CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION:

The Prominence of the र्गवेदसाम्हिता in the Vedic Literature
INTRODUCTION:
The Prominence of the Rgvedasamhitā in the Vedic Literature

The Vedic literature is the oldest Indo-European literary monument where the cultural heritage of the people of the then India is reflected. In the words of Bloomfield, ‘Vedic literature is the most ancient literary document of the Indo-European peoples— the foundation, for all time of Indian’s religious thought’. The whole Vedic literature occupies a very important position in the study of the history of India and its religion. The term *veda*, which is derived from the root *vid*, ‘to know’ with the suffix *ac*, means a type of literature which is the source of knowledge. The *Veda* signifies knowledge that is heard or orally communicated. The Vedas are said to be the foundation of all knowledge. Manu, the first law-maker says, *vedo ‘khilo dharmamūlam*, i.e. the *Veda* is the source of all dharmas. Gautama also supports this view. Sāyaṇācārya in the *Bhāṣyabhūmiṇī* of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* states, *iṣṭapraptyāṇaṁ śpaparīḥārayoralaṅkikamupāyān yo grantho vedayati sa vedah/* i.e. the books known as the Vedas illuminates the supernormal means of attainment of the desired object and avoidance of undesired object or evil. The Vedas are called *alaukika*, as the normal means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), viz. perception (*pratyakṣa*) or inference (*anumāṇa*) is not capable of enlightening about the knowledge of these.

Max Müller also holds that the *Veda* of the tradition is the unique storehouse of the ‘supreme knowledge’ that can be obtained through revelation only. It is stated that the Self-born Brahman went towards the eternal sacred persons, i.e. the Ṛṣis, practising penance. By the favour of Paramēśvara, the self-restrained sages can realize the *Veda*. So, being taught first by the Self-born, the great sages won the Vedas. The mantras are said to be revealed

1 Vide, Aggrawal, H.R., *A Short History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 214
2 Manu., 2.6
3 *vedo dharmaṃūlam / G.Ds., 1.1.1
6 M. Müller, F., *The Vedas*, p. VII
7 ajan ha vai pṛṣṭhāntastapasyamānān brahma svayambhāvaḥyānaśat ta ṛṣayo’bhavan/ T Ār., 2.9.1
8 yugante’ntarhitan vedan setihasan mahārsayah/ lebhire tapasā pūrvamanunjñātāḥ svayambhūvā/ *Mbh.Śānti.*, 210.19
in the inner self of the seers. So, the seers are called Mantradrastrs or seers of the Vedic hymns. These Vedas are said to be infinite, i.e. anantah vai vedah and are believed to be apauruseya, i.e. not composed by any agency, human or divine, in Indian tradition. According to Sāyaṇācārya, Veda constitutes statements of divine origin: apauruseyaṁ vākyam vedah. The term veda or Vedic literature do not mean one single literary work. In his work, History of Indian Literature, Winternitz says, 'It (the word Veda) does not mean one single literary work ... but a whole great literature, which arose in the course of many centuries, and through centuries has been handed down from generation to generation by verbal transmission.....' According to him, Veda or Vedic literature consists of three different classes of literary works, viz. i) the Saṁhitās, i.e. collections, ii) the Brāhmaṇas, i.e. voluminous prose texts and iii) the Āraṇyakas, i.e. forest texts and Upaniṣads, i.e. secret doctrines. Veda is the name applied to both Mantra and Brāhmaṇa, i.e. hymns and their explanations. There goes the saying of Apastamba: mantrabrāhmaṇaḥyorvedanāmadheyaṁ i.e. Mantra and Brāhmaṇa taken together are known as Veda. According to Rgbhāṣyabhūmikā, the sum total of words used in Mantras and Brāhmaṇas constitute the Veda, e.g. mantrabrāhmaṇaḥatmakah śabdaraśirvedah. Besides the division of the Vedas into Mantra and Brāhmaṇa, there is another division. The Brāhmaṇa again is subdivided into Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Upaniṣad. The Āraṇyaka is the last part of the Brāhmaṇa and the last part of the Āraṇyaka is called the Upaniṣad. So, the Veda means different classes of literary works, viz. the Mantras, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads form the closing part of the Veda and are called Vedānta, as they discuss the doctrine of Self and Supreme Brahman, highest and ultimate goal of the Veda. Besides these, there is a set of works associated with the study of the Vedas. These works being the parts of the Vedic studies are known as the Vedāṅgas, which are indispensable in the Vedic literature. The Vedāṅgas are six in number, viz. Śikṣā, Kalpa, Nirukta, Vyākaraṇa, Jyotiṣa and Chandas. Thus,
the term *veda* primarily means the knowledge par excellence and secondarily, the vast ancient Indian Literature. *Mantra* literature forms the oldest part of the *Veda* and contains its kernel. The term *mantra* is defined by Yāśka as, *mantrā mananāt* i.e. the mantras or stanzas are so called from thinking. It offers ample scope for thought and deliberation. Jaimini also defined *mantra* as *taccodakesu mantrākhyāt*, i.e. Anything that reveals (or reminds) the deed to be performed is the *mantra* and this *mantra* requires to be recited for the performance of the said deed. The Mantras are also called *Śāhītās*. From the very beginning, the *Mantra* or metrical portions were collected in the form of *Śāhītās*. *Śāhītā* literally means a collection (of hymns) intended for recitation (in the case of the *Rgveda* and *Atharvaveda*), singing (*Sāmaveda*) and muttering (*Yajurveda*). The *Śāhītās*, which form the first stage of development in the field of Vedic literature, are four in number, viz. the *Rgvedasāhītā*, i.e. the collection of laudatory verses, the *Sāmavedasāhītā*, i.e. the collection of the melodies (*sāman*), the *Yajurvedasāhītā*, i.e. the collection of the sacrificial formulas, and the *Atharvavedasāhītā*, i.e. the collection of the magic formulas. Thus, the *Śāhītās* are four in number and the mantras are threefold. The term *traya* or sacred triad signifies the four *Śāhītās*. The *Atharvaveda* is a late addition to the Vedas which bears the character of the *Rgvedic* mantras. Sukumari Bhattacharjī states that *Traya* (a collection of three) is generally taken to mean the *Ṛci*, *Sāman* and *Yajus* *Śāhītās*, because the *Atharvan* came to be included among the *Śāhītās* much later. Of these four *Śāhītās*, the oldest at the same time the most important is the *Rgvedasāhītā*, simply called the *Rgveda*. It belongs to a period thousands of years far removed from the present people, of which no other record or monuments are available. It is stated by Max Mùller, "The first and most important *Veda* is the *Rgveda*, which has often, and not without some truth, been called the only true *Veda*." As the *Rgveda* is the oldest of the Vedic compositions and the oldest literary record of the human race and, therefore, lies its importance. The very foundation of the entire Vedic literature is the *Rgveda*. Max Mùller also says in his *Origin and Growth of Religion*, "One thing is certain, there is
nothing more ancient and primitive not only in India but in the whole Äryan world than the hymns of the *Rgveda.* He also states that all the hymns of the *Veda,* particularly those of the hymns of the *Rgveda* are certainly older than any other poetry we possess in India, nay, older than any literary composition we possess of any of the Äryan nations in Asia or Europe. In this regard A.A. Macdonell says, "It (*Rgveda*) represents an earlier stage of thought than is to be met with in any other literature." Sukumari Bhattacharji also states that the *Rgveda* is the world's earliest oral composition which has come down to us and it presents traits which are different from compositions in a post-literary age. The term *rk* means verse or hymn, which is distinct from, and earlier than *Yajus* or sacrificial formula, though sacrifice or throwing oblations into fire in propitiation of deities is a form of worship which is common to all ancient people and goes back to pre-historic times. The verb *rc* means to praise, and hence, the term *rk* can well be understood as the means to praise the gods, i.e. *rcyate stūyate anena iti rk* The *Rgvedasamhitā* is a collection of verses called *rcas,* where there are prayers and praises addressed to different gods and goddesses, which are regarded as the powers of natural phenomena by various families of poets and sages. The collection of *rcs* meant for *haustra karma* forms the *Rgvedasamhitā.* The *Rgveda* records the picture of a society mostly dominated by the priestly classes, who prayed to different gods and goddesses to confer favour on them. Besides praises to the gods, the *Rgveda* presents a variety of themes. There are lyrics of various kinds, dialogues, ballads, legends and myths, spells, doxology, philosophical speculations, hymns dedicated to nature and various other subjects. Besides supplying information on such topics, it includes a mass of material which helps to form an idea regarding the past history and daily life of the Rgvedic Äryans. The hymns of the *Rgvedasamhitā* are the earliest record for the social and religious institutions of the Vedic Äryans. It is the sole means of getting the history of the Äryans. Max Müller holds, "...on the whole the *Rgveda* is a genuine document,...and it exhibits one of the earliest and rudest phases in the history of mankind;...and bringing us as near the beginnings in language, thought, and mythology as

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26 M. Müller, F., op.cit., p. 43
27 Vide, Mazumdar, A.K., op.cit., p. 270
28 Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 79
29 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 22
30 Vide, Sharma, S.N., op cit., p. 4
literary documents can ever bring us in the Aryan world.' The *Rgveda* has long been known as an authority for the study of ancient Indian culture. Because it gives a clear idea of the civilization of a very remote past by representing people’s life and culture, which is not to be found anywhere else. The *Rgveda* occupies pioneering position in the whole Vedic literature for it gives the first impetus to the ancient Indian culture, its philosophical ideas, political institutions, religious beliefs, code of conduct, music, fine arts, plant science and so on and so forth. The *Rgveda* which is voluminous in extent describes the ancestors, their life-style, language, their thought and religion, their faith and method of worshipping the gods as well as their ideals. From the contents of the Rgvedic hymns it is proved that the Aryans were in a sufficiently advanced stage of civilization. So, it can be said that the study of the *Rgveda* is essential to understand not only the history of India but also for the elucidation of the history of the world. In this regard, the sayings of Max Müller can be cited, who says, ‘In the history of the world the *Veda* fills a gap which no literary work in any other language could fill. It carries us back to times of which we have no records anywhere, and gives us the very words of a generation of men, of whom otherwise we could form but the vaguest estimate by means of conjectures and inferences. As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of the Aryan branch of mankind, will belong forever to the *Rgveda*.’

