

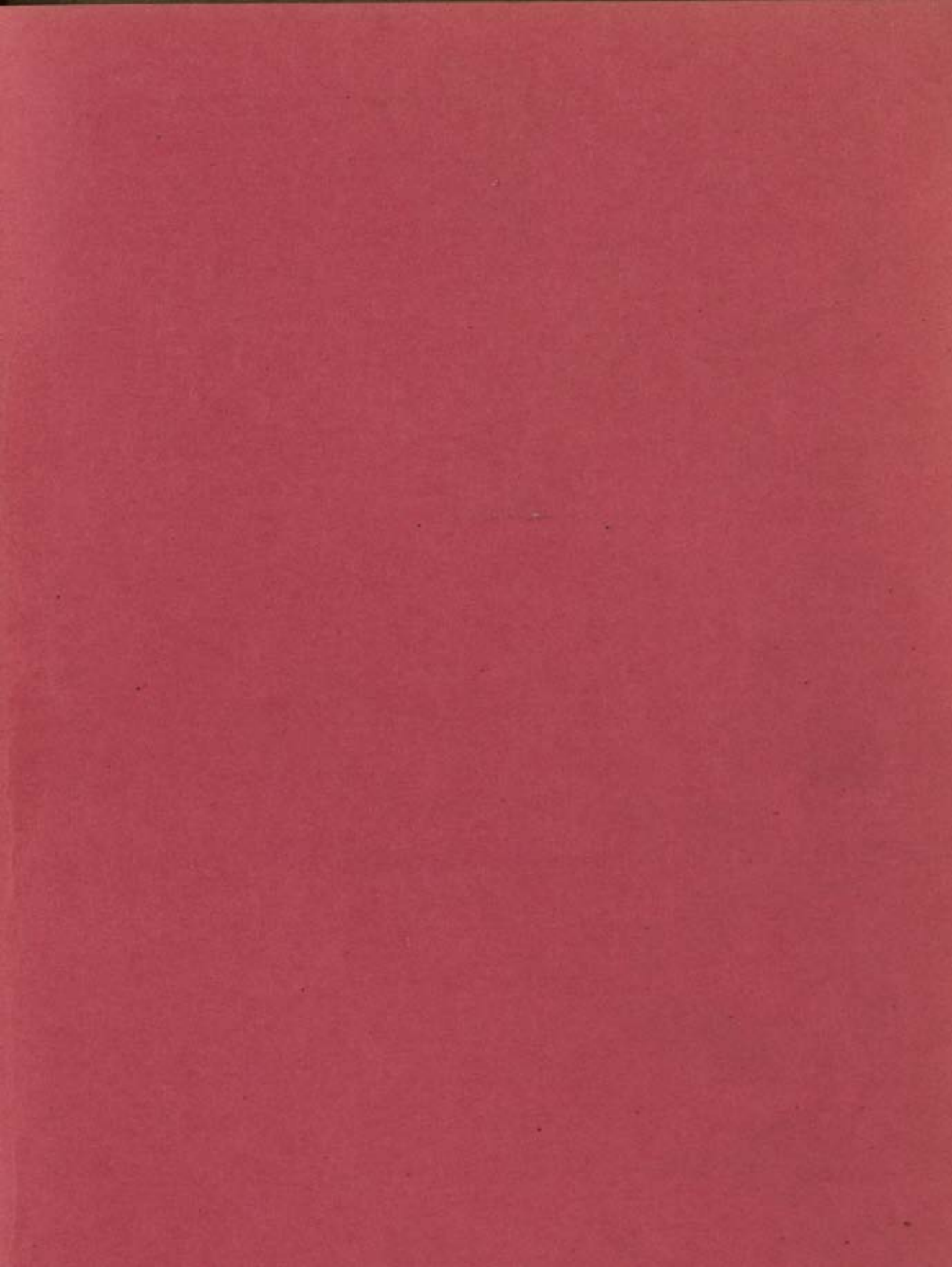
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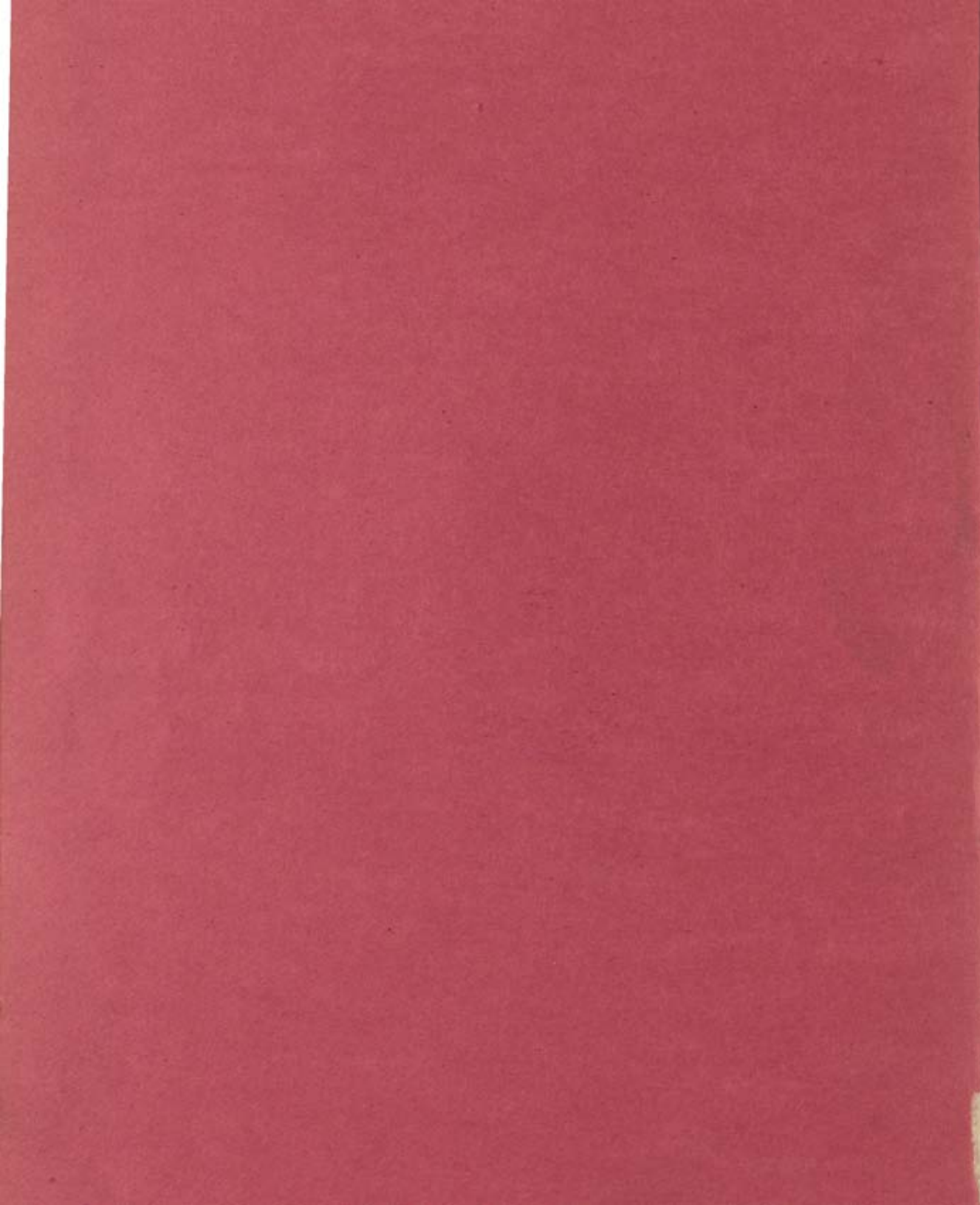
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# KAMA-CHUMBANA

