section of the forest tribes, who were recruited in the army. 16 It may be pointed out that in the Arthasastra reference has been made to the forest tribes of the Mlecha stock. The term Mlechāṭavi, if taken in the sense of Mlecha forest tribes, would signify either that all the forest tribes were not Mlechhas or that all the Mlechhas were not forest dwellers. 17

A close scrutiny of the Arthasastra clearly shows that the Mlechhas are kept out of all privileges by Kauṭilya. They formed the bulk of the slaves and settled in the villages of their own outside the habitat of the ordinary people. They
may be compared to the *anirvasita sudras* of Panini. That is the reason why Kautilya declares that the land on the border of which there are many forts and dwell the robbers and Mlecchas is one with permanent enemies (*nityāmitra*).

It, therefore, appears that the Mlecchas were a band of people not governed by the rules of caste. They probably included some bad elements of Indian society — the thieves and the highway robbers. They might have been members of the pre-Aryan or non-Aryan tribal groups, who were declared by the highly cultured and civilized Aryans as outlaws. Kautilya thus directly distinguishes between the Aryans and the Mlecchas. The distinction lay in matters of social gradation, economic privilege and habitat. Socially and culturally, they were outside the Aryan fold.

The above survey leaves no room for doubt that throughout the early Buddhist texts and in the *Arthasastra* the term *Milakkha/Mleooha* has been invariably used in the sense of a people or peoples, who formed an element of the non-Aryan population of India. They fed on animals, roots and fruits and were averse to agriculture. They lived in outskirts and outlying provinces in isolation. Want of proper means of livelihood compelled them to take to theft and highway robbery. Kautilya's
prescription that selling or mortgaging the life of an offspring is not a punishable offence for a Mleccha couple may be interpreted as only an attempt to upgrade the position of the Südras and consequent procurement of slaves from the Mleccha population. They were even taken into the army for espionage and committing such heinous acts as inoculating poison into person of the enemy. These are only indications of giving them a place in the social hierarchy by allotting them the lowest professions.

Nevertheless, reference to the Mleccha language in the Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali (2nd century B.C.) indicates that the original sense of the term had not yet become obsolete.

From 400 B.C. onwards a number of texts were written down on civil and criminal law under two heads — (a) Sūtra and (b) Śāstra. The dating of these texts is a matter of controversy. Following Mm. P.V. Kane, we can give only tentative dates to these texts. According to him, the Dharmasūtras of Gautama, Baudhāyana and Āpastamba appear to have greater antiquity than the other Sūtra and Śāstra works. Mm. Kane ascribes a period between 600 and 300 B.C. for the Sūtra works. The Mānava Dharmāśāstra, popularly known as the Manusmṛti, seems to have attained its present form before 200 A.D. The kernel of
the Dharmaśāstra of Viṣṇu seems to have been composed before 300 A.D. and received additions between 400 and 600 A.D. The rest of the large number of the Śārtti texts may be ascribed to a period after 500 A.D.

Of the three Dharmaśūtras those of Baudhāyana and Āpastamba do not contain explicit references to the Mlecchas. It seems that either they were neglected by these law-makers or they enjoyed such a despicable position in the society that the authors of these two law books completely ignored them.

That the Mlecchas did not belong to the fourfold varṇa division is evident from the Gautama Dharmaśūtra. Gautama categorises the Mlecchas with profane (aśuci) and unrighteous (adhārmika) men of the society. He forbids a Brāhmaṇa to converse with these people. With regard to their habitat he is completely silent. It may be surmised that the Mlecchas of the Gautama Dharmaśūtra did not follow the Brahmical system, either socially or religiously, which earned for them such censorious terms as aśuci and adhārmika.

Baudhāyana gives a long list of countries inhabited by the races of mixed origin. Visit to some of the countries was also condemned by him. A person, belonging to the Brahmanical society, had to perform propitiatory rites if he
ever visited any of those countries. We do not know whether the Mlecchas referred to by Gautama belonged to any of them. It may, however, be pointed out that they were situated outside the zone of Madhyadeśa defined by the early law-makers as situated between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas and from Vinaśana to Prayāga. It is interesting to note that Kauṭilya prescribes the outlying provinces for the settlement of the Mlecchas. Some early Buddhist texts also give similar prescription.

Thus, it appears that by the term Mleccha, the Sūtra writers designated the people or peoples who lived outside the pale of the Brahmanical order. Socially, they were inferior even to the Śūdras. We have already seen that even Kauṭilya in his Arthasastra labelled them as outside the social and cultural zone of the varna system.

Viśṇu assigns equal status to the Caṇḍālas, Mlecchas, Antyajas and Patitas. He lays down authoritatively that a snātaka, meaning "a Brahmin who has performed ablution" or "one who has ceremonially completed his studies", must not speak to the Mlecchas and low born persons (antyajas). He further enjoins that even a householder must not even converse with the Mlecchas and Antyajas. He enjoins them to sip water after
having committed that vice and forbids a householder from talking to the outcastes during bathing and after bath.