So, the *Rgveda* can be said as a unique work of its kind in Indian literature in general and Vedic literature in particular. The *Rgveda* forms the basis of the Hindu way of life even today. Most of the precepts, rituals, philosophical principles contained in this *Veda* are followed by a large number of people in India till date.

**Age of the *Rgvedasamhitā***

It is already stated that the *Rgvedasamhitā* is the oldest document of the Aryans. But there is diversity of views regarding the probable date of this *Veda*. It appears that the hymns of the *Rgvedasamhitā* have been composed at different periods. Language and grammatical differences are noticed in between the hymns of this *Veda*. Moreover, their collection together in the present Samhitā text is altogether a different matter; for the date

31 M. Müller, F., op.cit., p. 8
32 M. Müller, F., *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 36
of such collection must be distinct from the date of the composition of the hymns themselves.\textsuperscript{33} Most of the European scholars have given the date of composition of the \textit{Rgvedic} hymns from about 1500 B.C. to 1000 B.C. According to Macdonell, the first collection comes from a period which can hardly be less remote than 1000 B.C.\textsuperscript{34} Max Müller assigns the \textit{Rgveda} approximately to 1200 B.C. In one place he states that the \textit{Rgvedasamhita} could not have been collected before the second century after Christ, because the word Niška occurs in the hymns.\textsuperscript{35} D.C. Sircar also states that the \textit{Rgveda} is assigned by some scholars to 1200-800 B.C. and the other three Sarḥitās to 1000-800 B.C.\textsuperscript{36} On the grounds of astronomical references Tilaka states about the age of the \textit{Rgveda} thus, ‘The traditions recorded in the Rigveda unmistakably point to a period not later than 4000 B.C. when the vernal equinox was in Orion, or, in other words, when the Dog-star (or the Dog as we have it in the Rigveda) commenced the equinoctial year.’\textsuperscript{37} He further states that a good many sūktas in the Rigveda were composed during the Orion period, roughly extending from 4000 B.C. to 2500 B.C. from the time when the vernal equinox was in the asterism Āдрā to the time when it receded to the asterism Kṛtiṣṭā.\textsuperscript{38} Based on astronomical calculations Jacobi also states that the period of the Rigveda goes back to at least 4000 B.C.\textsuperscript{39} It is stated that if the \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa} is itself so old as 3000 B.C. than the \textit{Rgvedic} hymns must be far older and their period, therefore, may be placed between 4000 and 3000 B.C.\textsuperscript{40} The older hymns of the \textit{Rgveda} may fairly be placed in the fourth millennium B.C.\textsuperscript{41}

\textbf{Rgvedic Recensions and Division into \textit{maṇḍala} and \textit{aṣṭaka}}

The \textit{Rgveda} has been preserved for thousands of years without any variation and there are no various readings in it. But some differences in pronunciation and ritual arose in course of time which gave rise to the sākhās or cāraṇas.\textsuperscript{42} In the \textit{Mahābhāṣya} of Patañjali it is said that the \textit{Rgveda} has twenty one recensions, the \textit{Yajurveda} has hundred and the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, p 25
\item \textsuperscript{34} Vide, Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{35} M. Müller, F., op. cit., p. 330
\item \textsuperscript{36} Sircar, D.C., \textit{Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature}, p. 9
\item \textsuperscript{37} Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., \textit{Ghate's Lectures on Rigveda}, p. 198
\item \textsuperscript{38} Vide, Ibid., pp 198,199
\item \textsuperscript{39} Vide, Ibid., p. 199
\item \textsuperscript{40} Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 35
\item \textsuperscript{41} Vide, Ibid., p. 39
\item \textsuperscript{42} Vide, Ibid., p. 44
\end{itemize}
Sāmaveda has thousand recensions. The Mahābhārata gives the number of the śākhā as twenty one thousand. The Caranavyuha of Saunaka enumerates five principle śākhās of the Rgveda, viz. Sākala, Vāskala, Āśvalāyana, Śāṅkhāyana, and Māndūkēya. Each of which had a sūtra of its own. The difference of these śākhās, so far as the contents of the Rgvedasamhitā are concerned, is not easy to determine. All the recensions are not available in present times. Of the various recensions, the Sākala and Vāskala are available now. The Sākala śākhā is popular from ancient times, which preserves the best tradition of the text of the Rgveda. The hymns of the Rgvedasamhitā are preserved and arranged in a systematic manner, in order to preserve the heritage of the Vedic Aryans from change and destruction. The contents of the Rgvedasamhitā are arranged in two ways, viz. one into aṣṭakas and the other into maṇḍalas. Of these, the division into maṇḍala seems to be more ancient and based on the internal grounds, whereas, the aṣṭaka division is more or less formal and evidently the more recent. The arrangement of the Rgvedasamhitā into the maṇḍala division is more scientific than the aṣṭaka division. In the aṣṭaka division, each aṣṭaka is subdivided into adhyāyas and the adhyāyas are again into some vargas, whereas, in the maṇḍala division, the Rgveda is divided into ten maṇḍalas. Such maṇḍalas contain some anuvākas and each anuvāka in turn, comprise some sūktas or hymns, and the sūktas consist of rks or mantra. In the aṣṭaka division, the entire bulk of the Rgveda is divided into eight aṣṭakas, sixty-four adhyāyas and two thousand and six vargas. Moreover, the Rgveda has ten maṇḍalas of varying length, excepting the tenth maṇḍala that contains the same number of sūktas as the first one, and eighty-five anuvākas, one thousand and seventeen sūktas. If the eleven Vālakhilya sūktas are inserted in the middle of the eighth maṇḍala, the number of hymns becomes one thousand and twenty eight. According to Winternitz, 'Vālakhilya hymns 'are of less antiquity than the hymns of the Rgveda, but for some reason unknown to us were not included in the collection.' Similar is the case with

 ekaviṁśatidhā vahvṛc'yaṁ, ekasatamadvaryusākhaṁ, sahasravartmā sāmavedaṁ / Mahābhāṣya paspaśā, 1.1.1

 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 57,58
 Vide, Ibid., p. 44
 Vide, Ibid., p. 45
 Also vide, Shastri Gaurinath, op.cit., p. 35
 Vide, Ibid., op.cit., p 75
 Vide, Goswami, S., & Chakravarti, H N., op cit, p. 58
 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., p 34
 Winternitz, M., op.cit, vol. 1, p.60
the Khilas or the 'Supplementary hymns' which are collected and added to the *Samhitā* only after the latter had already been concluded.\(^{51}\) A.B. Keith also holds, 'It is most probable...that the Khilas are somewhat later than the *Rgveda Samhitā*.\(^{52}\) Max Müller translates the term *khila* as the apocryphal hymns.\(^ {53}\) The Khila hymns include the Nivids, *Pururuc*, *Praīsa* and Kuntāpas hymns and the entire supplementary section together is known as *Rkpariśīta*.\(^ {54}\)

The *Rgveda* is alternatively called *Daśatayī*, as it contains ten maṇḍalas. It is stated that the term *daśatayī* is a late term, used when the *Sākala* recension, which followed the *Maṇḍala* division had gained ascendency over the other recensions.\(^ {55}\) The *Rgveda* is also known as *Bhūryca*, for many ṛks are incorporated in it.

**Arrangement of the *Rgvedasamhitā***

The hymns of the *Rgvedasamhitā* represent compositions of different periods and are of varying degrees of literary merit. The different hymns of the *Rgvedasamhitā* were composed long before they were brought together and systematically arranged. Its language, vocabulary, style and metre and ideas indicate that the different portions of the *Samhitā* represent chronologically different stages. The hymns are composed of various metres and have particular seer and deity. The maṇḍalas of this *Veda* are of varying length and are devoted to different topics.

Among the ten maṇḍalas, the first *maṇḍala* is the production of the latest period of Vedic times and contains hymns on miscellaneous subjects. It has one hundred and ninety-one number of hymns ascribed roughly to fifteen different seers of different families, excluding those belonging to the families of Bhṛgu, Atri and Bharadvāja,\(^ {56}\) viz. Madhucchandas,\(^ {57}\) Medhātithi,\(^ {58}\) Sūnaḥsepa,\(^ {59}\) Kaṇva,\(^ {60}\) Gotama,\(^ {61}\) Kutsa,\(^ {62}\) Agastya\(^ {63}\) etc. The Anukramaṇīs

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\(^{51}\) Vide, Ibid., pp. 59, 60  
^{52}\) Vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, pp. 32, 33  
^{53}\) M. Müller, F. (ed.) *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 32, p. xivii  
^{54}\) Vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 32  
^{55}\) Vide, Ibid., notes, p. 4  
^{56}\) Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., notes, p. 77  
^{57}\) R.V., 1 1-10  
^{58}\) Ibid., 1 12-19, 1 22, 1 23  
^{59}\) Ibid., 1 24, 1 25, 1 27, 1 28, 1 29, 1 30  
^{60}\) Ibid., 1 36, 1 37, 1 41, 1 42, 1 43  
^{61}\) Ibid., 1 74-93  
^{62}\) Ibid., 1 94-98  
^{63}\) Ibid., 1 165.13-15, 1 166-169, 1 170.2, 5, 1 171-178, 1 179.3, 4, 1 180-181
also give the names of the seers of every single hymn of the first, ninth and tenth manḍalas, which include the names of female seers also. The first hymn of this manḍala is addressed to Agni, the most favourite god of the Āryans, ascribed to Madhucchandhas. The second part of the first manḍala (hymns 50-191) is arranged on the same plan as the eighth manḍala, as more than half of its hymns are attributed to seer Kaṇva and his family. The hymns ascribed to seer Agastya occur at the end of the manḍala.

