CHAPTER-VI
CONCLUSION

The present work entitled ‘The Tenth Maṇḍala of the Rgveda— A Study’ gives emphasis on a detailed deliberation of the tenth maṇḍala of the Rgveda, which is one of the most significant parts of the Rgvedasamhitā. The Rgveda is the most ancient literary document of the vast Vedic literature. It is the most authoritative work of the Vedic literature. It gives ample information regarding the cultural heritage of Vedic India. The Rgveda consists of ten chapters, called maṇḍalas. These ten maṇḍalas have their own characteristics in some aspects. All the maṇḍalas belong to different period of compilation. Among the ten maṇḍalas of the Rgveda, the tenth one is a late addition. It plays a significant role in the development and growth of Indian culture and civilization. Though there are several commentators of the Rgveda, all of them are not available till date. The commentary of Sāyaṇācārya is very popular among the readers as it is very elaborative in nature. The present study on the tenth maṇḍala of Rgveda analyses the interpretations of Sāyaṇācārya as given in his commentary.

The work comprises six chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction to the Vedic literature. In the very beginning, the meaning and scope of the term veda is discussed. The term veda literally means knowledge, which later comes to denote sacred knowledge or knowledge par excellence. The term veda is used to mean the whole Vedic literature, which includes Mantras, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyas and Upaniṣads. The six Vedāṅgas, i.e. Śikṣā, Kalpa, Nirukta, Vyākaraṇa, Chandas and Jyotiṣa also occupy a prominent position in the Vedic literature. The oldest and most important of all the works of the Vedic literature is the Rgveda. The division of the Rgveda into
maṇḍala and aṣṭaka is discussed in this chapter. There are different views regarding the age of the Rgveda, which are dealt with in this connection. The arrangement of the different maṇḍalas is very systematic. The ten maṇḍalas did not belong to the same period of composition. The language, vocabulary and style of the writing indicate that the different parts of the Rgveda represent different stages in chronology hymns. The different maṇḍalas of the Rgveda are of varying length and attributed to different seers.

The first and the last maṇḍalas have the same number of hymns. The second and the seventh maṇḍalas of the Rgveda are known as Varśamaṇḍalas, i.e. the Family Books. Each of this maṇḍalas contains hymns ascribed to seers belonging to a particular family. The eighth one is ascribed to Kāṇva and Aṅgirasa and is addressed to a number of gods. All the hymns of the ninth maṇḍala is dedicated to Soma Pavamāna. Hence this maṇḍala is called Somamaṇḍala or Pavamānamāṇḍala. The seers of the tenth maṇḍala belong to different families and it contains subject-matter of miscellaneous character. The tenth maṇḍala appears to be a very late addition to the Rgveda. The uses of vocabulary, grammar and style of writing indicate the lateness of its compilation. The lateness of this maṇḍala are evident also from its varied contexts. The subject-matter of the tenth maṇḍala is manifestly different from the other maṇḍalas of the Rgveda.

The significance of the tenth maṇḍala is thoroughly discussed in this chapter. This maṇḍala gives, more precisely, the knowledge of religion, culture and faith of the Vedic people. Most of the dialogue hymns appear in the tenth maṇḍala. These dialogue hymns contain a story, which possesses dramatic elements. Some of the hymns of the tenth maṇḍala are secular in nature, which are valuable as they throw light on the earliest thought of secularism and civilization of India. Among such secular poems,
some are didactic. These didactic hymns are aimed at infusing the spirit of righteousness into the mind of the people and are relevant till the present society. There are also a good number of hymns in the tenth maṇḍala of the Rgveda, which focus on the development of philosophical speculation in those times. In the tenth maṇḍala of the Rgveda, a number of abstract ideas is deified, which is another characteristic feature of the tenth maṇḍala. In this maṇḍala, valuable data are found regarding the socio-cultural aspects of the Vedic Āryans. The everyday life of the people, education system of the Vedic people, their occupations, caste system in the society, status of women in the period are nicely portrayed in this maṇḍala. The Rgvedic religion is based on nature worship. In the tenth maṇḍala, various natural elements are worshipped. Some inanimate objects are also elevated to the rank of gods. Goddesses play an important role in the tenth maṇḍala. Reverence to the Pitṛs is another significant aspect of the tenth maṇḍala. The language and style of the tenth maṇḍala are unique. The hymns are composed with a considerable degree of metrical skill, and with the poetic elements like alaṅkāras, rasas, etc.

