

We have here nothing to do with the theological definitions of these two terms; we are only concerned with their meaning, from a literary point of view. And this we can state without reference to Brahmanic authorities.

Each of the four Vedas (Rik, Yajus, Sâman, and Atharvan) has a Mantra, as well as a Brâhmaṇa portion. The difference between both may be briefly stated as follows: That part which contains the sacred prayers, the invocations of the different deities, the sacred verses for chanting at the sacrifices, the sacrificial formulas, blessings and curses, pronounced by priests is called *mantra*,¹ *i. e.* the produce of thinking. This word is of a very early date; for we find it in the Zend-Avesta in the form of *mañthra* also. Its meaning there is that of a sacred prayer, or formula, to which a magical effect was ascribed, just as to the Vedic mantras. Zoroaster is called a *mañthran*, *i. e.* a speaker of mantras, and one of the earliest names of the Scriptures of the Parsis, is *mañthra s'peñta*, *i. e.* the holy prayer (now corrupted to *mansar spent*).

This fact clearly shows, that the term *mantra* in its proper meaning was already known at that early period of Aryan history when the ancestors of the Brahmans and those of the Parsis (the ancient Iranians) lived as brother tribes peacefully together. This time was anterior to the combats of

¹ See more about it in Goldstücker, "Pāṇini, his Place in Sanscrit Literature," page 68.