

occasion be built inside.<sup>8</sup> Presumably they consisted of detached houses with enclosures, but no details are to be found in Vedic literature. Large villages (*mahāgrāmāḥ*) were known.<sup>9</sup>

The relation of the villagers is difficult to ascertain with precision. In several passages<sup>10</sup> the word occurs with what appears to be the derivative sense of 'body of men.' This sense presumably started from the use of the word to denote the 'village folk,' as when *Śaryāta Mānava* is said in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*<sup>11</sup> to have wandered about with his 'village' (*grāmeṇa*); but, as Zimmer<sup>12</sup> observes, this restricted sense nowhere appears clearly in the *Rigveda*,<sup>13</sup> where indeed the 'folk' (*jana*)<sup>14</sup> of the *Bharatas* is in one passage<sup>15</sup> called the 'horde seeking cows' (*gavyan grāmāḥ*). Zimmer<sup>16</sup> tends to regard the *Grāma* as a clan, and as standing midway between the family and the tribe (*Viś*). The *Grāma* may, however, perhaps be regarded more correctly<sup>17</sup> as an aggregate of several families, not necessarily forming a clan, but only part of a clan (*Viś*), as is often the case at the present day.<sup>18</sup>

Vedic literature tells us very little about the social economy of the village. There is nothing to show that the community as such held land. What little evidence there is indicates that individual tenure of land was known (see *Urvarā*, *Kṣetra*), but this, in effect though not in law, presumably meant tenure by a family rather than by an individual person. The expression

<sup>8</sup> As nowadays. See Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 144, citing Hügel, *Kashmir*, 2, 45.

<sup>9</sup> *Jaiminiya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa*, iii. 13, 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Rv.* i. 100, 10; iii. 33, 11; x. 27, 1; 127, 5; *Av.* iv. 7, 5; v. 20, 3 (where, however, 'villages' is quite probable); *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, cf. i. 5, 2; vi. 7, 4, 9; xii. 4, 1, 3. Cf. n. 1.

<sup>11</sup> *iv.* 1, 5, 2, 7.

<sup>12</sup> *Altindisches Leben*, 161.

<sup>13</sup> See passages cited in n. 10.

<sup>14</sup> *Rv.* iii. 53, 12.

<sup>15</sup> *Rv.* iii. 33, 11.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, 159, 160, where, however, his language is not very clear. Cf.

Hopkins, *Religions of India*, 27, who points out that Zimmer is inaccurate in identifying the tribe with *Viś*. It is the clan, a division below that of the tribe (*Jana*).

<sup>17</sup> A village might contain a whole clan, but probably it contained at most a section of a clan. By family is meant a Hindu joint family; but the extent to which such families existed, and the number of persons included, cannot even be conjectured from the available evidence. Cf. Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, 393; Leist, *Altarisches Juss Gentium*, 34.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Baden Powell, *Village Communities in India*, 85 et seq.