A close scrutiny of the law-book, composed by Visṇu, shows that the Mlecchas, Caṇḍālas, Antyajas and Patitas belonged to the same category. To the Brahmanical law-givers, the Caṇḍālas were outside the four-fold varṇa division. They are described as belonging to Antyaja class. Mitākṣarā on Viṣṇu Sāstra, III. 260, describes the Caṇḍālas as antyāvasāyins. An antyāvasāyin, according to Manu, is the offspring of a Caṇḍāla male and a Niṣāda female. They are condemned by all as bāhyas and stay in a cemetery or a place of cremation.

One thing is, however, clear. The Smṛti writers classed the Mlecchas along with the people who enjoyed a despicable position in the society. The reason behind is not clear to us. We can only conjecture that either they were not members of the Aryan social organization or they must have followed certain filthy, low and disapproved avocations. As such certain restrictions were imposed on their movements by the followers of the orthodox school.

That there existed a country inhabited by the Mlecchas is evident from the Viṣṇu Dharmaśāstra. Viṣṇu declares Mlecchas-visya as impure and unfit for human habitation and as such a
visit to this country except for pilgrimage is prohibited. It indirectly points to the existence of centres of pilgrimage in the land of the Mlecchas. Viṣṇu also prohibits the performance of post-mortem rites (śrāddha) in a country inhabited by the Mlecchas.

The value of the Viṣṇu Dharmaśāstra lies in the fact that it gives a clear definition of the countries inhabited by the Mlecchas. According to him, the country where the system of the four-fold varna has not been established is known as Mleccha-ḍesa. Āryavarta is beyond that. Viṣṇu, in fact, describes all those countries as belonging to the Mlecchas, where the Aryan culture had not been rooted or over which it had not spread. It may be pointed out that Āryavarta, in the days of Manu, lay between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas and the eastern and western oceans. Manu, in defining the geographical limits of Āryavarta, thus, includes the countries which were regarded as outside the zone of Aryandā by Baudhāyana.

Viṣṇu often refers to Mleccha-visaya. It is not clear whether the term visaya in such cases has been used in a general sense meaning 'country', 'tract', etc., or in a technical sense meaning 'district' or an administrative unit. The etymology of the term would, however, imply a sense of propriety and enjoyment. Mleccha-visaya as such may be interpreted as th
land or a unit enjoyed by the Mlecchas. Hence, it would have to be taken in a sense differing from that of Mleccha-śā.

Manu clearly distinguishes between Brahmāvarta, Brahmā-śi-śā, Madhyadeśā, Yajñiyadeśā and Mleccha-deśā. According to him, Brahmāvarta lay between the holy rivers Sarasvatī and Drāḍadvatī. Here-sadaśā, i.e., the customs, which had been followed by the people belonging to different castes from generation to generation, were practised. The countries of Kurukṣetra, Matsya, Pañcatā and Śrasena, which lay beyond Brahmāvarta, were the constituents of Brahmā-śiśā. The Brahmins of this land are regarded as superior to all others in education and culture. Madhyadeśā was bounded by the Himalayas in the north, the Vindhyas in the south, Vīnasāna in the west and Prayāga in the east. Aryāvarta was situated between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas and the eastern and western oceans.

Geographical definition of the boundaries of the Aryāvarta is followed by the reference to the Yajñiyadeśā which is characterised as the country where the 'kṛṣṇasāra' deer or black antelope used to roam freely. Beyond Yajñiyadeśā lay the country of the Mlecchas. It is not clear whether Aryāvarta and Yajñiyadeśa are identical. If it be that they are different from each other, then Yajñiyadeśa must be regarded
as having a wider denotation than Āryāvarta. The nature of evidence supplied by Manu would reveal that the countries, referred to by him, are in a descending order, i.e., each country has a wider denotation than the preceding one. The denotation of the term Āryāvarta, however, indicates that it included the preceding countries, i.e., Brahmevarta, Brahmarṣidesa and Madhyadesa. Following this argument we may assume that Yajñiyadesa denoted a wider area than Āryāvarta.

Mlecchadesa of Manu lay beyond all these divisions. Manu prescribes Brahmevarta, Brahmarṣidesa, Madhyadesa and Āryāvarta as ideal places of residence for the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas. A Śūdra can reside in any of these countries as well as in Mlecchadesa in accordance with the availability of the means of livelihood.

Thus it appears that Mlecchadesa, according to Manu, was situated either outside the zone of Brahmevarta, Brahmarṣidesa and Madhyadesa (in the narrower sense) or Āryāvarta (in the wider sense). In the former sense the country of the Mlecchas would have been somewhere to the south of the Vindhyas, to the east of Prayāga and to the west of the rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī. In those parts of the country, Vedic sacrifices and learning had no value. Even the four-fold varṇa system was not followed there.
On the other hand if the Mlecchas lived outside Āryāvarta they should have been outside the main limits of northern Indic (including the land even to the east of Prayāga, where, according to another indication given by Manu, there could have lived the Mlecchas). Vajñiyadesa may only be just a qualifying adjective for Āryadeśa, i.e., the entire Āryavarta stretching from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas and from the western to the eastern ocean was also suitable for the performance of sacrifices. Mlecchadesa lay beyond the geographical confines of Āryavarta.

This apparent contradiction can be removed by assuming that Mlecchadesa, according to Manu, was not a particular region. It stood for every country which lay beyond the zone of Aryandom.