Majority of the oldest hymns of the Rgvedasamhitā occur from the second to the seventh manḍalas. These manḍalas have a homogenous character. The homogeneity of the Family books renders it highly probable that they formed the nucleus of the Rgveda. Each one of the manḍalas contains hymns ascribed to seers belonging to a particular family of the Vedic age. So, these are called Vaiśam&macr;manḍalas or Āṛṣam&macr;manḍalas, i.e. the ‘Family Books.’ The seers of these Manḍalas are Grīṣamāda, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bharadvāja and Vasiṣṭha respectively. The second manḍala is attributed to the family of Grīṣamāda and it contains forty-three hymns addressed to Agni, Indra and other deities. The third manḍala has sixty-two hymns ascribed to Viśvāmitra. The fourth manḍala consists of fifty hymns, which are ascribed to Vāmadeva. In this manḍala various deities are addressed, where Agni and Indra occupies the supreme position. The fifth manḍala has eighty-seven hymns belonging to Atri. These hymns are addressed to Agni, Indra, the Viśvedevās, the Maruts and others. The sixth manḍala contains seventy-five hymns ascribed to Bharadvāja and addressed to numerous gods. The seventh one consisting of one hundred and four hymns belongs to Vasiṣṭha, and are addressed to various deities. Some of the uncommon hymns, i.e. Sakuntasūkta, the Sangrāmasūkta and the Maṇḍūkasūkta are found in these manḍalas. There is a principle, according to which hymns addressed to such gods are arranged. In each manḍala, there is a collection of hymns addressed to Agni in the beginning, followed by Indra and the rest to other deities. Moreover, the deity to whom the largest number of hymns is addressed finds the first place. Where the number

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64 Sarvānukramanī, 2.4
Also vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 58
65 Vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 5
66 RV., 2.42,43
67 Vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol 1, p. 5
68 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., notes, p. 75
69 Vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 5
70 RV., 1.165.13-15, 1.166-169, 1.170.2,5, 1.171-178, 1.179.3,4, 1.180-181, 1.190
71 Vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 5
72 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., notes, p. 75
73 Ibid., 6.75
74 Ibid., 7.103
of hymns is equal, the deity to whom a larger number of stanzas is addressed in the first 
hymn, gets the priority in the order.72

The eighth manḍala which contains ninety-two hymns is attributed to different families 
of seers, i.e. Kaṇya and Aṅgirasa and addressed to many gods. In this manḍala the eleven 
Vālakhilya hymns are inserted in the middle. Thus, the total number may be taken to be 
hundred and three. In this manḍala, Kaṇya family predominates amongst the seers, as the 
eleven Vālakhilyas are all by Kaṇyas and of the other ninety-two, more than half are attributed 
to Kaṇya.73 The definite principle of arrangement like the Kulamaṇḍalas cannot be seen 
with regard to the eighth manḍala. Macdonell holds that the eighth manḍala does not 
form a parallel to the Family-books. For though a single family, that of the Kaṇyas, at least 
predominates among its authors, the prevalence in it of the strophic form of composition 
impresses upon it a character of its own.74 The eighth manḍala is famous as Pragāṭha manḍala, i.e. a collection of Pragāthas by different seers. According to Macdonell and 
Keith, Pragāṭha is the name given in the Aitareya Āraṇyaka (2.2,2) to the poets of the 
eighth Maṇḍala of the Rgveda, so called because they composed Pragāṭha strophes.75 
Pragāṭha is said to be a combination of a mantra in metre, viz. brhati-kakubh with one 
in satobyhati and sung with a musical tone.76 This manḍala is also called Udgīthā manḍala, 
i.e. a collection of hymns required by the Udgātr-priests in a Soma sacrifice.77 The eighth 
manḍala has its own peculiarity and the second part of the first manḍala has close similarity 
with this manḍala.

The ninth manḍala has one hundred and fourteen hymns ascribed to a large number 
of seers. C. V. Vaidya has noted the peculiarity of a hymn incorporated in this manḍala78 
and he states that the first three verses of this hymn are ascribed to Bharadvāja, the next 
verses to Kaśyapa and then to Gotama, Atri, Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni and Vasiṣṭha who 
form the well-known Sapta-Rishis. The last eleven verses are ascribed to Pavitra Vasiṣṭha.79 
The ninth manḍala has a homogeneous character and bears its own peculiarity, as all the 
hymns of this manḍala are dedicated to Soma Pavamāna. It was formed mainly collecting

72 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., notes, p. 75
73 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 62
74 Macdonell, A.A., A History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 34
75 Vide, Macdonell, A.A., & Keith, A B., Vedic Index of Names and Subjects, vol. 2, p. 29
76 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., notes, p. 76
77 Vide, ibid., pp. 75,76
78 Vide, ibid., pp. 75,76
79 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., notes, p. 75
together the hymns which glorify Soma, the sacred drink. So, this *manḍala* is called *Somamandala* or *Pavamāṇamandala*. These hymns are meant to be used at the time of preparing the Soma drink. The arrangement of this *manḍala* is purely according to metres, as the god Soma is invoked here alone. It can be said that the verses in Gāyatrī metre are placed before those in Jagati and Triśṭubh metres. Verses composed in other metres come next. Thus, hymns 1-67 are in Gāyatrī, the hymns 68-86 are in Jagati, hymns 87-97 are in Triśṭubh and others are in miscellaneous metres. This *manḍala* is added when the first eight *manḍalas* were complete.

The tenth *manḍala* consists of one hundred and ninety-one hymns of miscellaneous subjects, showing their familiarity with the first *manḍala*. The first part of this *manḍala* follows the pattern of arrangement of the first *manḍala*, and the second part, where the longer hymns have been placed before the smaller ones, is a collection of a few heterogeneous hymns. This *manḍala* has seers of different families, viz. Vimāda, Kavaṣa, Vena, Atri, Sudās, son of Pijavan, Arunā, son of Vīthahavya, etc. In some sūktas the deity itself is the seer, i.e. Yama, Indra, Agni, Śraddhā. Mention is made to some other seers, viz., Īrdevagrāvān, son of the serpent Arbuda, Nārāyaṇa, the seer of the *Purusa sūkta*, etc. There are other hymns attributed to Manu, son of Vivasvat.

This *manḍala* has a number of female seers also, e.g. Ghosā, Yamī, Indrāni, Rātri, etc.

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80 navamam manḍalair pāvamāṇair somyam iti vacanāt...// Sāyana on R.V., 9.1
Also vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol 1, p 6
81 Vide, Ibid., p. 7
82 Vide, Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., p. 36
83 Vide, Ibid., p. 38
84 R.V., 10.20, 10.21
85 Ibid., 10.30-34
86 Ibid., 10.138
87 Ibid., 10.123
88 Ibid., 10.143
89 Ibid., 10.133
90 Ibid., 10.91
91 Ibid., 10.10, 10.14
92 Ibid., 10.86
93 Ibid., 10.11, 10.12, 10.80
94 Ibid., 10.151
95 Ibid., 10.175
96 Ibid., 10.90
97 Ibid., 8.27-31
98 Ibid., 10 39, 10 40
99 Ibid., 10.10
100 Ibid., 10.145
101 Ibid., 10.127
Vāk etc. Āśvalāyana groups the seers of this *mandala* as the Kṣudraśūktas and Mahāśūktas, i.e. The seers of small and great hymns. The commentator Sadgurusisya explains that the hymns down to the famous Nāśadīya (10.129) are great hymns and the remaining (10.130 to 191) are small ones. The tenth *mandala* includes hymns of miscellaneous character that covers a wide range of materials, viz. cosmogony, cosmology and philosophical speculations, wedding, burial rites, spells and incantations, superstitions and exercising belonging to the period of Atharvaveda, dialogue hymns, which prove its lateness. The individual hymns and praising of the deities like Brahmanspati, Prajāpati, Puruṣa, Viśvakarman, and abstract ideas like *Manas*, Manyu, Vāk, Jīmna, use of post-Vedic metre Anuṣṭubh etc., show signs of its late origin. From the point of view of linguistics, the tenth *mandala* betrays certain characteristics, justifying its lateness. The language of this *mandala* comes very near to the Classical Sanskrit. Macdonell holds that the hymns of the tenth *mandala* came into being at a time when the first nine already existed. Its composers grew up in the knowledge of the older books, with which they betray their familiarity at every turn. So, it can be said that this *mandala* came into being at a time when the other *mandalas* existed. This *mandala* has also close relation to the other Vedas and the other Vedas borrowed largely from it.

The ten *mandalas* do not belong to the same period of composition. Among the ten *mandalas*, the first, eighth, ninth and the tenth *mandala* have different principles underlying them. These *mandalas* are generally described as Prakṛta (heterogeneous) *mandalas*.
as they contain collection of mantras of varied contents, attributed to the seers of different families. Maṇḍalas first and tenth form the latest portions of the Rgvedasamhitā. Sukumari Bhattacharji observes that both the maṇḍalas tenth and the first part of the first maṇḍala (1-50) were composed and added to the Samhitā much later, and are separated from the earlier corpus by at least two centuries. It appears that the maṇḍalas from two to seven generally formed the oldest portion, i.e. the nucleus, to which the first maṇḍala was prefixed and maṇḍalas eighth, ninth and tenth were affixed. It is stated that there were more stages than one in the compilation of the Rgveda, that the second to the seventh books of single families must have been first compiled, that the ninth was subsequently added containing hymns addressed to Soma taken from the above family books and that the first book was subsequently added to these, together with the eighth with which it has much affinity, more than half of its hymns being attributed to the Kanva family and the favourite strophic metre of the eighth reappearing in the first. The tenth book came into existence, when the first nine already existed. The Rgvedasamhitā is also said to be made of three portions as the seers were broadly divided into three divisions, viz. firstly Satarcinaḥ, i.e. the different seers of the first maṇḍala, secondly Mādhyamāḥ, i.e. the middle ones, referring to the seers of the maṇḍalas two to seven, viz. Grītsamada, Visvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bharadvāja and Vasiṣṭha and thirdly Kṣudrasūktāḥ and Mahāsūktāḥ, i.e. the seers of the shorter and longer hymns. It is stated that the Rṣis of the first maṇḍala are called Satarcins, because the first viz., Madhucchandā has 102 Rks, the rest having the same name by comradeship, while the Rṣis of the intervening Maṇḍalas are called Mādhyamās and the Rṣis of the last or tenth Maṇḍala are called Kṣudrasūktas and Mahāsūktas. Max Müller states that the very name of Mādhyamā, given to the poets of the books from the second to the seventh are called so because they stand by themselves, in the midst of other books of a more miscellaneous character.

