

CHAPTER II

DATA ON SEX IN THE PALI VINAYAPIṬAKA

50. As already alluded to (*v. supra*, 19-21), the Vinaya contains some data bearing on the sexual life of the Indian society of the time to which it refers. These data are to be found mostly in such passages considered to be "interesting historically, scientifically and psychologically, and even psychoanalytically."¹ The data are not always directly presented; statements have to be analysed and inferences made. Indian culture about the Buddha's time being very much composite, one feels that there had been an intermingling of several traditions in this sphere, as in many others. The present study tends to suggest that there was the possibility of an admixture of at least two such traditions in ancient India. Firstly, there was the Brahmanic tradition which, one must admit, was moral and religious (*v. infra*, 52). Secondly, there seems to have appeared towards the latter part of the first millennium B.C. at least one other tradition of an erotic nature, which, (for want of an accurate term), may be designated as "non-Brahmanic". This coincides with the rise of monarchies and the advent of city-culture amongst the Aryans in the Gangetic Valley, nevertheless preceding the rise of Buddhism. We would hazard the conjecture that the data on sexual matters in the Vinaya represent, in very many respects, a fusion of these traditions. This fusion perhaps contributed in no small measure to the development of Indian Erotics as symbolized by Vātsyāyana. It is very likely that the developed science of Indian Eroticism largely represents a compromise between these traditions. In the ensuing pages an attempt is made to place these data in their proper perspective, and as far as possible, to examine their socio-cultural significance. An attempt has also been made to correlate these data, to whatever extent feasible, with the findings of modern psychology, sociology and allied sciences with a view to bringing the subject into a wider perspective. And, in the analysis and evaluation of the data the bhikkhu and the bhikkhuni rank high, for, without reference to them it is well-nigh impossible to deal with anything in the Vinaya.

1. Horner, B.D.I, p. xxxvii. Also *supra*, 25.