

would not have been possible until the Soma sacrifice had attained a place of recognised importance, and had inspired a literature for its conduct and celebration. Its canonical status is somewhat lower than that of the bulk of the Veda.

The hymns of this book ascribe praises to Soma during all the processes of the preparation of the liquid which was virtually identified with the deity. The question of authorship is inconsequential as the reputed authors are personally unknown.

Most of the processes of the extraction of the Soma juice are referred to in the Mandala, of whose hymns the following is typical.

1. "This swift-flowing Soma, placed by the priests, all knowing, the lord of praises hastens to the woollen filter.
2. "The Soma, effused for the gods, flows into the filter penetrating all its forms.
3. "This divine immortal Soma is brilliant in his own place, the slayer of enemies, the most devoted to the gods.
4. "This showerer, expressed by the ten fingers, hastens uttering a sound to the pitchers.
5. "This purified, all-contemplating, all-knowing (Soma), gives radiance to the sun and all sph
6. "This powerful, invincible, purity Soma, proceeds, the protector of the gods, the destroyer of the wicked" (Hymn 28).

**Mandala X.** differs from the preceding nine in language, in subject, in style of thought. It contains the Long and the Short hymns. Its constituent poems belong to an advanced period of religious thought. Many of them are abstruse metaphysical speculations, their ideas are highly philosophical, their "whole atmosphere is different to that of the other Mandalas." Some pieces were designed to assist the practice of magic. In these respects it approaches most nearly to the Atharva Veda, in which forty per cent. of the hymns borrowed from the Rig originally belonged to this Mandala.

Like Mandala I. it contains one hundred and ninety-one hymns. Of these—either wholly or in part—thirty-three are dedicated to Agni, forty-five to Indra, twenty-seven to Visvadevas, four to the Waters, and three to Yama.