121 Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 6  
122 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 63  
123 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, p.47 
124 Cf., atha ṛṣayaḥ Satarcino mādhyamā grītsamado viśvāmitro vāmadevobharadvājo vāsisthah; pragnāḥ pāvamānyah kṣudrasūktāḥ mahāsūktāḥ // Aṣv Gr., 3.4 
Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 63  
125 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, pp. 60,61 
126 M. Müller, F., op.cit., pp 361,362
The Rgvedic hymns were generally the visions of the seers on various topics put in the form of poetry. The poetic skill of the seers is reflected through the Rgvedic hymns. At the very outset, the Rgvedasamhitā was composed as a poetry which in later times associated with the sacrifices. That all the composition of the seers is poetry is indicated in a Rgvedic verse.127 From the Rgvedic hymns it is clear that the literary achievements of the Vedic seers were commendable. In this regard, Adolf Kaegi can be cited who has rightly said, “The great majority of the hymns are invocations and adoration of the gods respectively addressed, their keynote is a simple outpouring of the heart.”128 Gaurinath Shastri also states that though the hymns of the Rgveda have been collected more often than not for ritualistic purposes, still there are stanzas which may be regarded as sparkling gems of the poetic imagination of the Vedic seers and have little connection with the ritual.129 The whole Rgvedic collection is fundamentally lyrical in nature. Poetic beauty reflects in the prayers addressed to different gods and goddesses, which are depicted as manifestations of different phenomena of nature. It is stated that the hymns of the Rígveda are all praises and prayers addressed to gods who are personification of the powers of nature, fact which has greatly contributed to give a poetic colouring to them.130 So, such types of hymns give rise to much beautiful and noble imagery. According to Cowell, “The poetry of the Rgveda is remarkably deficient in that simplicity and natural pathos or sublimity when we naturally look for in the songs of an early period of civilization. The language and style of most of the hymns is singularly artificial. . . . occasionally we meet with fine outbursts of poetry, especially in the hymns addressed to the dawn, but these are never long sustained; and as a rule we find few grand similes or metaphors.”131 Admiring the Rgvedic poetry, Macdonell observes, “This lyrical poetry far older than the literary monuments of any other branch of the Indo-European family, is already distinguished by refinement and beauty of thought, as well as skill in the handling of language and metre.”132

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127 abhivisvanikāvya/R.V., 9.62.25
Also vide, kaviḥ kavitvā divī rūpanāsajat.../Ibid., 10.124.7
128 Vide, Kaegi, A., Life in Ancient India, p. 35
129 Shastri, Gaurinath, op.cit., p. 40
130 Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 127
131 Vide, Dowson, J., A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography History and Literature, p 347
132 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol I, pp. 21,22
into gods and goddesses is seen in the suktas of Sūrya,133 Agni,134 Dyaus,135 the Maruts,136 Uṣas,137 Parjanya,138 the Aśvins,139 rivers,140 forests,141 etc., where the poetic beauty of the Ṛgvedasamhitā is reflected. Among such hymns, the most important from the point of poetic value are the hymns addressed to Dawn. In a verse, there is an illustration of the charming imagery. Uṣas is poetically depicted as a woman in the Ṛgvedic verses.142 Addressing Uṣas the poet says, ‘In pride of beauty like a maid thou goest, O Goddess to the God who longs to win thee, And smiling, youthful, as thou shinest brightly, before him thou discoverest thy bosom.' Another verse which depicts the beauty of Uṣas is specimen of figure called Upamā.143 Hymns to Dawn which Macdonell pronounces ‘equal, if not superior, in beauty to the religious lyrics of any other literature.'144 Praising the Uṣas sūkta as the best specimen of lyrical literature, he states, ‘This deity is the most graceful creation of Vedic Poetry, there being no more charming figure in the descriptive religious lyrics of any other literature.'145 M. Wintemitz praises these as the ‘Pearls of lyric poetry.'146 It is said by J. Muir thus, ‘The hymns which are addressed to these divinities, the two Aśvins and to Uṣas (the Dawn), at least those which salute the arrival of the latter do not spring from devotion alone, but are product of a deep poetical feeling and a delicate imaginative power.'147 Storm and battle lyrics are seen among the hymns addressed to Indra, Parjanya and the Maruts. The conflict of Indra with Vṛtra is graphically described in the Ṛgvedic

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133 R.V., 1.115.1
134 Ibid., 4.3 10, 4.7.10
135 Ibid., 1.159.2
136 Ibid., 1.85.10, 1.87.3
137 Ibid., 7.75.5
138 Ibid., 5.83.2,3,4
139 Ibid., 7.71.1
140 Ibid., 10.75
141 Ibid., 10.146
142 eṣa sūhṛti natanvo vidānordhveva snāti drāye no asthat / apa dveṣo bādhamānā tamāṁsyuṣā divo duhiṁ jyotisāgat // Ibid., 5.80.5
143 Ibid., 1.48.5,15, 1.92.4,5, 1.124.4,7
144 kanyeva tanvā śāsadānā eṣi devi devamīyakṣamānām / sarasmāyamānāya yuvatiḥ purastādāvivakṣāhini kṛṣṇe vibhāt // Ibid., 1.123.10
Also vide, Griffith, R.T.H., The Hymns of the Ṛgveda., on 1.123.10, p. 85
145 sūryo devīnusāsanī rocamānānī marī na yośāmabhīyeti paścāt / yatrā naro devayanto yugāni vitanvate prati bhadrāya bhadrām // R.V., 1.115.2
146 Vide, Grisworld, H.D., The Religion of the Ṛgveda., p. 332
147 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 156
148 Wintemitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 91
149 Muir, J., Original Sanskrit texts, vol. 5, part. 5, p. 452
verses. Yāska accepts the existence of poetical elements in the battle between Indra and Vṛtra when he says, *apāṁ ca jyotīśaśca miśrībhāvakarmāṇo varṣakarma jāyate / tatropamārthena yuddhavarrṇā bhavanti* / which means, ‘The phenomenon of rain is produced by the commingling of water (vapours) and lightning (jyotish) with reference to this, there are figurative descriptions of battle.’ The Rgvedic seers beheld beauty in their environment, in nature. The nature consciousness at that period was really commendable.

In the hymn to Aranyāṃī, forest is deified and it is described in a poetic and graphic manner. The Poetic elements are found in the praise of rivers by Visvāmitra thus, ‘Rushing from the flanks of the mountains, eager (to reach the sea) like two mares with loosened reins contending (with each other in speed), like two fair mother cows (hastening) to caress (their calves), the Vipāś and Śutudrī, flow rapidly with (united) waters.’ Moreover, the verse *dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānāṁ vrksaṁ pari ṣasvajāte...* is a fine example of symbolic poem which reveals the character of a paradox. There are many passages in the *Rgvedasamhitā* dealing with the concept of Beauty. According to Oldenberg, ‘Rgvedic concept of Beauty is intertwined with the practical and moral values.’ The Sun has its own beauty. It is seen that at the approach of the all-illuminating Sun, the constellations depart with the night. Maruts are highly beautiful.

The hymns of the *Rgvedasamhitā* are composed of metrical skill and with a command of language. This *Veda* has different hymns of different seers composed in different periods. With multiplicity of seers, there is variety of metres in this *Veda*. The *Rgvedasamhitā* is composed of hymns, each of which consists of a number of verses that consists of two
or more feet and each foot consists of a certain number of syllables. The most prominent of the Vedic metres like Gāyatī, Anuṣṭup, Brhatī, Upariṣṭād Brhatī, Paṅkti, Prastārapaṅkti, Triṣṭup, Dvipadā Triṣṭup, Jagatī, Atijagatī, Dvipadā, Purauṣṇik, etc., are seen in the Rgvedasamhitā. Among these different metres the Triṣṭup is the most favourite metre of the Rgvedic seers. Some of the Vedic metres are mentioned together in a Rgvedic hymn. About the metrical elements of the Rgvedasamhitā, Arnold states, ‘...As works of mechanical art of metres of the Rīgveda stand high above those of modern Europe in varieties of motive and in flexibility of form. They seem, indeed, to bear the same relation to them as the rich harmonies of classical music to the simple melodies of the peasant...’ Besides metre, the other elements of poetry, i.e. figures of speech, imageries, sentiments are seen in the Rgvedasamhitā. Beautiful similes are found by hundreds in the Rgvedasamhitā. An instance of it is as follows, ‘Agni is prayed to be easy of approach to his worshippers as a father to his son.’ In a Rgvedic hymn there is a strings of similes, i.e. Mālopaṃ. Extraordinary poetic genius is indicated by the use of Upamā or simile. Rupakas or metaphors are also seen in this Veda, e.g. Uṣas is called a bright robed young woman. Similarly in the Rgvedasamhitā the figure called Upriṃkṣa or poetical fancy is found. The passage apāṃ madhye tathivāṃsaṃ tryāvidajjitarāram/ under the verse is an instance of Viśeṣokti or peculiar allegation as it means, ‘During the sea-voyage Vasiṣṭha is thirsty amid the waters.’ Here in spite of the

160 Ibid., 7.15, 7.31.1-9, 7.55.1, 7.59.9-11
161 Ibid., 10.146, 7.55.5-8, 7.59.12, 7.94.12, 7.103.1
162 Ibid., 7.14.1, 10.14.15
163 Ibid., 7.55.2-4
164 Ibid., 9.113 1-11
165 Ibid., 7.96.3, 10.18.11
166 Ibid., 7.86.1-8
167 Ibid., 7.17
168 Ibid., 7.89 5, 7.41.1, 7.44.1, 7.46.1-3, 7.82, 7.83
169 Ibid., 7.50.4
170 Ibid., 8.29.4
171 Ibid., 7.66.16
172 Ibid., 10.130.3,4,5,7
173 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S, op.cit, p. 189
174 sa naḥ piteva sūnave'gne supayano bhava /sacasvā naḥ svastaye // R.V, 1.1.9
Also vide, Ibid., 1.124.7, 10.149.4
175 Ibid., 1.66
176 ese divo duhī pratyadāri vyucchanti yuvatīḥ sukravāsāḥ / viśvasyeyaṁ pārthivasya vasva uṣo adyeṣa subhage vyuccha // Ibid, 1.113.7
177 vakṣyantīveda ganīganti karnaṁ priyaṁ sakhīyaṁ pariṣṭavājāṇā / yoseva śīṅkte vītatādhi dhanvaṇīyaṁ iyai samane pārayanti// Ibid., 6.75.3
178 Ibid., 7.89.4
existence of a cause, the effect is absent. Moreover, Arthāntaranyāsa or corroboration,179 Śleṣa or pun,180 Virodha or contradiction,181 Vyatireka or contrast,182 Drśṭānta or exemplification,183 Yamaka184 etc., are seen scattered in the Rgvedic verses. So, it can be observed that many figures of speech used in Classical Sanskrit literature were in use in the Rgvedasamhitā. The source of figures, metres etc., found in later Classical literature is the Rgvedasamhitā itself.185

