INTRODUCTION

The *Stotra* literature, a new phase of Sanskrit literature, is as old as the *Vedic* literature. There are many more Sanskrit poet-philosophers who have displayed their skill in various fields and in *Stotra* literature in particular.

Śankarācārya in the eighth century A.D, Rāmānujācārya in the eleventh century A.D, and Madhvacārya in the thirteenth century A.D, have adorned the history of *Stotra* literature in Sanskrit. Śankarācārya, the founder of Advaita school of vedanta composed many more *stotras* and enriched the *Stotra* literature. Similarly Rāmānujācārya too composed *Stotras*. Madhvacārya, propounder of Dvaita school of vedanta, has written two *Stotra* works, viz., *Dvādaśa stotra* and *Nṛsimha-Nakha-Stuti*. Another so called small *stotra* *Kanduka stuti* is not considered in the list of thirtyseven works of Madhvācārya. Dr. B.N.K.Sharma asserts,*"Krṣṇastuti, Krṣṇagadya or Kanduka stuti, as it is variously called, is a short *stotra* in praise of Kṛṣṇa, in two smart, alliterative verses said to have been composed by Madhvācārya, as a boy. It is not included in the traditional list of his works. The name *Kanduka-stuti* is fancifully taken to mean that it is “generally repeated by Hindu girls at the time of playing with a ball.”* (M.Rangacharya, Descriptive catal, of Madras Govt, oriental Lib. vol xxvi no 14801) There is no warrant for any such surmise."

In the course of the following pages these three *Stotras* are taken for the study, viz., *Dvādaśa stotra*, *Nṛsimha-Nakha-stuti* and *Kanduka stotra*, since these are the stotra works composed by Madhvācārya and they constitute *Stotra-Sāhitya* of Madhvācārya. The analysis of these *stotras* is done with special reference to the tenets of Dvaita philosophy in brief.
Since the origin of stotras are traced to Vedic literature, the nature of stotras is changing. In the classical age, saint-poets and religious-teachers have chosen the stotra media to propogate their philosophical doctrines. During this period the Bhakti movement started spreading at large, particularly the Bhāgavata cult, and the Jaina religion added much material to the stotra literature. At this juncture many schools of philosophy have been established. In order to make the philosophy and religion much popular, saint philosophers who founded different schools of thought, composed significant stotras and made them accessible to the laymen. Thus, the stotras also called stotra literature composed by them are rather philosophical in content.

Among the philosophical stotras, the Annapūrṇasātaka, Gajendrabhujaṅgaśatpadi, Saundaryalahari, Śivamānasapūja, Ardhanāri-svarastotram, Daksīṇāmūrthistotram, are from the pen of Śankarācārya. Gadyatraya of Rāmānujaścārya, stotraratna of Yamunācārya., Nārāyaṇīyam of saint Nārāyanabhaṭṭādri, Mukundamāla of saint Kulaśekhara and the Dvādasā stotra of Madhvācārya can be classed as stotras par excellence with a philosophic approach.

The Dvādasā stotra ranks as the foremost hymn of Madhvācārya, expressive of intense devotion, capable of being set to music, of twelve chapters in various metres. The Stotra was composed by him, at the time of installation of the idol of Lord Kṛṣṇa at Udupi, seven hundred years ago.

Madhvācārya describes in the first chapter, the Lords beauty, His arms, His benign grace. In the second chapter the Lord is described as the heaven of the weary pilgrims. The third chapter epitomizes the philosophy of Madhvācārya i.e. Dvaita philosophy in eight beautiful verses, and it is rightly called Haryastakam.
The fourth chapter describes, the visible, sensible, and intelligible world as a manifestation of divine thought that is not apprehensible by man's sense and intellect. The fifth chapter begins with an invocation to Vāsudeva, and then the twelve forms of the Lord beginning from Keśava to Dāmodara, are praised. The ten incarnations of the Lord are praised and described in the sixth chapter.

