

CHAPTER IX

EROTICS, GAṆIKĀS AND PROSTITUTION

330. The science of eroticism as developed by ancient India has already been discussed (*v. supra*, 50 *passim*). In a monastic religious literature like the Buddhist Vinaya one cannot expect any reference to it or to any of its contents. However, it is possible to infer from the *Vinaya-piṭaka* that the society portrayed in it betrays signs of a knowledge of eroticism which was perhaps a fore-runner to the subsequently developed science. In fact, as stated earlier,¹ as the beginnings of Indian erotic traditions were pre-Buddhistic, a good knowledge of eroticism should be expected during the period under review.

331. In the art of developing tumescence as a preliminary to sexual intercourse, sexology recognizes, *inter alia* the significant rôle played by tactile stimulation. And, Indian erotics give sixteen methods of achieving tumescence.² We have had occasion to observe how two female devotees — Supabbā of Rājagaha and Saddhā of Sāvatti — could visualize that sexual contact may be effected at different spots on the female body, to wit: the region between the breasts, the navel, the stomach-coil, the arm-pit, the throat, the ear, the coil of hair, and the space between the fingers (*v. supra*, 325). From the point of view of sexology, these spots on the human body arouse sexual excitation on special adaptations and intensification of tactile sensation. The later-day writers on Indian erotics call these spots the *Kāmasthānas* or *Ratitithis* — *i.e.* "Erotic Spots" — and what the two females Supabbā and Saddhā perhaps wanted was the stimulation of these erogenous zones, and the method suggested may be connected with what is known to Indian erotics as *Candrakalāprabodhanavidhi* — the cutaneous excitation of erogenous zones on the basis of lunar variations — which is said to promote orgasmic response. Tactile sensations, when properly effected, result in "powerful reverberations in the emotional sexual sphere",³ and are recognized in early Buddhist psychological observations as *phoṭṭhabba* or *kāyasamphassa*. Their psycho-sexual import has already been discussed (*v. supra*, 253). Our list

1. *v. Supra*, 52 et 120.

2. *v. S.C. Upadhyaya, op.cit.*, pp.7 ff.

3. S.C. Upadhyaya, *ibid.*, p.7.