It may be pointed out that the inscriptions of Asoka tend to prove the spread of Aryan culture to south India in the 3rd century B.C. That Aryan culture had become deeprooted in the south by the 1st century A.D. is well illustrated by the inscriptions of the Sātavāhana queen Nāyanikā which refer to the performance of Vedic sacrifices.52

Manu further informs us that the various outcastes, who had been excommunicated from the Brahmanical order due to non-observance of rites and ceremonies, were all relegated to the position of dasyus irrespective of their speech, either Ārya
or Mleocha. It implies that the Mleocha language was different from the Ārya speech and that both the languages were used by the people or peoples who did not or no longer belonged to the Brahmanical order. As such the speech could not have been the criterion for discriminating between an ārya and a dasyu; for, according to Manu, the Dasyus could have been the speakers of either the Ārya or the Mleocha language.

The dasyus did not belong to the four-fold system of caste. On the other hand, by describing the Pāṇḍrakas, Oḍrās, Draviḍas, Kāmbojas, Yavanas, Śakas, Pāradas, Pahlavas, Gīnas, Kirātas, Daradas, Khaśas, etc., as Śūdras, Manu actually places them within the four-fold varna system.

It thus appears that the tribes or peoples who lived outside the pale of Vedic culture were abhorred by the authors of the period. They spoke either Mleocha or even an Aryan speech. A close scrutiny of the relevant passages and identification of the tribes show that some of them belonged to the non-Āryan population.

That these Mlechas were given a very low position in the society is clear from the work of Manu. He classes them along with the dullard (jāda), dumb (mũka), blind (āndha), deaf (vadhira), birds and aged persons with extra limbs or
without limbs. He forbids a king to engage in a consultation with his ministers in their presence. According to him, these people, due to their inborn qualities divulge the secrets.

Manu classifies the living world into three sections according to three gunas — sattva, raja and tamas. Each of these divisions is divided into three strata according to the gatis — uttama, madhyama and jaghanya. Thus, animate beings are actually grouped under nine classes according to their guna and gati. The Mlecchas are classified along with only the best of animals like elephant, horses, tigers, lions, etc. This is a classic example of the contemptuous feeling of the law-makers with regard to the people branded as Mlecchas.

Additional information with regard to the development of the concept of the term Mlecha as well as their social position and culture are furnished by the Nātyaśāstra of Bharata.

The Pulindas and Sataras are enumerated as Mlecchas in the Nātyaśāstra of Bharata. They dispersed over a wide region and were not confined to a particular habitat. They differed from each other in manners and customs. Bharata refers to gaits and movements of the Mlecha tribes and characteristics...
various communities which existed among them. Fulinda and Sabara women are mentioned as vījātiyas. It probably points to their exclusion from the Brahmanical social order.

In characterising the local usages (pravṛtti), however, Bharata does not specifically refer to the Mlechas, but broadly categorises them under four heads, viz., Avanti, Dākṣiṇātya, Pañcāla and Odra-Māgadhā. The Yavanās and the Khaśās, mentioned in the Mahābhārata as of Mleccha origin, are enlisted along with the Kaliṅgas, Andhras, Dramīṇas and others who are to take to the local usages of the Deccan; the Sindhus and the Sauviras, along with the Avantīs, Saurāstras and others to those of Avanti; Prāgjyotīsas and Fulinda and Odra-Māgadhī. Countries such as Pañcāla, Saurasena, Bāblika, Madras etc. adopt the usage of Pañcāla-śāṣṭrīya. The regional classification of the peoples, according to pravṛtti or local usage, includes tribes expressly referred to as of Mleccha extraction in the Nātyaśāstra itself as well as in other ancient Indian texts datable to the early centuries of the Christian era.

That Bharata recognises only the people of indigenous origin as Mlechas is evident from his observation that "the common language prescribed for use (on the stage)" contains word of Mleccha origin and is spoken in Bhāratavarga only.
The common language stands for the language of the common people distinguished from that of the priests and the nobility. The words of "mleccha origin", according to S.K. Chatterji, seem to have been the vocables of the Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic languages, which infiltrated into the Indo-Aryan pretty early in its history.

Bharata recognises at least seven regional dialects (bhāsa) like Māgadhī, Avantī, Prācya, Sauraseni, Ardha-Māgadhī, Bāhlika and Dākṣīṇātya. The dialects of the Candaṇālas, Sābaras and the foresters are characterised under vibhāṣā. The Sābaras and the Sākas speak their own languages respectively. The northerners (udicya) speak the Bāhlika language and the Khaśas the language of their own country. The language of the Sābaras has been prescribed for those on the stage who would play the role of inhabitants of the grazing grounds for horses, elephants, goats, camels and the like. Bharata further recommends that the tongue of the Sābara may be used for the tongue of the Ābhīras and observes that the language of the region lying between the Vindhya and the sea is characterized by the frequency of 'na'. Bharata speaks of the language of the Gangetic valley in which the sound 'e' predominates, whereas in the language of Surāṣṭra and Avantī the predominating sound is 'a'. The language of Sindhu and Sauvīra is
characterised by the use of the word 'u'.