THE LOVE-KISS IN THE EAST AND THE WEST

47359

RUSTAM J. MEHTA



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# I

## INTRODUCTION

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The kiss has been defined by Dr. Hugo C. Beigel as "a caress given with the lips." It may vary from a casual touch of the mouth to an intense means of arousing desire. No wonder the poets of ancient Greece called it the "Key to Paradise, the blossom of love."

Speaking in general terms, the kiss is perhaps one of the most intimate forms of contact. It may be said to mark the first step of the love-play and all its ultimate physical aspects. It may strengthen desire, for the sense of touch embodied in the lip-kiss plays a more important part than any of the other senses.

Though among Europeans and Americans, the kiss on the lips has come to be a very essential and necessary part in the whole process of love-making, kissing is by no means a universal practice as we shall see later. Yet, in the West at least, it has become the accepted method for the expression of growing love, and in its absence we may assume that love does not exist. Further, it may increase the desire for other more intimate forms of affection and may pave the way slowly but surely to the final aim of love. The initial kiss, especially in the married woman, may awaken "the first discharge of a purely physical sexual sensation, the first crisis of voluptuous pleasure." (Iwan Bloch.)

Dr. Iwan Bloch further states : "It is a true saying that a woman who permits a man to kiss her will ultimately grant him complete possession." This may not be quite correct today when the kiss is treated rather casually in the West; when kisses range from a mere gesture of friend-



liness, to the popular "good-night" kiss of young people. According to Bloch, "By the majority of sensitive women the kiss is valued just as highly as the last favour." But this statement seems rather far-fetched to us in these days when a woman will freely offer her lips to a man without having the slightest inclination to proceed any further with him.

Kissing in its present form is rare among the primitive and the less civilised races, but seems to be fully established, and almost instinctive, in the higher societies. Strangely enough, investigations by Dr. Kinsey and others among American men and women also proved that the kiss was more common as a measure of love among the cultured and among those of the higher social strata. It is definitely practised to a smaller degree among the lower classes. The Kinsey Report concludes that most college students will have kissed hundreds of girls without having had any other relations with them; on the other hand, among the lower-social levels, the men may have had physical relations with many women and yet may have kissed but rarely.