In the seventh chapter, the vertical pluralism worked out by Madhvācārya attuned to the harmonious hierarchy of sentient beings proclaims unequivocally the absolute majesty and supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu named Ajita. The propitiation of Vāsudeva, the integral ornament to the assemblage of divinities is the subject-matter of the eighth chapter. The ten incarnations of the Lord are again praised with their objectives in the ninth chapter. In the tenth chapter, we have a very touching appeal to the Lord who is full of compassion and who is the bestower of boons on the devotee for making a devotee worthy of knowing the greatness of the Lord. Madhvācārya after proclaiming again and again the supremacy of the Lord concludes the eleventh chapter, with a fervent hope that the devotee who recites the hymns may attain the state of blessedness, the highest goal of all human endeavour. The recital of the prayer rises to a crescendo in the last chapter of the Dvādaśa stotra.

Thus, the Dvādaśa stotra of Madhvācārya is most remarkable literary work known as Stotra-Sāhitya. It is highly esteemed by one and all. It attracts the intense-contemplators, the followers of mystical formulae and philosophers to the same extent with its poetic beauty with it's superb exposition of Lord Viṣṇu's epithets and His incarnations.

The Nṛsimha-Nakha-stuti is the short eulogy of the nails of God Nṛsimha in two verses. They are found prefixed to the Vāyustuti of Trivikramaṇḍitācārya.
son of Narayanapanditaarya, and they are now also recited as a part of the Vayustuti, at the beginning and at the end. Kanduka stuti, in praise of Lord Krsna is the another stotra of Madhvacarya in two alliterative verses.

Studies and criticisms on various works of Madhvacarya have already come out by innumerable learned scholars. But it is a matter of considerable concern that there has not been any special study on his Stotra literature. The importance of the present study lies in the fact that, it includes both a summary of the stotras and a critical study of different aspects of the Dvadasa stotra and others. For, apart from the scholarly edition of the text of the Dvadasa stotra published by Dharmaparaksh publications, Madras and English rendering by Vaisnavacaran. Only few articles dealing with some aspects of the Madhvacarya's stotras are published. At any rate, no attempt has been made to study Madhvacarya's Stotra Sahitya, as a whole, in order to bring out all the literary merits thereof. We propose to make such an attempt in the present study.

In the present study, a brief survey of Stotras, right from Vedic literature up to classical period is applied to the study and assessment of the different aspects of the Stotra literature. The development of the theme, Madhvacarya's works with short summary is made. A sincere attempt, thus, to highlight the nine principal doctrines of Dvaita philosophy is made in this critical study. Bhakti, devotion is the all-pervasive key doctrine of Stotras. The Bhakti is considered as one of the rasa in the present study. Finally literary excellences i.e., alankaras and metres are dealt upon. The following scheme of arrangement as well as discussion of the material is adopted;
"A brief survey of *Stotra* literature,
Date, life and works of Madhvācārya,
Summary of the *Stotras* of Madhvācārya,
Essence of Dvaita philosophy
Aspect of *Bhakti* or *Bhakti* as depicted in *Stotras*, and
Literary excellence of Madhvācārya."

The investigator feels that a critical study of Madhvācārya's *Stotra* literature is worth being taken up, so that his aesthetic talents combined with his philosophical fervour are revealed to the domain of learning scholarship.

Moreover, I sincerely express my sense of gratitude to the scholars from whose works I have derived informations and more importantly inspiration to formulate my views on the different aspects of Madhvācārya's *Stotra-Sāhitya* under study.

Thus, I hope, this work will be a substantial contribution to the existing literature on Dvaita vedanta, a major system of Indian philosophy.
References

1. भाष्याणं दशकं च पंचकयुं तिक्ष्णं निर्णयं।
"विष्णों स्तोत्रयुं" दशप्रकरणं कल्याणं च श्रृतं।
श्रीकृष्णपूर्ववत्तन्त्रसारकं न्यायाचार्यदीपिनम्।
येनाकारी सदैव मध्यमनिरादृश्यात् दशासूबिधां मन।॥

*Sri Madhvacārya and His Cardinal Doctrines.*
Dr. D.N. Shanbhag, Bharat Book Depot and Prakashana,
1990, Dharwad, p.12 (Quoted in Foot Note)

2. *History of Dvaita School of Vedanta and its Literature*
Dr. B.N.K. Sharma, Motilal Banarassidass,
Delhi, 1981, pp.190-191.