From the Mahābhārata it appears that the regions mentioned above abounded in Mleccha settlements. Even if the prescriptions given in the Nātyasāstra with regard to the language to be used by the dramatic characters, belonging to different regions and ethnic stocks, be regarded as conventional, they give us some idea of the peculiarities of the languages which were current in various areas largely inhabited by the Mleccha tribes. We would do well to remember that the nature of evidence given by the Nātyasāstra points to the Pulinda, Śabara and such other tribes, who, according to indigenous texts lived on hunting, as being denoted by the term Mleccha. On the other hand, contrary to the evidence furnished by the Great Epic, alien races, having settlements in the north-west, are nowhere mentioned by Bharata as of Mleccha extraction.

Bharata refers to the complexion of the various tribes and races. Thus, the Kirātas, Barbaras, Andhras, Droniṣas, Kāśis, Kosālas, Pulindaś and the southerners should be presented on the stage as of brown colour. The Śakas, Yavanas, Pallavas (i.e., Pahlavas), Vāhlikas and such other peoples of the north should be reddish yellow. The people of Pancāla, Śūrasena, Odra,
Magadha, Anga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga should be made dark or deep blue (śyāma).

Thus Bharata uses the term Mlecha in a somewhat restricted sense. Only such tribes as the Pulindas and Śabarases are categorically mentioned as Mlechas. They did not belong to the existing Brahmanical social order. Their language is grouped under Odra-Magadhī. But many words of Mlecha origin are stated to have had infiltrated into the common language spoken by the people of Bharatavarṣa alone. It proves the indigenous origin of the Mlechas, on the one hand, and the exclusion of foreigners from the Mlecha population, on the other. The complexion of the Pulindas and the southerners in general is characterised as śyāma. It may be inferred that the habitat of the Mlechas of Bharata lay in southern India including the Vindhyan range.

The Āṅgavijaya, a Jaina text of the early centuries of the Christian era, refers to the division of the population into two classes, viz., Ājña (i.e., Ārya) and Milakkhu (i.e., Mlecha). In the chapter entitled 'Jātivijaya', the upper three castes of the Brahmanical system, viz., the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas, and the Vaiśyas are grouped under the Āryas,
while the fourth class, viz., the Śūdras are referred to as constituents of the Milakkhu/Mleccha population. According to this text, the Brāhmaṇas are white, the Kṣatriyas red, the Vaiśyas yellow and the Śūdras are black. It is really very interesting to point out that Book XII of the Mahābhārata also describes the four major varnas in a similar fashion.

Thus an attempt is perceptible to bring the various non-Aryan tribes into the fold of Brahmanical social order. They are described as black-complexioned. Physically, they were either very tall (mahākāya) or of medium stature (majjhimaṃkāya).

Despised professions are not reserved for the Mlecchas. They lived on trade (vavahārajīvī), agriculture (khettopajīvī) and military professions.

Pleasure groves (nikkhundavāsi), mountains (pavvatavāsi), islands (dīvavāsi), cities (nagaravāsi), forests (rajabhāvī) and janapadas are mentioned as the dwelling places of the Mlecchas. They roamed in the cities as jugglers (cakkācāra). That the Mlecchas dwelt in all quarters seems to be indicated by their naming, according to the directions they lived in.

The Angaviśa also refers to Ajja (Ārya) and Anajja (Anāryadesa) countries. The Mlecchas who lived in Aryan land are called 'Ajjadesanissita' and those who migrated to another
country 'Ajjadesāntara'. The Mlecchas living in pleasure groves, perhaps forests (nikkhunda), were treated as belonging to non-Aryan countries (Anajadesijja).

Like the division of the worldly population into Aryan and Mlecha, the countries, according to the Jaina concept, are also grouped into Ārya and Anārya. From the Āngavijjā it appears that neither the Anārya land is exclusively reserved for the Mlecchas nor the Ārya land for the Āryas. In other words, the Mlecchas lived in both the Ārya and Anārya lands.

Higher vocations like warfare, trade and agriculture were not denied to them. The Āngavijjā in another context divides the worldly population into Ajja and Passa. The latter includes the 'dāsas' or slaves. It appears that in the former case the term Ajja (i.e., Ārya) has been taken in the sense of the 'master'. The Chinese version of the Assalāyana-sutta, refers to 'masters' and 'slaves' as constituents of the society of the Yuēh-Chih kingdom. The Śūdras or at least Mleccha individuals, thus, could have attained masterhood. It may be noted that the Mlecchas in the Āngavijjā are described as living on trade and agriculture, besides warfare. Thus a Mleccha, amassing land and wealth by means of trade and agriculture, could have become the master of slaves.
Although a better position for the Mlecchas is envisaged in the Angavijja, a few contradictory statements are, not unoften, found in the text. Thus, while characterizing some cities as 'Aryanasa', the author negatively hints at the existence of 'Anaryavasa' or rather 'Mlecchavasa'. Explicit reference is, however, made to cities as 'Coravasa', i.e., inhabited by thieves. It is not clear whether 'Coravasa' and 'Mleccha' or 'Anaryavasa' should be synonymous.

The tribes or peoples who, according to the Angavijja, formed the Mleccha population, are not mentioned separately. No separate mention of arts and crafts followed by them is made in this text. The observation that the Sudras may be counted as Mlecchas and that they are black complexioned seems to exclude the foreigners of north-western India like the Yavanas, Sakas, Pahlavas, etc., who, according to the Natyasastra of Bharata, were reddish yellow (gaurab). It seems that by the term Milakkha, the Angavijja probably refers to the non-Aryan population of India.