Touch has been called "the mother of the senses," and it is this sense of touch that is most powerfully stimulated during the lip-kiss. On the tactile basis, it is perhaps a very specialised form of contact. It has been maintained that, in its simplest form, the kiss is nothing more than a mere pressing together of the lips of the male and the female, or the lips of one against some other part of the body, bringing into play the active and passive senses of touch, those tactile sensations that originate when touching something and on being touched.

This sense of touch, in a very elementary form of "kissing," is exemplified by the antennal play of certain insects, the billing of birds and the nuzzling and licking noticed in higher forms of animal life like the dog and the bear. Speaking of the cooing and billing of birds reminds one of Charles Buxton's rather amusing lines:

"You would think, if our lips were made of horn and stuck out a foot or two from our faces, kisses at any rate would be done for. Not

## INTRODUCTION

so. No creatures kiss each other so much as the birds."

According to Dr. Eustace Chesser, kissing as known to us today is not a fundamental requirement of man. Its evolution and development has been slow so far as its place in the gamut of love is concerned. According to him, animals do not kiss. This is contradicted by E. J. Kempf, who affirms that simians do kiss. During the sexual act the female will often smack her lips noisily and turn the head round to bring her lips in contact with those of the male. The latter will also smack his lips during the act, making the female respond by pushing forward her lips to meet those of the male. (*Psychoanalytical Review*, Vol. 4, 1917.)

"... the male and female elephants will demonstrate their mutual regard by certain physical signs. In suitable periods of repose between the business of eating or working they will indulge in innocent dalliance, much as young human couples in spring enjoy mild flirtations during their luncheon break in the local park. The elephants will fondle one another with their trunks, stand face to face and pinch each other gently with their mouths, or butt each other playfully in the ribs." (Richard Carrington, *Elephants*.)

And, again, "... two prospective mates do caress each other with their sensitive trunks and sometimes knot them together." (Georges Blond, *The Elephants*.)

Kissing also activates the senses of taste and smell. During the act of kissing there is bound to be an intake of breath, however slight it may be. It is this that brings in the sense of smell allied to that of touch. When the tongue is also brought into play as in the case of a "deep kiss"—as we shall see later—together with the lips, the sense of taste also is apt to play a rather important part in the sensations produced and the feelings roused. "As regards the sense of taste, the most important is through kissing," writes Dr. A. P. Pillay. "The love-kiss utilizes the lips and the tongue of both the partners and these are



pressed against each other, bitten or sucked." (*The Art of Love and Sane Sex Living.*)

Ernest Crawley goes a step further in his belief that in the kiss we see a physiological and psychological interaction of two primeval impulses, love and hunger. Whether that be so or not, the kiss is certainly an ideal form of expression of affection or love, as the mucous membranes of the lips are one of the most important and most easily accessible of the body's erogenous zones.

Yet, many authorities feel that the belief that the tactile sensations and feelings aroused by a meeting of lips, by mouth contacts, are primarily of an erotic nature, has been over-rated. The connection is certainly there, they agree, but of an extremely tenuous nature. On the other hand, it is maintained by others that the various forms of non-erotic kisses, mentioned later in this book, have a sexual basis or origin. According to some, from the kiss of the mother and the child evolved the sexual kiss; and there are certainly good grounds for this belief, as advocated by Havelock Ellis and others, who further maintain that there are marked sexual overtones in the pleasures experienced by a mother while suckling her child.

It has been shown later that the lip-kiss as known to us and so common in the West, is unknown or despised in many parts of the world, especially among primitive peoples. To them, the Hindu proverb that "a moist kiss is better than a hasty coitus" is either unintelligible or at least obnoxious.

Kissing may consist of a chaste and gentle pressing together of lovers' lips, and range to kisses given with force and great pressure. Lastly, there comes the "deep kiss," the "French kiss," or "Maraichinage" as it is called by Dr. Van de Velde, who describes it best as a kiss "in which the couple, sometimes for hours, mutually explore and caress the inside of each other's mouths with their tongues as profoundly as possible..." It is a well-known fact that the inside of the mouth, lined as it is with mucous membrane, is a very sensitive area and the mutual ex-

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ploration and caressing with the tongue may lead to a powerful stimulus of a very satisfying nature.

That the sense of smell also plays some part, however subordinate, in the kiss, especially the nose-kiss of primitive races, is certain. It has been pointed out that the arm-pits and genital regions of human beings, both male and female, produce secretions that may promote sexual desire through olfactory channels. It must be further noted that the specific sexual qualities of these secretions do not appear until puberty, when alone their power as a sexual stimulant becomes of some importance, as in childhood physical love for the opposite sex is generally absent. In the opinion of Dr. Kinsey, odours have a "direct effect upon the nervous system, and thus start the physiological changes which constitute sexual response."