The second chapter is entitled ‘The Contents of the Tenth Maṇḍala’. The Rgveda is the storehouse of the religious, philosophical and secular ideas of the Vedic people. The tenth maṇḍala of the Rgveda consists of a number of hymns of miscellaneous subjects. It contains hymns of various aspects including the dialogue hymns, secular hymns, philosophical hymns and the hymns related to the abstract deities, etc. The dialogue hymns have a special literary interest as foreshadowing the dramatic works of the later age. The dialogue hymns of the Rgveda contain different kinds of myths, legends and varied stories. Later writers of different languages have taken themes for some of their works from these dialogue hymns. Though the Rgvedic
hymns are mainly religious in nature, the tenth maṇḍala bears a number of hymns, which are secular. The funeral hymns and the wedding- hymn forecast different aspects of the society of the Ṛgvedic period. The didactic hymns of the tenth maṇḍala are secular in nature. They contain high ethical values, which are helpful forever. The famous Akṣasūkta is noteworthy in this regard. Among these secular hymns, some are considered as Dānastutis. The Dānastutis contain much historical values. These types of hymns have contributed a lot in moulding the society. The Ṛgveda is the earliest record of Āryan philosophical thought. There are a number of hymns in the tenth maṇḍala, which show a gradual growth of the philosophical speculation in those times. It deals with the philosophical ideas like the origin of the creation, its existence and the theories of creation, etc. In the Jñānasūkta, knowledge is highly praised. The Puruṣasūkta is remarkable because it records a transition from ritual to philosophy. The Hiranyagarbhasūkta and the Nāsadīyasūkta describe the creation process. The Devīsūkta is said to be the embryo, from which has issued forth the later Indian philosophical thought of the Upaniṣads and Vedānta. Thus, all the philosophical hymns of this maṇḍala contain their own philosophical values. The advance of thought during the period of the Ṛgveda from the concrete towards the abstract is noticeable mainly in the tenth maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda. In this chapter, the hymns, dedicated to the abstract deities are also discussed. The tenth maṇḍala contains a number of abstract deities, which reveals their own characteristics distinctly. They touch almost every sphere of life like wrath, reverence, favour, etc.

The third chapter is entitled ‘The Socio-cultural Study of the Tenth Maṇḍala’. First of all, it deals with the caste-system of the Vedic period. In the Ṛgvedic era, caste distinction was not yet developed. However, in a Ṛgvedic passage of the tenth
mandala, the Brahma and the three other castes, find mention for the first time. The rules and regulations pertaining to the caste were not so rigid in that period. A human being is called physically sound, only when, his all organs are working together. Similarly, a society is not developed, when all the classes of the people are not working in unity. In that period, emphasis was given on the performance of work. It is derived that caste was not determined by birth, but by training and education.

A brief discourse has been placed on the status of women of the Rigvedic period. Though the society of the Rigvedic period was patriarchal in nature, the position of women was not miserable. The society bestowed proper respect for women. Parents were equally affectionate towards their children, irrespective of male and female. Women education was prevalent at that time. Considering the contribution of women to the mystical thought, it can be summed up that women of that period were highly learned. The role of women as a wife is recognized as much praiseworthy. The admissible status of women is noticed by the fact that they participated in sacrifice with her husband. In the Rigvedic period, widows had their normal position in the society even after the death of their husband. There is no clear mention of the prevalence of Sati custom in the Rigvedic period. Moreover, widows were allowed to procreate offspring through the system of niyoga. Thus, the women of Rigvedic era occupied a place of honour.

The system of education in the Rigvedic society is also discussed in this context. In the tenth mandala of the Rigveda, there is no clear evidence of the education system that prevailed in ancient India. However, it is hinted in a passage that the education was imparted orally. Importance of knowledge was emphasized in those days. People had the knowledge of diseases, both mental and physical. They were also acquainted with
the knowledge of architecture, carpentry, cattle rearing, astronomy, agriculture, irrigation, art of warfare, art and crafts, etc.

The everyday life of people is also discussed. They used to take animal food. Beef eating was also practised in those days, which is evident in many Rgvedic passages. Barley and fruits were largely used. Among the beverages milk and Soma were commonly used. Honey as a sweet drink was also used with food. The people of the Rgvedic period were fond of decorations. References are made in various places to well-dressed females. They used to decorate themselves with various ornaments. Regarding, means of transport people used chariot, car, boat, etc. The tenth manḍala of the Rgveda also refers to the economic life of the people, during that period. The people of the then Indian society took various occupations and earned their livelihood through agriculture, cattle-rearing, hunting, making iron equipments, carpentry, weaving, preparing various weapons, etc. Thus, the people of that period were found to be hard workers.

