

'desirous of a village' (*grāma-kāma*), which occurs frequently in the later *Samhitās*,¹⁹ points, however, to the practice of the king's granting to his favourites his royal prerogatives over villages so far as fiscal matters were concerned. Later²⁰ the idea developed that the king was owner of all the land, and parallel with that idea the view that the holders of such grants were landlords. But of either idea there is no vestige in Vedic literature beyond the word *grāma-kāma*, which much more probably refers to the grant of regalia than to the grant of land, as Teutonic parallels show.²¹ Such grants probably tended to depress the position of the actual cultivators, and to turn them into tenants, but they can hardly have had this effect to any appreciable extent in early times.

The village does not appear to have been a unit for legal purposes in early days,²² and it can hardly be said to have been a political unit. The village no doubt, as later, included in its members various menials, besides the cultivating owners, and also the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Kṣatriyas* who might hold interest in it by royal grant or usage without actually cultivating land, such as chariot-makers (*Ratha-kāra*), carpenters (*Takṣan*), smiths (*Karmāra*), and others, but they did not presumably, in any sense, form part of the brotherhood.²³ All alike were politically subject to the king, and bound to render him food or service or other tribute, unless he had transferred his rights to

¹⁹ *Taittiriya Samhitā*, ii. 1, 1, 2; 3, 2; 3, 9, 2; *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā*, ii. 1, 9; 2, 3; iv. 2, 7, etc.; Hopkins, *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 15, 32, thinks that *grāma* here means 'herd' (of cattle).

²⁰ Cf. Baden Powell, *Indian Village Community*, 207 *et seq.* Whether or not the idea is already found in *Manu*, ix. 34, is disputed and uncertain. See *Rājan*. The germ of it lies in a different sphere—the right of the *Kṣatriya*, with the consent of the clan, to apportion land (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, vii. 1, 1, 8).

²¹ Cf. Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, 2, 237 *et seq.*; Baden

Powell, *Village Communities in India*, 83; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, 48. It may be mentioned that we have no Vedic evidence as to the non-sale of land by the members of a family, except the indications mentioned under *Urvarā*. The later evidence is overwhelming for *grāma*, meaning 'village.' Cf. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, iv. 2, 4; *Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*, i. 14; *Kausika Sūtra*, 94.

²² Cf. Foy, *Die königliche Gewalt*, 20, n.; Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, 93; Hopkins, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 13, 78, 128.

²³ Cf. Baden Powell, *Indian Village Community*, 17, 18.