"Even in civilised human beings, whose olfactory sense has to a considerable extent regressed, there is demonstrable an anatomical and physiological connection between the nose and the genital organs, the excitability of the reproductive organs being in both sexes accompanied by changes in the activity of the nasal mucous membrane," writes Dr. Curt Thesing. "Perhaps this accounts for the fact that among many savages (whose olfactory sense is much keener than ours), but also among certain highly civilised races, the kiss, which is one of the most important contractive demonstrations on the part of Europeans, is replaced by the practice of rubbing noses." (*Genealogy of Love.*)

The emanation of a specific odour during the rutting season is well marked in many animals and especially in the musk-deer, bats, the musk-rat, horses, foxes, dogs, cats, and many others.

Whatever the origin and history of the kiss, it cannot be denied that at least among higher civilisations, it has become an universal expression of affection and love, both sexual and non-sexual, filial and parental. In spite of the fact that lip contacts are unknown, or at least rare, among primitive races, it must be admitted that they are almost instinctive in the advanced societies of the world. The line of evolution seems clear.



#### KAMA-CHUMBANA

Kissing was almost unknown in ancient Egypt; it was fairly widely practised in Assyria and early Greece, mainly as a token of humility or reverence, and fully developed in India soon after the time of the Aryan penetration.

As Sir Charles Bell has said, "The lips are of all the features the most susceptible of action, and the most direct index of the feelings." It has also been said that "for the expression of all other emotions, by words or signs, one pair of lips suffices. Love alone requires for its expression two pairs of lips." Love should not merely be implied, but it should be expressed—in kisses, embraces, and loving caresses.

Let no one minimise the importance of the kiss in the whole gamut of love, for when love speaks through the language of the lover's kiss,

" . . . . the voice of all the gods

Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony."

—*Shakespeare*

## 2

# ORIGIN OF THE KISS

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Many different theories have been put forward to explain the origin of the kiss. Some make one think, though quite a few have no substance in them. Truthfully speaking, very little is actually known as to the origin of the kiss, and all that may be said is mere conjecture.

Is the impulse to kiss innate in human nature? Havelock Ellis believed that the kiss of love is an evolutionary development from the instinctive maternal kiss, a type of kiss practised among primitive societies among whom the love-kiss is either unknown or abhorrent.

Or perhaps the origin of kissing lies much lower down in the ladder of evolution and derives from the habit of biting manifested by our animal ancestors during the height of passion and the culmination of the sex act. This may be especially true of the love-bite, dealt with later, and may have evolved from our semi-anthropoid stage of evolution when it may have been necessary for the male to fasten on to his mate by teeth and jaws during the actual sex act. In that case, however, it is surprising that as Dr. Van de Velde has pointed out, among the civilised male of today the love-bite is not too frequent, and as a matter of fact is rather more popular with the female sex during congress than with the male.

It has even been maintained that the kiss is an outcome of pre-historic sadism. That it has been sublimated and evolved through the different stages of biting, amorous or otherwise.

Bain has called touch the alpha, and the sex-embrace the omega, of love. "Touch is the mother of the senses," says Surgeon Rear-



Admiral C. M. Beadnell. He believes that the different kinds of kisses we know today, the lip-kiss of the Westerners and Indians, the deep or tongue kiss, and even the love-bite, are specialised varieties of the "touch kiss of affection." The sense of touch is most highly developed where the mucous membranes of the body meet the outer skin, and the mouth is one such zone. "The rapture of the kiss is to be sought in terms of the functioning of a highly specialized and erotogenic touch-zone." He further points out that probably it is due to the sensitivity of the mouth-zone that monkeys and even human babies have the habit of putting whatever they may have in their hands into their mouths. A cat licks her kittens as a gesture of affection, and so will many a primitive mother lick her child with love. It is further believed that our ancestors — those who came before *Homo sapiens* — may have partially digested and warmed the food in their mouths before transferring it into the mouth of the young one, as is found among certain animals and birds. In this connection may be mentioned the description given by David Attenborough of the making of cassava wine, the cassiri of the Akawaio of British Guinea. "Its main constituent is boiled grated cassava, but added to it is sweet potato and cassava bread which has been assiduously chewed by the women of the village. This addition of spittle is supposed to aid in the fermentation of the drink." (*Zoo Quest to Guiana.*)

It is quite likely that the kiss as we know it originated in some pleasurable function or custom in the dim past, as even now it arouses affection or love, both in the giver of the kiss and its recipient.

However, it is almost certain that the kiss is a late-comer in mankind's ways of expressing love. It is hardly ever mentioned by the very early Greek poets, and there is no word for it in all the Celtic languages. Apparently, the Celtic races practised the kiss much later than other European peoples.

