

As a compilation it is attributed to the rishi Krishna Divaipayana, whose labour won him the title Oyasa (arranger). Tradition also credits him with the task of superintending the arrangement of the other vedas by certain of his pupils.

There are 10,417 verses in this collection, which by the more ancient division—according to authorship—is divided into a thousand and twenty-eight hymns grouped in ten mandalas (circles).

As a systematic whole the Rig Veda is built of six main groups of hymns. The first is an “eclectic ceremonial liturgy” (Mandala I.). The second contains the “Family Books” (Mandala II.-VII.). Then follows a book of miscellaneous and supplementary hymns (Mandala VIII.). The next group consists of hymns celebrating the Soma juice (Mandala IX.). Then follow two collections of mystical and mythological hymns (Mandala X. 1-84; Mandala X. 85-191.)

The particulars on which these distinctions are founded do not appear, except incidentally, in the Veda itself. They are supplied by a late Index, which gives the names of the authors, the number of stanzas in each hymn, the class of metre used, and the name of the deity addressed.

Mandala I.—The first Mandala contains a hundred and ninety-one hymns, and constituted “the veritable prayer-book of the ancient Brahmans rehearsed whilst performing the eleven acts which completed the solemn offering of the *Puroṣa*.”¹

Tradition divides the Mandala between eighteen rishis, and has set the hymns of each poet together. The tradition is not wholly reliable. The same hymn occurs under different authorships (*cf.* 13 and 142). Distinct fragments are united in one piece (*e.g.* 126). Some clusters were drawn together because of common characteristics (*e.g.* 127-140) a group of examples of an elaborate metre; (65-70) a cluster of so-called

¹ See Mr F. Pincott, M.R.A.S., in J.R.A.S., vols. xvi. and xix. 1884-1887.