Like the division of the Indian population into Arya and Mleccha, gods and goddesses are also grouped under Ariya and Milakkhu, i.e., Arya and Mleccha. Goddess of vegetation, hills, rivers, wells, tanks, etc., have been referred to. No
The earliest pseudo-scientific text, having reference to the Mlechos, is the Yavanajātaka of Sphujidhvaja. The date of the composition of the work is Saka 191 (= A.D. 269). Sphujidhvaja admits that the text is a "versified version" of a translation in prose made by Yavanesvara in the year (Saka) 71 (= A.D. 149) of a Greek text on genethiology. The Mlechos in the Yavanajātaka are grouped with the thieves and Candalas protected by the first Horā in capricorn. They are mentioned further along with the hunters, arrows, swords, weapons, woolens and gold. The lord of these objects is Leo. If the sun is in Leo, one should know (that he is thinking of) the Mlecchaganas. In another context the Mlechos are mentioned together with the Piśācas, mountains and water creatures, hunters and Candalas.

The cumulative evidence hints at the contemptible position of the Mlechos and at their livelihood based on hunting. Their association with weapons may indicate their participation in wars and battles. The existence of the various Mleccha tribes seems to have been indicated by the expression Mlecchagenas. The term gana, qualifying Mleccha, may have a bearing.
on the constitution of the various Mleccha tribes. It was non-monarchical in character. Thus, the Yavanajātaka does not take into account the foreigners or the foreign countries who by the middle of the third century A.D. had come into contact with India by way of trade. It may be noted that the text under review cropped out of a Greek text which had been written down before 149 A.D. Neither the original text in Greek nor its translation in prose rendered by Yavanesvara in 149 A.D. has come down to us. There is, thus, no means to ascertain the exact term used for Mleccha in the original text in Greek. If it be admitted that the text of Yavanesvara and that of Sphujidhvaja did not swerve in any way from the original Greek text, then we may consider the possibility that the author of the Greek work used the term Mleccha in the same sense as it has been used in such texts as the early Dharmasūtras, early Buddhist texts and the Arthasastra. The Yavanas and the Śakas had not by then become branded as Mlecchas.

The apprehension made in the Mahābhārata with regard to the encroachment of social anarchy and religious disorder following the introduction of the Mleccha rule is echoed in the Yuga Purāṇa. It refers to Amrāṭa, a Mleccha with red eyes,
and wearing red garments, who invaded the city named Puppa. He robbed the wretched people of all their belongings and finally destroyed them. The traditional varna system was demolished and the outcastes were promoted. It is stated that the Śūdras would officiate at the sacrifices and the aliens would be "admitted to the Aryan fold".

The Nāmalīṅgaṇuśāsanam, popularly known as Amarakośa, is a thesaurus ascribed to the 5th century A.D. The term Mleccha occurs in three contexts. In the section entitled Nāṭyavarga, the term has been used in the sense of an obscure language. The expression "mlistam=avispaṭam" indicates that attempts had already been made to give a derivative meaning of the term concerned (sqrt mlīch + kba). Grammatically, therefore, the term would connote a language which was indistinct. By the time of the composition of Amarakośa, the tradition that the Mleccha language had been an indistinct or obscure speech was in existence.

In the section entitled Bhūmivarga again Mlecchadesa has been categorically stated to be a synonym for 'pratyanta'. The Mleccha land, thus, comprised the outlying regions, evidently, in the Indian context. According to the political thinkers of ancient India, particularly Kautilya, the bordering areas were
the habitat of the Mlecchas. As we have pointed out elsewhere, the literary texts of ancient and medieval India bear numerous references which indicate that the coastal belts and the outlying regions were habitat of Mlecchas.

In the Śūdravarga, again, the Bhedas, Kirātas, Sabaras and the Pulindas are branded as Mlecchajātis. These tribes figure in various literary texts as living on hunting and in the hills and forests of the Vindhyan complex of Central India. It should be noted in this connection that the peoples like the Śakas, Yavanas, etc., have not been enlisted in the Śūdravarga as Mlecchajāti.

The term Mleccha has once been used in the text concerned in a sense different from that of a language, people and country. In the Vaiśyavarga, it has been used as a synonym for copper. It is not clear whether the complexion of the Mlecchas has any bearing on such an equation or whether copper played any important role in the economic pursuits of the Mlecchas.

Thus, the term Mleccha in the Amarakosā has been used in a four-fold sense, signifying a language, country, peoples or tribes and copper. It appears that the text concerned embodies the different implications of the term concerned,
which had been current from time to time before the end of the 5th century A.D.

In the list of sixty-four arts prescribed for young ladies, Vātsyāyana includes "Mlecchita vikalpa". According to R.L. Mitra, the expression concerned implies a "secret language" or codification of an "ordinary language" making it unintelligible. It indicates that either the term Mleccha connoted a language or the Mlecchas spoke a different language. In either case it was unintelligible to the ordinary people.