It is believed by some authorities that the kiss of the tactile variety originated somewhere in Asia Minor where the lowly kissed the king and where the kiss of love was known, if we are to take Solomon's





1

Forcible kiss on the upper lip, the left hand supporting the head. Dirk Bogarde and Olivia de Havilland in MGM's "LIBEL."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)



2

The kiss on the upper lip. George Sanders and Barbara Shelley in MGM's "VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)



3

The light kiss in the face-to-face posture. George Nader and Esther Williams in Universal-International's "UN GUARDED MOMENT."

(By courtesy of Universal - International Films)





4

The kiss of affection.  
Rock Hudson and  
Cornell Borchers in  
Universal-International's "NEVER SAY  
GOODBYE."

*(By courtesy of  
Universal-Inter-  
national Films)*

## ORIGIN OF THE KISS

*Song of Songs* in the Bible literally :

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."

And again :

"How fair and pleasant you are, O loved one, delectable maiden ! You are stately as a palm tree, and your breasts are like its clusters. I say I will climb the palm tree, and lay hold of its branches. Oh, may your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and the scent of your breath like apples, and your kisses like the best wine that goes down smoothly, gliding over lips and teeth." (Quoted by William Graham Cole in *Sex and Love in the Bible*.)

Perhaps one of the earliest references in the West to the kiss as a token of love is that connected with Leybard, the famous saint of Tours, who in the sixth century gave his fiancée "a ring, a kiss and a pair of shoes" — the ring symbolic of the tie between them, the kiss as a seal of affection, and the shoe as a token of his complete submission to her. This story may not be true, but it is a nice flight of fancy !

But surely the kiss as a seal of affection must be older than the sixth century. True, we have no proof, but is it too much to suppose that that great lover of antiquity, Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, was adept in the art of kissing ?

Here is a rather amusing theory regarding the origin of the kiss that need not be taken too seriously. According to Pliny, the Roman Marcus Cato believed that husbands started the practice of kissing their wives in order to find out if they had been drinking wine !

The famous Irish essayist of the seventeenth century, Sir Richard Steele, has declared regarding the kiss that "nature was its author and it began with the first courtship." But this rather fanciful theory is easily disproved when we remember the fact that millions of persons on this earth, and especially those belonging to the primitive races, do not express their physical love and inclinations through the medium of any oral contact. One cannot escape the conclusion that kissing as is known to us is of fairly recent origin and may have first evolved in India in



Vedic times to spread eventually to the West.

We have already mentioned that the kiss may have originated from maternal love and instincts. Lombroso, the famous Italian criminologist, believed that the kiss as exchanged between lovers is a derivation of the maternal kiss. It is true that the maternal kiss is sometimes known among those who do not practise the other form. The Japanese, before they came in contact with the West, did not practise kissing between men and women, though mothers might kiss their infants. The same fact has been observed by many travellers among a large number of African cultures. They have repeatedly reported that among the less civilised African tribes, there would be no form of kissing between lovers or husbands and wives, though mothers were sometimes seen to caress their babies.

Yet, all said and done, it is difficult to derive sexual love from maternal instincts.

Whatever the origin of the kiss, it is now quite definite that the kiss as a token of love and affection—the lip-kiss—evolved rather late in the history of mankind. As we have said elsewhere, the Polynesians do not kiss in our sense of the word, but merely press their noses together. Nor does the Laplander or the Eskimo who also welcomes another by pressing his nose against that of the person he wishes to greet.

The form of greeting common among certain islanders near the Philippines used to be even more elaborate. They would take the other person's hand or foot and rub it over their face. In the Philippines the natives would bend low, raise one foot with the knee bent, or may place the hand on the cheek of the friend in a gesture of salutation.

Is it possible that the kiss developed from the nose-rubbing or nose-kiss mentioned above and dealt with more fully in a later chapter? Is it likely that the nose-kiss itself is a derivation of the instinctive sniffing of animals? In support of the above, it has been pointed out that certain tribes do not say "kiss me" but "smell me." In this case, the kiss is more a form of inhalation of the other person's body odour. If so it



#### ORIGIN OF THE KISS

would admittedly be a derivation from the sense of smell, unlike the Western or Indian kiss which certainly seems to be based on the sense of touch primarily, and on smell and taste only secondarily.

Even if the lip-kiss as a token of love evolved rather late it must have its origins in the dim past for as Havelock Ellis says in his *Psychology of Sex* :

"Manifestations resembling the kiss are found among various animals lower than man. Snails caress antennae. Birds use their bills for a kind of caress. The dog who 'licks' his master is really kissing him."

It is quite possible that the primitive female of the Stone Age kissed her child with affection. According to Lombroso, kissing is a Caucasian habit and Orientals are strangers to it! He believed that its origin lies undoubtedly in maternal caresses. Out of them grew the kiss of reverence, affection, and love. Apparently, Lombroso was not familiar with ancient Sanskrit classics like those of Vatsyayana, Kalyanamalla, and others; had he been, he would not have made the statement that the kiss is unknown to Orientals. This is an error made by many other Western writers as well.

