

# Selected passages from the first act of Brajvāsīdās' *Prabodhacandrodaya Nāṭaka*<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. The author and the text

Brajvāsīdās composed his *Prabodhacandrodaya Nāṭaka* in 1760 in Brajbhāṣā, an established literary medium in North India at the time. Information about Brajvāsīdās is scarce: he was born around the 1730s, a resident of the Braj area and probably a Vallabhan. The *Prabodhacandrodaya Nāṭaka* is his first work and is a retelling of the Sanskrit allegorical drama *Prabodhacandrodaya* by Kṛṣṇamiśra (11<sup>th</sup> c.). The Sanskrit work was adapted several times in Sanskrit, Prakrits, Persian, south Indian languages, and north Indian vernaculars. This allegorical genre is especially significant for the study of Vedantic and bhakti traditions, moreover, the dynamic of transmission of the *Prabodhacandrodaya* story is complex, far from linear. I propose to analyze selected verses which deal with Brajvāsīdās' sources and his attitude towards them.

## 2. Summary

Brajvāsīdās introduces himself, the circumstances of composition and the sources of his *Prabodhacandrodaya*. After that, the first actor enters the scene and instructs his wife to set up the scene for a performance of the *Prabodhacandrodaya* drama at the court of king Kīrtivarman (Kirati Brahma in Braj). Brajvāsīdās mentions Kṛṣṇamiśra with the name Kṛṣṇa/Kṛṣṇadās Bhaṭṭ.

## 3. Text

### 3.1 Introductory part

सो० तैसे गुरु सुजान कीन्हों ग्रन्थ नबीन तब ।  
कला विदूषक खान अर्थ सिद्ध वेदान्त मय ॥१४॥

संगीति० नाम राख्यो ग्रंथ को परबोध चन्द उदोत ।  
सुनत मधुरे श्रवण को अति ससुझिते सुख होत ॥  
मथि निकास्यो वेद निधि तैं सुधा को सो सोत ।  
रीत नाटक तासु पाठक शिष्य कीन्हों पोत ॥१५॥  
सतसंग में ऐसे सुनी मैं ग्रंथ की उत्पत्ति ।  
रचना विचित्र प्रबन्ध सुन्दर बस्तु बरनन सति ॥  
हानि अह मम मोह प्रापति ज्ञान की सम्पत्ति ।  
सुनै समुझै पढ़ै रुचि सों मिटै जगत विपत्ति ॥१६॥

दो० सो तौ बाणी संस्कृत प्राकृत करि न विचार ।  
ताके समुझन को चही विद्या बुद्धि अपार ॥१७॥

दो० बलीराम ताकी करी भाषा यमन किताब ।  
सोऊ विद्या अति कठिन समुझि न परै सिताब ॥१८॥

<sup>1</sup> Source: Brajvāsīdās. 1875. *Prabodhacandrodaya Nāṭaka*. Lucknow, Naval Kishore Press.

दो० मित्र एक ऐसे कही जो यह भाषा होय ।  
सरल होय तौ सबन को सुनि सुख पावै लोय ॥१९॥

दो० ताते यह भाषा करी अपनी मति अनुसार ।  
सत संगत परताप ते विपुल छंद विस्तार ॥२०॥

दो० कृष्णदास भट शिष्य सों कहत कथा परबोधि ।  
नटलीला के ब्याज करि परमतत्वमय शोधि ॥२४॥

### 3.2 First actor's dialogue with the first actress

नट उबाच० चतुःपदी छन्द० ए मृगनैनी कोकिल बैनी मनहरणी मम प्यारी । आज भई इक गिरा गगन में अति अद्भुत  
सुखकारी ॥ ... ॥३२॥

नट उबाच० चौ० कहयो कृपाकरि ऐसी मोहीं । सो सुनु सुमुखि सुनावों तोहीं ॥ कीरति ब्रह्म नृपति बड़ भागी । जो यह  
राज काज अनुरागी ॥ ... ॥४०॥

दो० ऐसी चाह संतोष की भई भूप उर आय ।  
ताते तू कछु सांतरस नृप के आगे गाय ॥४३॥

सुगति का छन्द० प्रबोध चंद उद्योत नाटक गाव शुद्ध सुभाव । श्री कृष्ण भट्ट जु प्रकट किन्हो काव्य पण्डित राव ॥  
... ॥४४॥

### 4. Comparison with verses 15, 16 and 24

*Atha kam apy antevāsinaṁ bahuśo 'dhyāyita-vedānta-siddhāntam api tatra 'avabodha-parāṅmukhāṁ  
nāṭakādi-rasikam parama-kāruṇikāḥ śrī-Kṛṣṇamiśrāḥ Prabodhacandrodayākhyā-nāṭaka-vyājena  
taṁ bubodhayiṣavas, tad racayanti sma.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> This is a verse from the *ṭīka* by Rāmadās Dikṣit, commenting the *nāṇḍī* of the Sanskrit *Prabodhacandrodaya*. The source is Brockhaus, H. 1845. *Prabodha Chandrodaya: Krishna Misri Comoedia*. Lipsiae, Brockhaus, p. 3 of the “Scholien” section.