Of the texts on astronomy and astrology, the Brhat-Saṃhitā of Varāhamihira, assignable to the last quarter of the fifth or first half of the sixth century A.D., places the Mlecchas in the western Division. They did not abide by the customary laws (nirmārṣa). They are grouped along with Kuntala, Kerala, Daṇḍaka, Kāntipura, mixed-castes (saṁkarinaḥ), Nāsikya, Bhogavardhana, Virāṭa and the countries adjacent to the Vindhyas. Mars happens to be their Lord. The various Mlecchas under the influence of Rāhu lived in caves, mountain-tops and foothills. The Mlecchas, Śūdras, thieves, wealthy men living in towns, the Trigarttas and the mountainous
tribes fall ill and experience earthquake under the dominance of the Jupiter over the Mercury. Reversely, the Mleochas, people living on weapons and the Middle country wane towards destruction.

The above references seem to hint at the various non-Aryan tribes living in hills and forests of Central and South India and those of the outlying regions. From early texts we know that they lived on hunting and were sometimes recruited in the army. By the time when Varāhamihira had written down the Brhatsamhitā, the Śakas and the Yavanas had become categorized under the Mlecchas. Varāhamihira refers to the Yavanas as Mlecchas and observes that they had rendered the sciences of astrology to perfection and were honoured as sages. The reference here is evidently to the Greek texts on horoscopy which were transmitted from the "ancient world of the Mediterranean to the ancient world of India". Varāhamihira's observation further indicates that a Yavana, branded as a Mlecha, could attain high status by his feat in the field of learning. By the term Mlecha, the author of the Brhatsamhitā, thus, denoted not only the non-Aryans of indigenous origin, but also the alien peoples, particularly the Yavanas.

The early texts which belong to the category of technical
literature cover a long period from about the fourth century B.C. to about the sixth century A.D. Significant changes had been taking place in the Indian society and economy within the period specified above. The connotation of the term Mleccha had also undergone changes. The senses in which the term concerned had been used in different epochs are clearly echoed in the texts in technical literature. Thus, while Pāṇini and Patañjali use the term to designate a language, Kautilya points to outlying provinces as the habitat of the Mleccha people, who were distinct from the Āryas. They were not aloof from the society. Kautilya prescribes their appointment in espionage and army. According to the early law givers, on the other hand, the Mlecchas did not belong to the system of varṇa and āśrama and were looked down upon as bāhyas. In the text of Menu all the region beyond the pale of Aryasdom has been characterised as Mleccha, though the Nātyaśāstra clearly refers to the Pulindas and the Śabaras as Mlecchas. It may be pointed out that some of the mixed castes mentioned by Menu are categorised as Mlecchas. Thus, the process of bringing over the Mlecchas within the fold of the Brahmanical social order is perceptible in the texts concerned. The professions prescribed for them are low and despicable.

The Jaina text Angavijñā, however, put forward a different picture. Though the population has been divided into
Aryan and Mlecchas, the land of the Aryas was not exclusively reserved for them. The Mlecchas could live and thrive there. Higher vocations, like trade and agriculture, were not denied to them. They had grown rich and become master of slaves. The Angavijā for the first time hints at the alien population as Mlecchas. The Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana seems to carry the old sense in which the term Mleccha had been used, i.e., a language. Its cultivation was not popular. But the elites could grasp it for certain purposes. The technical sense of the term Mleccha is given in the thesaurus of Amara, who tells us that it was used even in the sense of copper.

Notes and References ... 106
NOTES AND REFERENCES.

   VII. 1. 101., Mleccha avyaktāyānāvāci.

2. Ibid., p. 358; III. 1. 58, Mleccha-avyakte sabde / Asphu-te(a)paśabde.

   va / Na tvevāryasya dāsabhāvah // III. 13. 3-4.

4. Ibid., III. 13. 1, p. 117.

5. Ibid., III. 13. 1-2, p. 117.

6. Ibid., XIII. 5. 15, p. 466.
   Coraprakṛtinām Mleccha jatīnām ca sthānaviparyāsamanekasthān 
   kārayet, durgarāsradandamukhyām ca //

   Yasyā hi bhūmerbahudurgāscora ganair Mlecchāśīvibhirvā nityā- 
   virahitāḥ prayantah sa nityāmitrā, viparyaye tvanāmitrā //

   Sarvato va prayātamena Mlecchāśīvakadandacārīnāh //

9. Ibid., VII. 14. 27, p. 115.
   Coragenātavikamleccha jātinām parāpakarīnām ...... //


12. Ibid., I. XII. 21, p. 15.

Antargrahacarasteaam kubjavämanapendakah /
Sílpavatyah striyo mukäsacitraśca Mlecchajátayah

13. Ibid., XIV. 1. 2, p. 268.
Kälakútadirvisavargah śradddhayadesavasá Silpabhäsābhijaná-
padesaih kubja-vämana-kiráta-müka-badhira-jadändhaschadme-
bhir mlecchajätisirbhiprataiḥ stribhīḥ pumabhśca para
saríropabhogesava-vadhātavyah


15. Ibid., III. 13. 1.

16. Ibid., VII. 10. 16; XII. 4. 23.


19. In the Brahdárañasaka Upanisad (I. 3. 10) it is stated that prāna threw aside "the sin that was death to these devatás (Vāk, etc.), sent it to the ends of the quarters (disāmanta) and he put down the sin of these devatás (i.e., Vāk, etc.) there (i.e., anta)". The same text, therefore, warns that no one should go to the people who live in the anta region.