Sentiments are seen in the Rgvedic poetry. The praise of different gods and goddesses often bring out different sentiments. Erotic sentiment is seen in the dialogues of Agastya and Lopāmudrā,186 or Purūravās and Urvasī.187 Erotic sentiment can give delight to the readers according to Ānandavardhana, i.e. śīṅgāra eva madhurāḥ paraḥ prahlādano rasah.188 Such type of sentiment can be seen in the Yama Yamī Saṁvāda too. Pathetic sentiment or Karunārasa is seen in the Gambler’s lament.189 Some hymns addressed to Indra depict heroic sentiment.190 Some verses addressed to Rudra191 and Parjanya192 depict furious and terrible sentiments. Frog song can be regarded as an example of comic sentiment.193

For all such reasons perhaps it is stated that the hymns of the Rgvedasamhitā resembles ‘The Golden treasury of Songs.’194 From the profuse use of figures, symbolic languages, metres etc., it cannot be denied that the seers were highly gifted poets. In the

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179 mā tvā somasya galdaya śadā yācannahaṁ gīrā / bhirūṁṁaṁ mṛgaṁ na savaneṣu cukrudhāṁ ka isānaṁ na yāciṣat // Ibid., 8.1.20
180 maṁ urdhiṣumabravaṁ svasurjāraṁ śpoṭu naḥ / bhrāṇendrasvaṁ sakhī maṁ // Ibid., 6.55.5
181 idaṁ su me jarītāṁ cikiddhi pratīpaṁ sapāṁ nadyo vaṅhanti / lopāśaṁ sīṁhaṁ pratyāfricaṁ kroṣṭaṁ vaṁhaṁ nirātakaṁ kakṣat // Ibid., 10.28.4
Also vide, Ibid., 10.34.9
182 Ibid., 10.117.8
183 Ibid., 10.117.9
184 Ibid., 8.24.30
185 ‘The later Classical metres evolved from Vedic metres. Similarly the diction, figures of speech and almost all the figures of Classical Sanskrit poetry can be traced to the Rigveda.’ – Vide, Sharma, M.M., op.cit., vol. 4, p. 2
186 R.V., 1.179
187 Ibid., 10.95
188 Vide, Sharma, M.M., op.cit., vol. 4, p. 9
189 R.V., 10.34
190 Ibid., 1.32, 1.52
191 Ibid., 7.46.1
192 Ibid., 5 83
193 Ibid., 7.103
194 Vide, Vaidya, C.V., op.cit., vol. 1, 41
Assigning poetic elements in the Vedas, Rājaśekhara states that without the knowledge of Alāṅkāraśāstra one cannot get the real meaning of the Veda. The Vedic hymns spontaneously came into the mind of the seers. Spontaneous poetic genius is also indicated by Bhavabhūti in his Uttararāmacarita. For some scholars some hymns of the Rgvedasamhitā specially, the Dānastutis were quite worthless as poems. Such hymns were composed by artisan-like verse-writers or accomplished for some expected payment. Even the Rgvedic seers compared their composition with work of construction of a chariot by carpenter, i.e. ‘I prepare praises for him, as a carpenter constructs a car....’ Oldenberg also states that the poetry of the Rgveda in general does not rank in the service of beauty, as this religion does not serve the aim of enlightening and uplifting the soul... In the present context, Winternitz states that on the basis of only forty such hymns which end in Dānastutis it cannot be said that the Rgvedic poetry is worthless. He further states—‘...among the composers of Vedic hymns there were certainly artisans, but equally certainly there were also poets.’ So, it cannot be concluded that poetical genius is lacking among the Rgvedic seers. Even the verses that compare the composition of the ṛks with that of the construction of chariot by a carpenter are the examples of similes. So, the poetical elements as found in some of the Rgvedic hymns can be the matter of proud. V.S. Sukthankar also states, ‘All the same it cannot be denied that the hymns of the Rgveda, at least some of them, are such as the goddess of poetry would be proud of. The freshness and beautiful imagery which characterize the hymns addressed to the Aurora, the heroic simplicity of some of the hymns addressed to the Thundering Bull, the homeliness which pervades some of the hymns to Agni, cannot but appeal to a sympathetic and appreciating reader.’

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195 ete vai kavyayā yadṛṣṭayaḥ/S.B., 1 4.2.8
196 Vide, Sharma, M.M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 145
197 laukikāṁ hi sādhunām marthīṁ vāganuvartate/
    rṣīṁ punarēdhāṁ vācam arthō 'nu dhāvati// Urc., 1.10
198 Vide, Winternitz, op.cit., vol. 1, p. 114
199 asmā idu stōmaṁ saṁ hīnomi rathaṁ na tasaṁva tatśīya / R.V., 1.61.4
    Also vide, Ibid., 1.130.6
200 Wilson, H.H., op.cit., vol. 1, on 1.61.4, p. 196
201 Vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 115
202 Ibid
203 Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 3
Nature of the Rgvedic hymns

The hymns of the Rgveda can be divided into three classes, viz. the religious hymns, the philosophical hymns and the secular hymns.\textsuperscript{204} The Rgvedasamhitā is said to be the rich source for the beliefs and rituals of the Āryan society in which it was composed. Its religion runs from a simple worship of the different phenomena of nature. It is worthy to be mentioned that most of the Rgvedic hymns are addressed to the deities, presiding over the diverse phenomena of nature. There are hymns to nature that describes the charms of a moonlit night,\textsuperscript{205} to river,\textsuperscript{206} to the Sun,\textsuperscript{207} to forests\textsuperscript{208} etc. The Vedic seers revealed the grandeur of the natural objects surrounding them through the hymns. They understood the true significance of the natural phenomena so intensely that they deified the natural objects, which found its expression in various forms of worship. The Vedic people believed in the existence of gods in the inanimate nature like the pressing stone, trees, weapons, the plough, furrow etc. Moreover, there are some gods which are the personified abstractions, viz. Manyu, i.e. wrath, Sraddhā, i.e. reverence, Anumati, i.e. favour, Aramati, i.e. piety, Asunīti, i.e. blessedness etc. There is another type of hymns which are applied in the praises of the gods and the sacrifices offered to them. All those hymns, which are addressed to divinities, containing a eulogy of them and requests for the granting of their desired object, are included in the religious class.\textsuperscript{209} German scholar Oldenberg in his Religions des Veda said that the Vedic mantras have close connection with the sacrifices.\textsuperscript{210} According to Winternitz, these sacrificial hymns are the ‘Second class of hymns in the Rgveda.’\textsuperscript{211} Such types of hymns reflect the belief of the Vedic seers in religion. One of the characteristics of such hymns is their extraordinary monotony. Here in one and the same hymn several gods are invoked one after another in the same way for wellbeing and prosperity of the worshipper. In a Rgvedic hymn,\textsuperscript{212} which consists of fifteen ṛks, there are prayers to gods Indra, Agni, Mitra Varuṇa, the Aśvins, Vāyu, Bhaga etc. Moreover, the hymns of the ninth mandala addressed to Soma Pavamāna are all sacrificial songs used in the great Soma sacrifice.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{204} Vide, Ibid., p. 117
\item \textsuperscript{205} R.V., 10.127
\item \textsuperscript{206} Ibid., 10.75
\item \textsuperscript{207} Ibid., 1.115
\item \textsuperscript{208} Ibid., 10.146
\item \textsuperscript{209} Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 117
\item \textsuperscript{210} Vide, Bandopadhya, S., Vaidik Sāhityer Rūprekha, p. 69
\item \textsuperscript{211} Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 93
\item \textsuperscript{212} R.V., 7.35
\end{itemize}
The Āprīsūktas or the propitiatory hymns belong to these sacrificial songs. These are evidently composed of for sacrificial purposes. According to Yāska, the word āprī comes from the root āp, meaning ‘to obtain’ or prī, ‘to please’ by which different gods are obtained or pleased connected with the sacrifice. In support of his view, he has quoted a passage from the Brāhmaṇa, i.e. āprībhīr āprīnātī which means, ‘One pleases them with Āprī hymns.’ The Āprī hymns are used at the animal sacrifices. There are ten of these hymns scattered in the different mandalas of the Rgvedasamhitā. Such hymns consist of eleven or twelve verses have different gods connected with them which are called Āprīdevatās, viz. Idhma, Tanūnapat, Narasamsa, Ilā, Barhiḥ, Devyaḥ Dvāraḥ, Uśasānaktā, Daivyau Hotārau, Tisrāḥ Devyaḥ, Tvasta, Vanaspati and Svāhākṛtī. Such deities are said to be various forms of Agni, the deity of supreme sacrificial importance.

As the sūktas of the Rgvedasamhitā are generally meant to propitiate the various gods, they are in general are looked upon as religious or non-secular. But the Rgvedic hymns are of varying nature and not always prayers to gods, nor prayers addressed to the gods to whom a sacrifice is being offered. There are a few sūktas which are not directly connected with the sacrificial performances. Such hymns are not specially addressed to divinities. These lesser number of sūktas are called secular or non-religious sūktas, which deal with social customs, liberality of the kings, ethical values, riddles etc. Among such secular hymns, the lament of the Gambler shines most brightly which is known as Aksasūkttā. The purport of this sūkta is to show gambling as a sheer social evil under the grasp of which most of the gamblers fall into miserable plight losing their wealth and booty. Another important secular or semi-secular hymn is the Sūryāsūkttā or Wedding hymn, which gives various information relating to marriage ceremonies prevalent in the Vedic age. Similarly the funeral hymns throw light on the contemporary funeral customs of that period prevalent in the then Indian society. Though the verses of the funeral hymns are composed for ritualistic purposes they bear great poetic beauty. The hymns wedding

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213 Ibid., 1.13, 1.142, 1.188, 2.3, 3.4, 5.5, 7.2, 9.5, 10.70, 10.110
214 athātā āpriyaḥ / āpriyaḥ kasmāt / āpnoteḥ / prīnātervā // Nir., 8.4
215 Ibid., 8.4
216 Sāyaṇa on A.B., 2.2.8
217 R.V., 1.13, 1.142, 1.188, 2.3, 3.4, 5.5, 7.2, 9.5, 10.70, 10.110
218 Ibid., 10.34
219 Ibid., 10.85
220 Ibid., 10.14, 15, 16, 17, 18
and funeral rites mark a transition from the religious to the secular aspect of thought, as they are partly religious and partly secular. There is another hymn of this kind which is the benediction of a newly elected king. There is a hymn, which is the blessing to a king at the time of his coronation. A Rgvedic hymn is related to war. With much poetic beauty, various weapons are described here. There are some historical hymns. These are historical only in the sense that they refer to the victory and triumph of some princes or princely families. The so-called dānastutis can be cited in the proper context elsewhere in this chapter.