Morality occupies the supreme place in the Rgvedic Society. Emphasis was given in hospitality, liberality and unity. However, some immoral practices like murder, theft, robbery, gambling, illicit relationships, etc., prevailed in that society.

A detailed discourse on the political system of the then Indian society is also presented in this chapter. The main political aspects which are reflected in the tenth manḍala are kingship, its origin, qualities of the king, his duty and position in kingdom, development of the state and different machineries of the state. The royal personalities, who had political responsibilities in the Rgvedic period were Grāmaṇī, Viśpati, Senānī, etc. During the Rgvedic age monarchy was the system of government prevailing in India. In the Rgvedic period, a king was given much priority. He was the sovereign
among men. There were many organizations in the Rgvedic period for the sake of the smooth running of the state like *sabhā, samiti, vidatha, etc.*

The fourth chapter is entitled ‘A Religious Study of the Tenth *Maṇḍala*.’ At the very outset, the meaning and scope of the term *dharma* is discussed. The term *dharma* is used in various senses like duty, right, virtue, morality, etc. It includes both the socio-ethical duties as well as religious order. There were different views regarding the concept of religious orders. In the *Rgveda*, the god worshipped in a particular context is regarded as the Supreme. Every object in the visible creation as well as every idea of mind is elevated to the rank of gods. The Vedic gods are, in general, personifications of various natural phenomena. People believed that those nature gods help them for their sustenance. Trees and plants, animals, water, mountains, etc. are worshipped in the tenth *maṇḍala*. In this *maṇḍala*, reverence to the Pitṛs are also noticed. The major divinities, which play predominant place in the tenth *maṇḍala* are Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Soma and the Aśvins. Goddesses like Vāk, Uṣas, Sūryā and others are also praised in the tenth *maṇḍala*. Certain inanimate things like chariot, dice, etc., are also eulogized as god in this very *maṇḍala*. The abstract ideas like Śraddhā, Dakṣinā, Aranyāṇī, Nīrṛti, Anumati, Asunī, Manyu, Tvaṣṭṛ, Dhātṛ, etc. are addressed. People believed that through the performance of sacrifices gods were pleased and, in return, the gods fulfilled all the desire of the sacrificers. In the tenth *maṇḍala*, it is also seen that the people of that period prayed the gods for various attainments like achievement of offspring, cattle, food and bodily welfare, etc.

In this chapter, different saṁskāras performed by the Rgvedic Āryans, are also discussed in the light of the tenth *maṇḍala*. Among the different saṁskāras performed in the Indian society, only three of them are found mentioned in the tenth *maṇḍala*. 
These are — Garbhādhāna, Vivāha and Antyeṣṭi. The details of these sarīṃskāras are thoroughly discussed. The last part of this chapter deals with superstitious beliefs and magical practices of the Rgvedic people. Though the people of that period were highly enlightened, they were inclined to some superstitious beliefs and magical practices. The belief regarding the existence of soul after death is portrayed in this connection. People believed in evil dream and considered some birds and other elements as ill-omened. They used various measures to destroy enemies and rival wives and different measures were also taken to get relief from distress by means of magical practices.

The fifth chapter of the present work is entitled ‘A Literary Study of the Tenth Maṇḍala’. The language and the literature of the tenth maṇḍala is significant in some aspects from the other nine maṇḍalas. The tenth maṇḍala displays manifold literary style, which is common in classical Sanskrit but not in frequent use in the earlier maṇḍalas of the Rgveda. Some newer words are used, which appeared for the first time in the Rgveda. In this part of the Rgveda, different alaṅkāras are employed, which enhance its poetic beauty. In use of metres also, it includes both the simple and the rarer metres. The tenth maṇḍala is very much rich in case of portraying rasa. Rasa is the vital element of kāvyā. It is observed that appropriate words are used to express the rasa in proper place. In grammatical aspect also, it contains some specialties, with the inclusion of some simpler forms, which are found in Classical Sanskrit.

After reviewing all the chapters, it can be summed up that the tenth maṇḍala of the Rgveda furnishes manifold information regarding the socio-cultural, political, moral, secular, philosophical and religious aspects of the then Indian society. Much about the ideas and thoughts prevailing in the then Indian society can be gleaned from the tenth maṇḍala, as it furnishes valuable information about the life and culture of
people during that age. It is the infallible source of information of the political lives of the Rgvedic people. The tenth *mandala* focuses on the ethical values of Indian lives, which contribute a lot towards the moulding of righteousness in the minds of the people of present day society also. The high ideals and ordinances, enjoined, in it are valuable enough to be followed by all, and these will hold good for all time to come.