

ten-stanza hymns, really composed of five stanzas, which by a literary fiction are halved and reckoned as two.

As we possess it, the Mandala is not a popular anthology but an elaborate liturgy, built about the words which celebrated the culminating act of the Soma libation.

The place of honour is held by a remarkable single verse addressed to Agni, and ascribed to the rishi Kasyapa.

"Let us offer libations to him who knows all our wealth,  
May Agni consume the wealth of our enemies,  
May Agni free us from all dangers, and cause us to pass over misfortune as a ship passes over the sea" (100).

With this verse the Hymn of the Five Rishis (101) is associated.

On either side of this central group five collections of hymns are arranged in the following order :—

i.	Hymns of the Visvamitra family,	1-10
ii.	„ „ Angiras „ (Bharadvajas branch)	11-64
iii.	„ „ Vasistha „	65-73
iv.	„ „ Angiras „ (Gautama „ )	74-94
v.	„ „ Kutsa „ (Bharadvajas „ )	95-99
The Hymns of Kasyapa and the "Five Rishis."		100-101
v.	„ „ Kutsa „ (Bharadvajas „ )	102-116
iv.	„ „ Angiras „ (Gautama „ )	117-127
iii.	„ „ Bhrigus „	128-140
ii.	„ „ Angiras „ (Gautama „ )	141-164
i.	„ „ Agasti „	165-191

"This arrangement separates the Mandala into eleven distinct parts, and serves to explain the saying : 'the Purolasa is offered in eleven vessels.' It suggests that the Purolasa was a religious act, which enumerated all the rishis (seven of the eight families of Vedic poets have their works included), and with them the entire people in a ceremonial observance, consisting of eleven separate acts, accompanied by the recitation of eleven sets of hymns" (J.R.A.S., xvi. 1884, p. 381, etc.).

The nature of the service is indicated by the fact that the "five rishis" were not human beings, their names are the names of the principal acts in the great Horse sacrifice, the Asvamedha.