Among the secular hymns, some are didactic in nature. Here in these hymns, proverbial thoughts and maxims are brought together in the form of a verse. A hymn known as Jñānasūktā, which praises wise speech declares supreme importance of knowledge. A verse of the relevant hymn distinguishes between various kinds of friends. Moreover, there are so many hymns which are the panegyrics of liberal donors. These are called Dānastutis or hymns in praise of the liberal donations from patrons and princes to priests. It furnishes the historical documents of ancient gifts. Such hymns, while praising the generosity of the prices, who bestowed presents on the seers, throw light on the names of tribes and kings and also on the families of singers and their genealogies. About these hymns, Max Müller states that these hymns like the Latin panegyrics, betray a modern character and must be referred to the Mantra period. According to Winternitz, these dānastutis occupy a kind of intermediate position between religious and secular poetry. Similarly, the hymns that give description of the kings and praise them, are designated as Narāśāṃśīs. The Dānastutis describe a fully elaborated ritual and the establishment of the practice of having hired priests to whom fees were paid. In these hymns praise of charity

221 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 118
222 R.V., 10.173
223 Ibid., 10.174
224 Ibid., 6.75
225 Ibid., 7.18, 83
226 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 119
227 R.V., 9.112, 10.71, 10.117
228 Ibid., 10.71
229 aksāṃvantāḥ karṇavantāḥ sakhāyo manojaśeṣasambāḥ bhūvah / ādaghnāsā upakāśṣā yā tve hradāśva śnātvā utvedādṛṣṭe // Ibid., 10.71.7
230 Ibid., 1.125, 1.126, 5.27.1, 5.30.12, 6.27.8, 7.18.22, 8.1.30, 31, 32, 8.5.37, 10.117
231 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., pp. 119, 120
232 M. Müller, F., op.cit., p. 371
233 Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 114
234 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 70
and the donors can be seen. There is one complete hymn of this type in the first mandala of the Rgveda, where the sage Kaksīvān praises the liberality of the king Svanaya Bhāvayavya.235 In another hymn, the patron of the sacrifice, who gave the singer a liberal priestly fee, is praised.236 A hymn237 eulogizes liberality and bounty in the shape of gifts of wealth and food and furnishes important genealogical data about the patrons of the sacrifice. This Bhikṣusūkta is famous for presenting the socialist ideas and virtues of the Vedic seers.

The Rgvedasamhitā is the earliest specimen of Aryan philosophical thought. In some hymns, the conception of beginning and origin of all things, theories of creation and of a state previous to all existence, are dealt with. Such hymns are distinctly later in character and marks the period of transition from the Mantras to the Brāhmaṇas.238 However, the seeds of the Upaniṣadic thought are seen scattered in the Rgvedasamhitā.239 The cosmogonic hymns of the Rgveda are the precursors of the Indian philosophy, one of the main objects of which is to describe the origin of the world. Many sūktas of the Rgvedasamhitā help to trace the Vedic cosmological and philosophical ideas.240 Most of such philosophical hymns are seen in the tenth mandala of the Veda, where the speculations on the Universe and the creation, great pantheistic idea of the Universal soul with the universe can be found. Philosophical poetry of a very high order is noticeable in the Prajāpati hymn, the Vāgāmbhrṇīya hymn and chiefly in the Nāṣadiya hymn.241 According to Rgvedic philosophy, there is an independent creator, described as existing in the beginning of the creation. He is identified to be Puruṣa,242 Hiranyagarbha or Prajāpati243 etc. The Hiranyagarbha sūkta describes Prajāpati as the sole lord of the creatures, who created the whole universe.244 Traces of monotheism can be seen in some of the hymns celebrating gods like Indra,245 Savitar246 and Prajāpati,247 where the deity is treated as the Supreme.

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235 R.V, 1.126
236 Ibid., 10.107
237 Ibid., 10.117
238 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 70
239 Vide, Ibid., p. 159
240 R.V, 10.90, 10 121, 10.129, 10 130
241 Vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 115
242 R.V, 10.90
243 Ibid., 10.121, 10.130
244 hiranyagarbhah samavartatāt Bhūnasya jātāh patireka ṛṣaḥ / sa dādhiṣa pratiṣṭhit dhūmamam hamsai devyam haviṣād vidhema // Ibid., 10.121.1
245 yasya dīvānpūrtiḥ sa mnāyāṃ mahadānyāṃ vratariṇi varṇam yasya suṁyaḥ / yasyendrāṇāṃ śindhāvāṃ sācaīṇi varṇen marutvantaḥ sakhyāvāṃ havāmāhe // Ibid., 1.101.3
246 na yasyendro varṇo na mitro vrataṇo maḥo maṅganti rudraḥ / nārāṇaśāstamidān śvasti huve devaṁ savitāraṁ namobhiḥ // Ibid., 2.38 9
247 Ibid., 10.121
God. Unity of the godhead is also seen.\textsuperscript{248} Thus, the seed of monotheism is seen here. The idea that the whole world is one being, the Puruṣa, who has pervaded the world contained in the \textit{Puruṣa sūkta}.\textsuperscript{249} This \textit{sūkta} gives the idea of the formation of the world from the body of Puruṣa and declares that Puruṣa is all that is, that has been and that shall be.\textsuperscript{250} The clearest proof of pantheism is seen in the \textit{Puruṣa sūkta}, which in the words of Macdonell constitutes the starting point of the pantheistic philosophy of India.\textsuperscript{251} The theme of the genesis of the world is dealt with here in this \textit{Veda} in many ways.\textsuperscript{252} In the \textit{Nāsadīya sūkta} the questions regarding the origin of the world are dealt with, where it is stated that in the beginning there was neither non-entity nor entity.\textsuperscript{253} Only darkness existed. Viśvakarman is represented as the one, who is all seeing and producing the heaven and earth.\textsuperscript{254} It is surmised that the \textit{Vāk sūkta} gives rise to the concept of \textit{Śabdabrahma}.\textsuperscript{255} The philosophical truth is presented in a verse of the \textit{Asya Vāmasya sūkta}.\textsuperscript{256} So, it can be said that the philosophy of the \textit{Rgvedasamhitā} is the basis for the later development of Indian religion and philosophy. According to A.B. Keith, the hymn 10.129 is the most important in the history of the philosophy of India.\textsuperscript{257}

The \textit{Rgveda} has another type of hymn which lays stress on social unity. In the last part of this \textit{Veda} prayer for peace and harmony for peaceful co-existence can be found.\textsuperscript{258} It is the \textit{Samjñānasūkta} of the \textit{Rgveda}, which describes the fundamental stands of socialist ideology and principles of unity. It illustrates beautifully various aspects of unity and harmony among persons working for a common purpose. Here prayer for wellbeing not only of family but also of society can be seen. The seer Sarīvanana prays that the minds and prayer, the hearts and desire, the purpose and acquirements, thoughts and words of the assembled worshippers be common so that there may be thorough union among them: samānīva ākūṭiḥ samānā hṛdayāṁ vahī samānamastu vo mano yathā vah susahāsatī//\textsuperscript{259}

\textsuperscript{248} indraṁ mitraṁ varuṇamagnīāhuratho divyaṁ sa superńo garutmān / ekaṁ sadvīprā bahudhā vādantyagnīṁ yamanī mātariśvānamāḥ / // Ibid., 1.164.46
\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., 10.90
\textsuperscript{250} puruṣa evedaṁ sarvaṁ yadbhūtāṁ yacca bhavym / uśāntatvasycāno yadamanīśirohah // Ibid., 10.90.2
\textsuperscript{251} Griswold, H.D., op.cit., p. 344
\textsuperscript{252} R.V., 10.82, 10.90, 10.121, 10.129
\textsuperscript{253} Ibid., 10.129
\textsuperscript{254} Ibid., 10.81.2
\textsuperscript{255} Ibid., 10.125
\textsuperscript{256} ko dadarsa prathamaṁ jāyamānamasthante vantaṁ yadanaṁŚā bibharti / Ibid., 1.164.4
\textsuperscript{257} Keith, A.B , \textit{The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads}, p. 435
\textsuperscript{258} R.V., 10.191
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid., 10.191.4
So, the Vedic seers wished that there should be perfect harmony of head and heart among the people of different strata. Later on, the Atharvavedic seers elaborated this idea through the Sāṃmanasya hymns. In an Atharvavedic verse there is a prayer for union and concord in the Sabhā and Samiti desiring common aim and common mind, which bears similarity of expression and thought to that of Samjñānasūkta of the Ṛgvedasamhitā. The Puruṣasūkta also reflects social harmony which is only an aspect of cosmic harmony. Here the whole society has been conceived as a Universal or Social man. Therefore, it can be said that the idea of one in many, harmony and not discord, unity of all beings is the perennial message of the Ṛgvedic seers. A particular aspect of the society and civilization is unveiled here in these sūktas.

The Ṛgvedic hymns thus display the message of an exalted morality and duties. This Veda bears optimistic view of life and knows no pessimism, no discontent with the present life. A heavenly spirit to enjoy the life seems to pervade in the Ṛgveda and it is only in very rare instances that immortality or dwelling with gods in heaven is referred to. There are no indications whatsoever of the later doctrine of Nivṛtti or Renunciation in the Ṛgveda. There are references to the highest heaven, where the righteous and godly men, dwell in bliss. Evidence of the belief in some kind of hell is not altogether wanting in the Ṛgvedasamhitā. There is reference to a deep place for those who are evil, false and untrue, which probably indicates a hell or Naraka. High moral ideas are contained in the Ṛgvedasamhitā, i.e. truth, hospitality, self-control, benevolence etc. References to ethics are found in the hymns to Varuṇa, who is praised to release from punishment.