The kiss is "as old as creation, and yet as young and fresh as ever. It pre-existed, still exists, and always will exist. Depend upon it, Eve learned it in Paradise, and was taught its beauties, virtues, and varieties by an angel, there is something so transcendent in it." (Haliburton.)

### 3

## HISTORY OF THE KISS

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According to Ernest Crawley, kissing was firmly established in Greece and Assyria, and in India by the time of the Aryans, though it seems to have been unknown in ancient Egypt. On the other hand, if we are to believe N. d'Enjoy, the kiss developed out of the love-bite, and according to him, among the ancient Egyptians, the word translated by "to kiss" meant "to eat." If that be so, kissing could not have been completely unknown in Egypt.

The kiss is mentioned frequently in the Bible, so it must be a very ancient form of salutation, an expression of reverence or homage, if not exactly a gesture of affection: Esau embraced Jacob, he "fell on his neck and kissed him." (Gen., xxxiii, 4.) The disciples from Ephesus "fell on Paul's neck and kissed him." (Acts, xx, 37.)

But in spite of these references, it is quite certain that kissing on the lips between the different sexes was taboo among the ancient Hebrews, though perhaps the forehead, cheeks, beard, hands and feet were allowed to be kissed as a mark of reverence or adoration.

In his *The Mystic Rose*, Ernest Crawley has given an excellent resume of the social history of the practice of kissing. He concludes that the habit of kissing, in some way or other, originated in very olden times and perhaps received its chief developmental impulse in Western culture—and in Indian culture, we may add.

In olden times, the Greeks and the Romans did kiss though perhaps not too frequently. Parents certainly kissed their children and lovers



## HISTORY OF THE KISS

kissed each other; it was also common between friends of the same or opposite sex. Under the early Empire, the practice of kissing must have been very common and thus it also became the fashion to perfume the mouth. In Rome, kissing developed into a symbol of civilised manners and became a mode of salutation between relations and close friends. The same was true of the ancient Hebrews except that later on kissing between friends of different sexes was not encouraged, though a male was allowed to kiss his female cousin. Yet there was more use of the kiss in ritual in Semitic countries than among the Greeks and the Romans among whom kissing on the mouth or the eyes as a form of dignified greeting was current.

According to H. Licht, kissing out of love was prevalent in ancient Greece, though this has been denied by others. He says that lips pressed against lips, the young lovers would remain for a long time in a tender embrace, while the tongues fondled each other (the "deep kiss"). Kisses were showered on the bosom of the girl, and were often followed by love-bites on the shoulders and the chest.

In his famous book, *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece*, Licht has quoted references to the art of kissing from ancient Greek literature :

" . . . . He took the wreath from her head and put it on himself, after he had kissed it : but she put on his dress, which he had laid aside and which she had been stroking and kissing."

And in a love letter written by the girl Phoenicium to her lover :

"New as to our loves, manners, customs, jest, sport, talk, sweet kissing, close embracing of love mates, soft little kisses with tender lips, gentle pressure of projecting breasts. . ."

Again, in Agathias, *Anthology of Palatine*, we find :

" . . . dragging myself along on my stomach I crept gently beneath the girths of the bed and gradually raised myself . . . and pressing closer to the girl's bosom . . . and feeding my lips upon the softness of her mouth. My spoils were a beautiful mouth and I had a kiss by pledge of the nightly contest."



There are many passages in Greek literature that go to show that the kiss on the shoulders or the breast was a popular way of showing tenderness and love. But perhaps the "handle kiss" enjoyed the greatest popularity. "Take me by the ears and give me the handle-kiss," we read in one of the Comedies. Mostly given to children, the child was taken hold of by both ears and kissed. while the child in return had to hold the ears of the giver of the kiss with his or her own tiny hands!

Homosexuality was rife in ancient Greece and apparently kissing among boys prevailed. Hence the advice of Socrates to Xenophon warning him against it: "Do not beautiful boys with their kisses inspire you with something fearful. . . . Therefore, my dear Xenophon, I advise you, when you see a beautiful boy, to take flight as rapidly as possible."

The classical lover's lip-kiss is well attested to in ancient Greek and Roman literature and art. References to it are found in the writings of Anacreon, Catullus, Ovid, Theocritus, and many others. Some of the wall-paintings discovered in Pompeii, buried for centuries under the volcanic ash of Mount Vesuvius, show lovers kissing. Compare the beautiful temple sculptures at Konarak, Khajuraho and Bhubanesvar in our own country.

"Prostration is an instinctive expression of fear, awe, or adoration," writes Ernest Crawley; "to clasp the knees, as was the custom with Greek suppliants, is equally instinctive. The act of kissing the feet is a refinement of these. . . . The feudalistic aspect of the little court held by the old Roman *patronus* is illustrated by Martial's epigram, which complains of the burdensome civility of the kisses of clients." (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 7.)

References to the kiss are also to be found in the memoirs of Pomponius who allowed to be kissed on the lips by deserving nobles of a high rank, on his hands by nobles less worthy than the former, and on the feet only by the least worthy.