To Śaṅkara, 'disāmanta' means the region outside the pale of Vedic culture. This description can well apply

20. AS, VII. 10. 16.


24. Ibid., p. 125.

25. Gautama Dharmaśutra, Ed. by V.M. Āpte (Anandasrama edn.), 1959, I. IX. 17 (p.50). Na mlecchāsucyadhārmikāh asha

26. Baudhayana Dharmaśutra, Ed. by A. Chinnaswamy Shastri (Kashi Sanskrit Series), Benaras, 1934, I. 1. 31;

Countries mentioned are — Anga, Magadha, Saurāstric, Daksināpatha, Sindhu and Sauvīra.

27. Ibid., Āraṭṭaka, Kāraskara, Pundra, Sauvīra, Anga, Vanga, Kaliṅga, etc.


30. See note 15 and 18.

32. Ibid., XXII, 76, p. 66, "Candala mleccha sambhasane ca".

33. Ibid., XXII, 75.

34. Ibid., LXIV. 15, p. 146. "Na mlechāntyajasatiteśaṁ sambhasaneākuryat //n.

35. Manu, IV. 61; Visnu, XXXVI. 7; Yajñavalkya, I. 273; Brahadāyana (quoted in Mitākasara on Yajñavalkya, III. 260, pp. 979-80).


38. Ibid.

39. Visnu, LXXXIV. 2, p. 176, "Na gacchenmlecchavissayam".

40. Ibid., LXXXIV. 1, p. 176, "Na mlecchavissyā śrāddha kuryāt".

41. Ibid., "Caturvārnyavasthenāṁ yaśmindeśe na vidyate Sa tataḥ mlecchadeso vijnayā Āryasvartab paraḥ // LXXXIV. 4, p. 176.

42. Manusmṛti, Vāngavāsi Edn., 1309 B.S., p. 76, III. 22.


44. Manusmṛti, II. 17, p. 72.

45. Ibid., II. 18, p. 73 — Tasmin deśe ya acāreṇ paraṃparasyakaṃgetaḥ / Varnanāṃ sāntarālenām sa sadacara ucyate //

46. Ibid., II. 19, p. 73.
47. *Mānu*, II, 21, p. 74. Himavadvindhyayor=madhyam yat práz-
Vinasanād=api / Pratyag=eva Prayāgac=ca Madhyadesaḥ
prakīrtitaḥ //

48. Ibid., II, 22, p. 76. Ā-samudrat=tu vai pūrvād=ā-samudrāt=
tu pāścināt / Tayor=ev=antarām gītory=ārāvarto vidur-
budhāḥ //

49. Ibid., II, 23, p. 76. Kṛṣnasāras=tu carati mṛgo yatra svabh-
āvataḥ / Sa jñeyo yajñiyodesḥo mlecchadesāstataḥ paraḥ //

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., II, 24, p. 76. Etān dvijātayo desāḥ samūreyeren pra-
yastnataḥ / Śūdras=tu yaśmin kasmin vā nivased vr̥ttī-karśicāḥ/

pp. 192-95.

A. Parashar observes that the border between Arya
and Mleccha lands was not a permanent one (*IHR*, Vol. IX,
Nos. 1-2, p. 14). She further observes that "mleccha lands
in the past and in the future had been and could be made
fit for habitation as long as Dharma or sacrifice, symboli-
zed by black antelope, purified those areas" (Ibid.). See
also *Taittiriya Sāmhitā*, V. 4. 4. 4 and the commentary of
Vivarupa on *Yājñavalkya*.


54. Ibid., X, 43-44, p. 876.
55. A passage in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa relates that Viśvāmitra cursed his elder filthy sons, when they did not agree to his proposal to treat Śuṇāhaśeṣa (Devarāta) as his son, that they would associate with the lowest castes. These sons would associate themselves with the Andhras, Pundrās, Śabaras, Pulindas, and Mutibas. All of them belonged to the lowest strata of the society and are called Dasyus. (Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, 33. 6; cf. Kāme, op. cit., Vol.II, p. 77).

56. Manu., VII. 149, p. 560. Jadamukhāvadhāraṁstairyaḥ yonāṁ vayo(a)tigān / Strī-Mleccha vyādhi tavyaṅśeṇmantraṅe(a)pasārayet //

57. Ibid., XII. 24, p. 999.

58. Ibid., XII. 39, p. 1007.

59. Ibid., XII. 43, p. 1004.

60. B.N. Sarma and B. Upadhyaya (Ed.), The Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata, Benaras, 1939. XIII. 149-50, p. 156. Mlecchāṁ jātayo yāṣṭu Pulinda-Śabarādayah /

61. Ibid., XIII. 190-91, p. 159.

Vijātiyāṣṭu ya nāreyah Pulinda Śabarānegah /

62. Ibid.

63. Pravṛtti is so called because it informs us about the local usages regarding costumes (veśa), languages (bhāṣā), manners (ṛcāra) and professions (vṛtti), which differed from country to country. (M.N. Ghosh, Trans. of the Nāṭyaśāstra (in 2 Vols.), Vol. I, p. 242.)
64. NS, XIV, 36–37, p. 165.