260 A.V, 6.64
261 saṁ jānīdhaṁ saṁ pṛṣyaṁhaṁ saṁ vo maṁśi jānaṁ / devā bhāgaṁ yathā pūrve saṁjñānaṁ upāsate // Ibid., 6.64.1
262 R.V, 10 191
263 Ibid., 10.90
264 Vide, Tiwari, S., Glimpses of Vedic and Ancient Indian Civilization, p. 62
265 Vide, Ibid.
266 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S, op.cit, pp. 126,127
267 Vide, Ibid., p. 127
268 saṁ gacchasva pitrāḥ saṁ yamenaśṭātṛtena parame vyoman / R.V, 10.14.8
269 Ibid., 1.115.2, 10.15.1, 10.154.2-5
270 Vide, Macdonell, A.A., The Vedic Mythology, p. 169
271 abhrātaro na yoṣāṇo vyantaḥ patīripo na janayo durevāḥ / pāpāsāḥ santo anṛṭa asatyā idaṁ padamajanatā gabbhiram // R.V, 4.5.5
272 Ibid., 7.104.3
273 Ibid., 2.27.16, 6.74.4
The *Rgvedasamhitā* gives knowledge of the riddle questions or riddle games popular in the then Indian society. In the poetical riddles or Brahmodyas, things are described by symbolical and mystical references through some enigmatical expressions. The *Asya Vāmasya sūkta*,274 which consists of fifty two stanzas, contains a large number of such riddles, mostly connected with the Sun, in mystical and symbolic language: 

\[ \text{dvādaśāram nahi tañjarāya varvarti cakram pari dvāmṛtasya īputra āgne mithunāso atra sapta šatāni vimśātisca tastuḥ} \] //275

i.e. ‘Formed with twelve spokes, by length of time, unweakened, rolls round the heaven this wheel of during Order. Herein established, joined in pairs together, seven hundred Sons and twenty stand, O Agni.’276 It indicates that the wheel formed with twelve spokes is the year with its twelve months. The seven hundred and twenty sons, joined in pairs are the days and nights of the year, three hundred and sixty of each.277 In the present hymn there are symbolic descriptions of Heaven and earth, Sun and Moon, the atmosphere, the rays of the Sun, the year, seasons, months etc. The literal meaning of the fifty-two ṛkṣ of the relevant sūkta do not convey the real sense. In a verse of this sūkta the reality of *jīvātmā* and *paramātmā* is described in a symbolic language.278 Moreover, another hymn279 describes various gods like Indra, Rudra, Viṣṇu etc., without mentioning their names but they can be guessed from the short descriptions typical of them. It is stated that from the point of view of language and syntax, such hymns have been now authoritatively declared to be late productions, forming, as it were, the connecting links between the earlier Vedic thought and its later phase culminating in the Upaniṣads...280

In the Rgvedic poetry some instances of interesting monologues can be seen.281 Three of these are monologues of Indra.282 The monologue in which Indra appears as glorifying himself in the intoxication of his favourite Soma drink, is relics of Vedic mysteries, an inheritance in germ from Indo-European times.283 In another monologue it is the speech

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274 Ibid., 1.164
275 Ibid., 1.164.11
276 Vide, Griffith, R.T.H., op.cit., on 1.164.11, p.110
277 Vide, Ibid.
278 dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāya samānaṁ vrksaṁ pari ṣaṣvajāte / tayoranyah pippalaṁ svādhvyatanaṁ naṁnamy abhi cākaśiti // R.V., 1.164.20
Also vide, MuU., 3.1.1
279 R.V., 8.29
280 Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 4
281 R.V., 10.34, 10.48, 10.49, 10.119, 10.125, 10.159
282 Ibid., 10.48, 10.49, 10.119
283 Vide, Keith, A.B., *The Sanskrit Drama, in its Origin, Development Theory and Practice*, p. 16
personified who speaks. Vāk is represented here as praising herself in this sūkta: amṛṣṇasya mahārṣerduhitā vāṁśāmī brahmaṇi bhrāhmaṇiḥ śvāṁśānāmastau. Moreover, in a hymn Sacī or power personified as the wife of Indra, mentions her achievements. The most famous monologue is the lament of the gambler, where the speaker is the particular gambler centering whom runs the Akṣasūkta of the Rgvedasamhitā. A.B. Keith considers it as a dramatic monologue, in which dancers represent the leaping and falling dice. This sūkta is a soliloquy of that gambler who by means of his addiction to dice playing has ruined his domestic happiness.

There are various sūktas which are in the form of dialogues between the gods and other characters. Such sūktas are designated as the dialogue hymns. The dialogue hymns found in the Rgveda form a connecting link between epic and dramatic poetry. The dialogue hymns are also called Samvāda-sūkta and are regarded by some scholars as the earliest forms of the dramatic literature in India. According to A.B. Keith, such hymns represent the beginnings of a dramatic art. These are called dialogue hymns because they are in the form of saṁvāda or dialogue. Winternitz marks such hymns as Vedic ballads. According to him, “This ancient ballad poetry is the source both of the epic and of the drama, for those ballads consists of a narrative and of a dramatic element.” Oldenberg calls them ākhyaṇa (ballad) hymns. These dialogues are also designated as the mystery plays. It is very difficult to determine the number of dialogue hymns mentioned in the Rgvedasamhitā. The most important dialogue hymns found in the Rgvedasamhitā are Agastya Lopāmudrā Saṁvāda, Purūravā Urvasī Saṁvāda, Yama Yamī Saṁvāda, Śaramā Paṇi Saṁvāda, Viśvāmitra Nadi Saṁvāda Indravasukra

284 R.V., 10.125
285 Śāyaṇa, Ibid.
286 Ibid., 10 159
287 Ibid., 10.34
288 Keith, A.B., op.cit., p. 19
289 Ibid., p. 17
290 Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, pp 102, 103
291 Ibid., p. 90
292 Vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 28
293 Vide, Keith, A.B., op cit., p. 16
294 R.V., 1.179
295 Ibid., 10.95
296 Ibid., 10.10
297 Ibid., 10.108
298 Ibid., 3.33
Samvāda, Vṛṣākapi Samvāda etc. Such dialogue hymns are called mythological ballads, which are not the prayers to gods but dialogues. In the Rgvedasamhitā the myths seem to appear in a dramatic form, the theme of which is social. Mostly, the moral and aesthetic problems associated with the relationship of man and women are dealt with through the dialogues. Such hymns are considered as secular one because it has no direct relation with the sacrifices. From the Sāyaṇācārya’s commentary, it is clear that besides the Vṛṣākapi hymn, the other dialogue hymns cannot be related with the sacrifices. Poetic beauty of the dialogue hymns cannot be denied which have an important place in the history of Sanskrit Literature. A.B. Keith also states that the remnant of a style of poetry is seen in these dialogues. The dialogue hymns foreshadow the dramatic works of later period. The later dramas had their origin in the dialogue hymns. It is stated that Brahmā creates Nātyaveda or Nāṭaka as the fifth Veda taking the element of recitation from the Rgveda, song from the Sāmaveda, mimetic art from the Yajurveda and sentiment from the Atharvaveda. The passage jagrāha pāthyamṛgvedāḥ in the present context is applicable to the dialogue hymns. The Yama Yami Saṁvāda is a valuable fragment of art of narration in ancient times. Such type of compositions are seen in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads also, such as, the Indra Rohita Saṁvāda of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Yama-Naciketas Saṁvāda of the Kathopanisad etc. According to Wintemitz, the story of Purūravās and Urvasī has often been retold in the works like Kāṭhakasamhitā, Harivamsa, an appendix to the Mahābhārata, Brhaddevata, Kathāsaritsāgara, in the works of Kālidāsa also. The story of Purūravas and Urvasī is described in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa. The story of love affair of Purūravas and Urvasī is the main theme of the drama Vikramorvaśiyam of Kālidāsa. Thus, the dialogue hymns of the Rgvedasamhitā possess an extra value and charm for which they have been given an additional importance in the whole world of Vedic literature.

299 Ibid., 10.28
300 Ibid., 10.86
301 Keith, A.B., op.cit., 15
302 Vide, Ibid., pp. 12, 13
303 Also vide, Sharma, M.M., op.cit., vol. 4, p. 11
304 A.B., 3.3.4
305 Kath., 1.1
306 Wintemitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 105
307 S.B., 11.5.1
A good number of hymns of the *Rgvedasamhitā* deal with formulas of incantations or magical practices which are mostly found in the Atharvavedic hymns. Such magic, exorcism and charms are allied to the contents of the *Atharvaveda*. There are spells and charms to remove diseases or cure of disease called Rājayakṣma, i.e. consumption or Atrophy,\(^{307}\) against evil spirits that may cause miscarriage,\(^{308}\) charms to remove the effect of poison,\(^{309}\) charms against the effects of bad dreams,\(^{310}\) for averting misfortune,\(^{311}\) battle charms to win over rival in a battle,\(^{312}\) charms against rival wife,\(^{313}\) charms for the blessing on the field to produce good quality of crops,\(^{314}\) hymn to Frog to bring forth rain.\(^{315}\) According to Bloomfield, 'it (the frog hymn) is a magic incantation which was used as a rain spell...’\(^{316}\) Some scholars think this song to be parody on the sacrificial songs.\(^{317}\) Muir and Max Müller regard this hymn as a satire, but Haug and Bühler think that frogs and priests are mentioned together only, because both have reference to rain.\(^{318}\) There is another rain bringing hymn in the *Rgvedasamhitā*.\(^{319}\)

Besides these hymns, the *Rgvedasamhitā* presents a great variety of themes, i.e. drinking song,\(^{320}\) work song,\(^{321}\) hymn dedicated to the return of mind,\(^{322}\) hymn that describes the manifold desires of mankind and also the various occupations prevalent at that period,\(^{323}\) hymns addressed to birds,\(^{324}\) to cows\(^{325}\) etc.