Ovid, the famous Roman poet of the Augustan Age, and the author of the celebrated *Ars Amatoria*, also has emphasised the importance of

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the kiss. Unfortunately, he advises the cultivation of the art of kissing as a means to an end—the final subjugation of the woman. He goes so far as to advise, if the woman will not kiss of her own free will, to forcibly snatch kisses from her lips. "If she will not grant them, still take them ungranted":

"The wise, sweet nothing breathed, with kisses match 'em,  
Won't she give kisses? Then ungiven snatch 'em.  
A first she'll fight perhaps — 'Brute! Cad!' she'll bleat.  
Yet fights to lose and means but to be beat.

\* \* \*

"He who has kisses ta'en and takes no more,  
Deserves to forfeit all he got before.  
Those kisses scored, 'twas but a point off game."

But note that he does advise that the kisses should not be rudely snatched; never should the soft lips be bruised; never should she be able to say that his kisses caused her pain:

"Only don't hurt soft lips by rapes too crude;  
Give her no chance to call your kissing crude."

The famous satirist Martial speaks of the custom of kissing among men in ancient Rome:

"Every neighbor, every hairy-faced farmer presses on you with a strongly scented kiss. Here the weaver assails you, there the fuller and the cobbler . . . there one with bleared eyes, and fellows whose mouths are defiled with all manner of abominations."

Was the love-bite known to the Romans? Writes Catullus:

"Whom wilt thou for thy lover choose?  
Whose will they call thee, false one, whose?  
Who will thy darted kisses sip,  
While thy keen love-bites sear his lip?"

It should not be conjectured that things were just the same in earlier Roman times, although perhaps Ovid did express the sentiments of his age. Actually, in ancient Rome, the kiss was more often a token



of reverence and homage, and from which perhaps derived such Christian customs, prevailing even today, as kissing the foot of the Pope, saintly relics, the hands of bishops, the ritual vestments, etc.

With the introduction of the kiss in Christian ritual, as described in the Chapter on "The Kiss in Religion," kissing became more popular during the Middle Ages and Continental and English women were allowed to kiss freely their male friends. Surprisingly enough, English women enjoyed more freedom in this respect than their Continental sisters. Desiderius Erasmus, the famous scholar and man of letters, born in Rotterdam, recorded in 1497 that he found on his visit to England that kissing was a widely practised custom. That a visitor to a house would kiss the host and hostess, all their children, even the dogs and cats, if they had any!

Wrote Erasmus:

"If you go to any place, you are received with a kiss by all; if you depart on a journey you are dismissed with a kiss; you return, kisses are exchanged; people come to visit you—a kiss is the first thing; they leave you—you kiss them all around. Do they meet you anywhere? — kisses in abundance. Lastly, wherever you move, there is nothing but kisses—and if you had once tasted them, how soft they are! how fragrant! On my honour you would not wish to reside here for ten years only, but for life!"

A hundred years later, the puritanical John Bunyan deplored this state of affairs, this "common salutation of women," who did salute with a kiss all the most handsome and ignored the ill-favoured.

After the Renaissance, this free exchange of kisses became limited to those between lovers, husbands and wives, and parents and children of course. The kissing of friends of different sexes fell definitely out of favour, as had happened in France almost a century earlier. As a matter of fact, according to medieval French law, if a married woman kissed a man other than her husband, or allowed herself to be kissed, she was considered guilty of adultery. This was also true of the Welsh of





5

The hesitant kiss.  
Rock Hudson and  
Jane Wyman in Uni-  
versal - International's  
"MAGNIFICENT  
OBSESSION."

*(By courtesy of  
Universal - Inter-  
national Films)*



6

The kiss on the cheek in the lying down posture. George Peppard and Leslie Caron in MGM's "THE SUBTERRANEANS."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)



The lip-kiss with the girl on the man's lap and one arm round his shoulders. Tony Curtis and Gloria de Haven in Universal-International's "SO THIS IS PARIS."

*(By courtesy of Universal-International Films)*





8

The hesitant kiss of young lovers, with the hands lightly on the shoulders, and in the one-behind-the-other posture. George Hamilton and Natalie Wood in MGM's "ALL THE FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)



9

The lip-kiss in the face-to-face posture, with one arm round the other's shoulders. Dirk Bogarde and Olivia de Havilland in MGM's "LIBEL."

*(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)*





10

The neck - kiss in a sitting - and - standing posture. Anthony Quinn and Lana Turner in Universal-International's "PORTRAIT IN BLACK."

*(By courtesy of Universal - International Films)*



The kiss on the neck  
in a lying down pos-  
ture. George Peppard  
and Leslie Caron in  
MGM's "THE SUB-  
TERRANEANS."

*(By courtesy of  
Metro-Goldwyn-  
Mayer)*





12

The shoulder-kiss.  
Robert Mitchum and  
Eleanor Parker in  
MGM's "HOME  
FROM THE HILL."