66. Ibid., XIV, 40–41, p. 166.

67. Assam.

68. A forest tribe of the Vindhyian region.

69. Bhagalpur district of Bihar was known as Ariga.

70. Vaṅgas are mentioned as a tribe in the Aitareya Āraṇyaka (II. 1. 1), along with the Mahas. They are also mentioned in the Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra (I. 25–31), the Maṅga (VII. 9. 15; I. 215. 9; II. 30. ; III. 253. 8), the Kam (II. 10. 36–37) and several other texts. Bk. XIV of the Mahābhārata (XIV. 82. 24) clearly shows that Vaṅga extended up to the sea.

71. They are mentioned in the Aitareya Āraṇyaka (II. 1. 1) as an ethnic group. As a janapāda it corresponds to Patna and Gaya districts of Bihar.


73. Ibid., XIV, 47–49, p. 217.

74. Ibid., XVIII, 26–27, p. 218:

76. NS, XVIII. 45-47, p. 217.
Māgadhavantijā prācyā sūrasenyaṛdhamāgadhī // 45 //
Bāhlīkā-dāksīṇātyāśca sapta bhāsāḥ prakīrtitāḥ // ... // 46 //

77. Ibid., XVIII. 46.

78. Ibid., XVIII. 50. śabaraṇām sakādhinām tatsvabhāvaśca yo gana? /

79. Ibid., XVIII. 50, p. 218. Bāhlīkabhasādicyānām ..... /

80. Ibid., XVIII. 50. Khaśānāaśvadeśajā ..... /

81. NS, XVIII. 54, p. 218. "Abhiroktih śābarī syāt ...../"

82. Ibid., 53. Vindhyāgaramadhye tu ye desāḥ śrutimāgatāḥ /
Nakāra babhulam tesu bhāsam tajjanah prayojayet //

83. Ibid., 55-56. Gahgāgaramadhye tu ye desāḥ samprakītiteh /
Bāhrababulam tesu bhāsam tajjanah prayojayet //

84. Ibid., 56.

85. Ibid., 58.

86. Ibid., XXIII, 102, p. 261.
Kirāta-Barbarāṇḍhrāśca Dremilāh Kāśiḥdaśāḥ /
Pulinda-dāksīṇātyāśca praṇega tvasita smṛtah //

87. Ibid., XXIII. 103.
Śakāśca yavaṇāścaiva Pallava Vālbikādayah /
Prayena gaurāḥ karavāya uttarām ye ārita diśam //

88. Ibid., 104.
Pancalāh sūrasenaśca tathā caivodha māgadhāḥ /
Anāga-Vaṁga-Kaliṅgaśtu śyāmāh kāryastu vanrataḥ //

90. Ibid.

91. Mbh., XII. 188, 5, p. 1564.

92. An. VI., p. 149.

93. Ibid.

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.

97. Paumacariyam, Canto XCVII, verses 57-67. For further details see J.C. Jain, Life in Ancient India as Depicted in Jaina Canons and Commentaries, New Delhi, Reprint Edn., p. 433.

98. Ibid., Chap. LVII, p. 218. The An. VI. also refers to the traditional fourfold system. Chap. IX, Sec. 40-46, pp. 101-103.


101. NS, Chap. XXIII, 103.


104. Ibid., pp. 505-6; 79. 61.
106. Ibid., p. 19, 4. 11.
108. Ibid., p. 168, p. 69. 11.
109. For the interpretation of the term gana see R.C. Majumdar, Corporate Life in Ancient India, Third Edn., Calcutta, 1969, p. 222.
110. See Supra, Ch. VI, n. 113.
111. See above n. 2.
112. Mbh., III. 190, 29; 72 etc.
117. Pandit Sivadatta (Edited) and Lexman Shastri Pansikar (Revised), Nāmalingānuśasanam nāma Amarakosāḥ, with the commentary of Bhaiji Dikshit, Nirnay Sagar Press, Bombay, 1915.
118. Ibid., I. Nāṭyavarga, 20, p. 70.

119. Ibid. II. Bhūmivarga, 6, p. 112. "Pratyanto Mlecchadesah syāt."

120. AS, VII. 10. 16, p. 187.

121. Mbh., I. 210. 8; II. 34. 9-10 etc.

122. Amarakosāh, II. Sūdравarga. 20.

"Bhedāh-kirāta-sābara-Pulinda-mlecha jātasyah /n"

123. Ibid., II. Vaisyavarga, 17, p. 339. "Atho Tāmrakam".

124. Goswami Damodara Shastri (Ed.), Kāmasutra of Vātsyāyana with the Jayamangala of Yaśodhara, Varanasi, 1929, p. 34.

In the commentary of Yaśodhara, the term "Mlecchavikalpa" has been explained as — "Yat sādhuśabdopanibaddhamvyaksa-syatyāsādaspastārtha tānmlecchitam-gudhavastumentrārtham, tasya vikalpa."


128. Ibid.

129. Ibid., XVI. 11-12, p. 131.

130. Ibid., XVI. 15, p. 131.
131. Ibid., XVI. 35, p. 135.

"Girisikha-r-kandara-darinivista Mlecha:katayah ... //35//

132. Ibid., XVII. 16, p. 141.

133. Ibid., XVII. 20, p. 142.


"Mlecha hi javanaste su samyak samanadham sthitam /
Rajivatte(a)pi pujyante kim punardevaviddvijah // 30 //