

descended from the original founders or not.¹⁸

But the *Gaṇa* indicated a certain type of state, sharply distinguished from monarchy, is proved by a reference from the *Avadānaśataka* where it is narrated that when some merchants from *Madhyadeśa*, travelling in the Deccan, were asked by a local ruler as to who the kings were in their respective homelands, they replied, 'Sir, in the countries of some of us there are kings but in those of others, there is *gaṇa* or republican government'.¹⁹ That *gaṇa* had a definite constitutional meaning is also supported by the evidence from the Jain literature, the coin-legends of the *Yaudheyas*, *Mālavas* and *Ārjunāyanas* as well as by the writings of the contemporary Greek writers.²⁰

It may be admitted that the ancient Indian republics were regular states and not mere territories marked for different tribes. They had crossed the tribal stage and had adopted the monarchical system or were transforming themselves to republicanism or had mixed constitutions. They were small territorial units. They issued their own coins and the coin-legends in Sanskrit. It proves beyond doubt that they got Aryanized. They had weak economy and followed their copper or silver coinage rather than the gold currency system which had its start with *Kaniṣka* in Northern India. In the time of distress or as a friendly gesture, they worked as auxiliary armies to the kings. Though at times tributary to the great kingdoms, they exercised internal autonomy.

Even when they migrated to other lands, it is not necessary that the whole population migrated, a majority of them might have succumbed to the onslaughts of the invader or got merged with the dominant tribe.