\(^{307}\) R.V., 10.161
\(^{308}\) R.V., 10.162.3,4,5,6
\(^{309}\) Ibid., 1.191
\(^{310}\) Ibid., 10.164
\(^{311}\) Ibid., 10.155
\(^{312}\) Ibid., 6.75 , 7.30
\(^{313}\) Ibid., 10.145,10.159
\(^{314}\) Ibid., 4.57
\(^{315}\) Ibid., 7.103
\(^{316}\) Vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 110
\(^{317}\) Vide, Ibid.
\(^{318}\) Vide, Sukthankar, V.S., op.cit., p. 120
\(^{319}\) R.V., 7.101
\(^{320}\) Ibid., 10.119
\(^{321}\) Also vide, Bhattacharji, S., op.cit., vol. 1, p. 26
\(^{322}\) R.V., 10.101
\(^{323}\) Ibid., 9.112
\(^{324}\) Ibid., 2.42, 43
\(^{325}\) Ibid., 10.169
Influence of the *Rgvedasamhitā* on later Vedic literature

The *Rgvedasamhitā* has greatly influenced the later literature. From the *Rgveda* the other three Vedas have largely borrowed their subject matter. It is stated that some of the hymns of the *Sāmaveda* and *Yajurveda*, which have a more modern appearance, are to be found in the tenth *Mandala* of the *Rgveda*, or among the latest additions, such as the Vālakhilyas. The other Vedas are more or less continuation or enlargement of certain portions of the *Rgveda*. As the *Rgveda* is composed of verses mainly in metres, the metrical stanzas of the *Yajurveda* are quoted from the *Rgveda* with variations in reading. Somewhat more than one fourth only of the *Vājasaneyi Samhitā* is derived from the *Rgveda*. One-half of this collection consists of verses (ṛc) most of which (upwards of 700) are found in the *Rgveda*. The *Sāmaveda* has no independent importance, because it consists almost entirely of stanzas taken from the *Rgveda* for the ritualistic purposes. All except seventy-five hymns of this *Veda* are found in the *Rgveda*, mostly in the eighth and the ninth *mandalas*. Some of the verses of the *Rgveda* met with in the *Sāmaveda* offer divergent readings. The *Atharvaveda* is similar in form to the *Rgveda*, from which many of its hymns are taken. Macdonell observes, ‘From the point of view of language and subject matter it can be said that the *Atharvaveda* formed into a collection subsequently to the *Rgveda*.’ Most of the materials of the *Atharvaveda* are taken from the *Rgveda*, with variations in reading, e.g. the marriage hymn in the fourteenth *kānda*, the burial rite in the eighteenth *kānda* and twentieth *kānda* with little variation in reading where the hymns mostly addressed to Indra can be found. The *Kuntāpa* hymns of the twentieth *kānda* of the *Atharvaveda* are allied to the dānastutis of the *Rgveda*. From such references it can be said that the *Rgveda* is more original than the other three Vedas. In the well-known *Puruṣasūkta*, the *Rgveda* is mentioned at first among the other Vedas. In the *Kauśītaki*
Brahmana, the Yajurveda and the Sāmaveda are called the attendants of the Rgveda. The Brhaddevatā also indicates the supremacy of the Rgveda among other Vedas. Sāyanācārya also mentions the supremacy of the Rgveda thus: *rgvedasya prāthamyena sarvatra āmnātavād abhyarhitam pūrvam iti nyāyena abhyarhitatvāt tadvyākhyaṇamādau yuktam...* or *ato'anyaih sarvairvedairādṛtatvādavyarhitatvām.../*

**The Commentaries and Editions of the Rgvedasamhitā**

There are various commentaries written on the Rgveda and the work has been published several times by various scholars. Different works of the ancients in the field of Vedic exegesis are available. The *Sarvanukramanī* of Kātyāyana and the *Brhaddevatā* are the important works which indirectly serve the purpose of Vedic interpretation. The *Nirukta* of Yāska deserves special mention in this regard, who, on the basis of the Nighantus, explains a great number of Vedic verses in the *Nirukta*. There are about fifteen commentaries on the Rgveda. The oldest commentator on the Rgveda is Skandasvāmin, who has written a commentary on the entire Rgvedasamhitā. But the whole commentary is not available, which is held by the scholars. Commentators like Harisvāmin, Ātmānanda, Veṅkaṭamādhava, Sāyaṇācārya and others are posterior to Skandasvāmin, as they have quoted from the commentary of Skandasvāmin. Nārāyaṇa has written his commentary on the fifth, seven and eighth aṣṭakas of the Rgveda. Another contemporary of Skandasvāmin is Udgītha, who wrote commentary on some of the Śuktas of the tenth mandala. Veṅkaṭamādhava wrote a commentary named *Rgarthadīpīkā* on the Rgveda. Among the noteworthy commentaries on the Rgveda, the commentary of Sāyaṇācārya named the *Mādhaviyavedārthaprakāśa* is very useful in deriving the real purport of the Rgvedasamhitā. Here Sāyaṇācārya has pointed out all grammatical peculiarities with etymological derivations of difficult words and so on. Other commentators on the Rgveda are Hastāmalaka, Laksmaṇa, Ānandaśīrtha, Ātmānanda, Rāvana, Mudgala, Caturvedasvāmin, Devasvāmin and Dayānanda Sarasvatī. The commentaries of Skandasvāmin, Udgītha, Veṅkaṭamādhava and Mudgala are edited by Visvabandhu Shastri.
and published by the Vishveshvarananda Vedic Research Institute, Hoshiarpur in seven volumes. Several other commentaries on the Rgvedasamhitā are mentioned as Rāvaṇabhāṣya, Kauśikabhāṣya and Guḍhārtharatnamālā etc. But there is nothing definitely mentioned about them. Moreover, the Rgveda Samhitā with the commentary of Sāyaṇācārya, in five volumes, published by the Vaidika Samśodhana Maṇḍala, in 1972, R.C. Dutta's Bengali translation of the Rgveda, with notes in seven volumes in the year 1887, Durgadas Lahiri's publication of the Rgveda in Bengali script with the commentary of Sāyaṇācārya etc., deserves mention.

Western scholars also have contributed much in the field of Rgvedic studies. German scholar Friedrich Rosen edited the oldest work, the Rgveda but died in 1837, before the first eighth of the Rgveda was published, as Rigveda Samhitā, liber primus, Sanskrite et latine in 1838. Roer has published the first and second aṣṭākas of the Rgveda with English translation in Bibliotheka Indica in 1847. T. Aufrecht's handy edition of the complete text of the hymns of the Rgveda in 1861-1863 deserves mention. The greatest scholar in the field of Oriental studies is Max Müller. He has made many contributions towards the interpretation of the Rgveda. The editio princeps of the Rigveda samhitā with the commentary of Sāyaṇācārya was edited in English by F. Max Müller. This edition is a landmark in the field of Vedic studies. The Sacred Books of the East include translations of the selected hymns of the Rgveda under the caption Vedic Hymns edited by Max Müller in two volumes (thirty-two and forty-six) published by the Oxford University Press in 1891, 1897. Max Müller has derived the most important assistance from the Sanskrit Dictionary of Professors Böhtlingk and Roth. Another well-known scholar in the field of Oriental studies is Oldenberg. His monumental commentary on the Rigveda (Die Hymen des Rigveda) deserves mention. Here he deals with all the metrical, grammatical, exegetical peculiarities of the Rgveda. It contains references to other treatises dealing with the Rgveda. French translation of the entire Rgveda was done by Langlois in 1870. Two German translations of the Rgveda, i.e. the prose translation of Alfred Ludwig in 1876 and H. Grassmann's complete metrical translation of the hymns of the Rgveda in two volumes in the year 1876-1877 deserve mention. Wilson stands first in the field of Rgvedic translation. He has published a complete English translation of the Rgveda in seven volumes. He has

Vide, Modak, B.R., Makers of Indian Literature Sāyana, p. 33
translated the hymns of the *Rgveda* as following the interpretation of Sāyaṇācārya, which also provides clue to the understanding of Sāyaṇācārya’s commentary clearly. Another scholarly English translation of the *Rgveda* is *The Hymns of the Rgveda* written by R.T.H. Griffith in two volumes in the year 1889-1890. A.B. Keith and A.A. Macdonell’s *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* in two volumes, Macdonell’s *Hymns from the Rgveda* (Heritage of India Series)\(^339\) deserves mention. J. Muir has edited a valuable work called *Original Sanskrit Texts* in five volumes. It is published by Oriental Publishers and Distributors of New Delhi. It contains important passages with translations into English from the *Rgveda* down to the Epics and Purāṇas. Mention may be made of the *St. Petersburg Sanskrit-German Lexicon* in seven volumes attributed to Roth and Böthlingk, in which every word from the *Rgveda* down to the Classical literature is traced. Grassmann’s Dictionary of the *Rgveda* published in the year 1873-75 is very much useful work of reference. *Vedische Studien* by R. Pischel and K.F. Geldner in three volumes is the work on Vedic exegesis. Most of the important obscure or doubtful words in the *Rgveda* are taken for discussion here. Some important hymns have been selected for study too. Whitney’s Sanskrit Grammar is worth mentioning. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* by M. Monier-Williams also deserves mention. Another important work in the field of Oriental studies is the Kaegi’s *Essay on the Rigveda* published in 1880, which is written in a very lucid style. Here a brief survey of the contents of the *Rgveda* can be found. Another work to the credit of this great German scholar is *Der Rgveda die aelteste Literatur der Inder* which comments on the nature of the Vedic mantras, deserve to be noticed. Kaegi and Geldner have given a popular and useful account of the results of Vedic studies in Siebenzig Lieder des Rigveda (1875).\(^340\) Bloomfield’s *Rig-Veda Repetitions* in 1916 and *Vedic Concordance*, Geldner’s *Der Rgveda in Auswahl* and the first part of a new and complete translation of the *Rgveda*, published in the series ‘*Quellen der Religionsgeschichte*’;\(^341\) A. Hillebrandt’s *Lieder des Rgveda*,\(^342\) etc., are noteworthy in the field of Rgvedic studies. In India, S.P. Pandit in his *Vedarthayatna* attempted to begin an interpretation of the text with Marathi and English translations and explanatory and critical notes. Tilak’s *The Orion*

\(^{339}\) Vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, notes, p. 71
\(^{340}\) Vide, M Müller, F., op.cit., vol. 32, p. 541
\(^{341}\) Vide, Winternitz, M., op.cit., vol. 1, notes, p. 71
\(^{342}\) Vide, Ibid.
and _The Arctic Home in the Vedas_ is the work of Vedic criticism. For the sake of precisions, all the materials are not traced here.

Thus, the varied contents of the Ṛgvedasamhitā, which reflect the life and thought of the Vedic Āryans on the basis of evolution of Indian thought and culture has thoroughly dealt with in a large number of works till date.