The 

Dharmaśāstra or Smṛti literature is one of the most important and interesting branch of Sanskrit literature. The Smṛtis reflect the religio-social life of the Hindus of different periods. The śrauta and the Grahyasūtras have direct relations with any of the Veda sākhās. On the other hand the Smṛtis have no direct relation with any of the Veda sākhā yet the Smṛtis are based on śrauta systems. The subject matter, of the Dharmasūtras and the Dharmaśāstras or the Smṛtis, is fundamentally similar. The Dharmasūtras are not systematic in dealing with the subjects while the Dharmaśāstras or the Smṛtis are systematic in dealing with the different topics.

The Dharmasūtras are composed in terse aphoristic style. On the otherhand the Dharmaśāstras or the Smṛtis are composed in metrical Sanskrit with a leaning to classical Sanskrit. It is found that the Dharmasūtras or the Smṛtis have recognised the customs as a source of Dharma. The Dharmaśāstras and the Smṛtis, therefore, deal with Varnadharma, Áramadharma, Kuladharma, Jātidharma, Desadharma, Mlecchadharma, Rājadharma etc. The Dharmasūtras as well as the Dharmaśāstras and the Smṛtis deal with Vyavahāra i.e. eighteen titles of litigation also.
The Viṣṇusārti is composed both in sūtra and metrical form. It is stated as the Viṣṇuṣūtra as well as the vaishnava-vadharmaśāstra. The sutras are terse with a leaning to vedic Sanskrit but the verses are classical in character.

Innumerable sutras of the Viṣṇusārti are found to be connected together into verse form in the Vaiṣṇavālkyāsārti. It might perhaps be that the verses of the Vaiṣṇavālkyāsārti are broken into sūtra form in the Viṣṇusārti. We also find a good number of verses quoted in the Viṣṇusārti from the Manusāṁhitā and from the Śrīmadbhagavatgītā. It is difficult to say decisively who quoted from whom. That is why a study of the Viṣṇusārti is warranted.

The verses in the Viṣṇusārti are classical in character full of sentiment and embellishments. The recurrence of classical metre and figures of speech are conspicuous in this book leading to an interest for its study.

An attempt has been made to study the Viṣṇusārti critically in the following pages of this dissertation.

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