(By courtesy of  
*Metro-Goldwyn-  
Mayer*)

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old among whom the husband had the right to drive away his wife if she allowed herself to be kissed by any other man.

But it was not always so in France. William Fielding points out that according to a fifteenth century historian, a young lady socialite of the time would rise from her seat even during a divine service to kiss her cavalier on the lips if he happened to enter the church. Montaigne has remarked that in his country it was the privilege of any Jack with three lackeys to kiss almost any woman he chose. We are further told that King Louis XII of France achieved popularity by kissing every woman in Normandy under the pretence of thus granting his Royal Benediction! When dancing reached the height of popularity in France, almost every dance ended with a kiss. And let us not forget that in Russia of olden days, a kiss from the Czar was considered a very high form of royal recognition. Under the old regime, the salutation on Easter day was a kiss, and everybody kissed everyone else.

Slowly, the promiscuous and mixed kissing in England fell into disuse. The change became so marked that it made Congreve write at the end of the seventeenth century: "You think you're in the Country, where great lubberly Brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet.... 'Tis not the fashion here...." (*The way of the World*, Act III, Scene XV.)

In modern times, the kiss is still most common among lovers and married couples, between members of the same family and women friends. In England and many parts of Europe, men no longer kiss one another. But kissing among men out of reverence or on bestowal of honour still exists to a small extent in France and certain other Continental countries. Sovereigns and high dignitaries may kiss each other on both cheeks on ceremonial occasions, and during the first World War, French Generals bestowed similar formal kisses when presenting the Croix de Guerre to soldiers for exceptional bravery on the field of battle. When Emperor William of Germany met the Czar at St. Petersburg in 1888, they embraced and kissed each other. When Nelson lay dying on



his flagship, the *Victory*, he called to his faithful friend with the words, "Kiss me, Hardy"—the last words he uttered. Sir Walter Scott when dying took leave of his friend Lockhart in the same manner. As such the custom of kissing between men has little more significance than the usual handshake of the more conventional peoples of the Western world today.

In certain European countries, the menial classes used to kiss the hands of their masters or mistresses. A trace of this still remains in the Spanish language, in the formal close of a letter like our "Your obedient servant" — "Beso a Vd. las manos" ("I kiss your worship's hand").

There came a drastic change of thought and feeling in Victorian England. The prudery of the times seems to have prevailed and affected the custom of the kiss as much as other modes of behaviour. The middle class men of the time looked with favour on virgins and inexperienced young girls, presumably unknissed, as making the most desirable brides, and the United States of America clearly followed in the footsteps of the British thought of the day.

The Victorian attitude is best expressed by B. Cartland in his *Love, Life and Sex*. He writes :

"In the middle of the last century my grandfather is reported to have said, 'if I kiss a girl I might as well go to bed with her.' That was the Victorian attitude. Today things have swung to the other extreme."

And again,

"Years ago the consummation of love-making was described to me as 'the perfect end to a long, long kiss.' It is a beautiful description but it does make one think that women should be a little more discriminating about whom they kiss and how."

Referring to the swing in the other direction today, B. Cartland feels that the good-night kiss has now come to be meaningless, something as common as a mere handshake; yet it still holds a certain sexual significance. This is the result of the fact that "the chance acquaintance of the dance or party who is refused a kiss will soon spread it around

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that the girl is a cold and uninteresting person," and no girl desires that. Hence her seemingly willing acquiescence to the good-night kiss even when coming from a mere chance acquaintance introduced at a party with the casualness so common among the young today.

If kissing was just a bit too prevalent in England and France during the Middle Ages, the conditions were very different among the Italians. The kiss was taken so seriously that if a man kissed a girl in public, it became almost obligatory on his part to marry her. This was very unfortunate at a time when Italian streets were the haunts of males on the prowl, and many young but impoverished men forced marriage on girls from rich families by trickery resulting in public kisses.

If the streets of Italy were unsafe, so were even the churches, and young women attended church always covered by a long veil and accompanied by well armed family retainers, or male companions.

History records that in the sixteenth century, Pierto Lando, who afterwards became the Doge at Padua, ordered his own son to be beheaded for kissing in public a girl with whom he was in love.

Among many cultures, the European and Indian type of lip-kiss is looked on with abhorrence. Before they came in contact with Western customs, the Chinese considered kissing as definitely immoral. It is said that mothers of what used to be French Indo-China would frighten their children by threatening them with "a white man's kiss"!

A study of past Japanese literature shows no mention of the kiss as we know it. The orthodox Japanese has no word for kissing nor is the kiss openly portrayed in painting or sculpture. Even girls do not as a rule kiss one another, and mothers only rarely kiss their children. "Kisses and embraces are simply unknown in Japan as tokens of affection, if we except the solitary fact that Japanese mothers, like mothers all over the world, lip and hug their little ones betimes," writes Lafcadio Hearn. "After babyhood there is no more hugging or kisses; such actions except in the case of infants are held to be immodest." (*Out of the East.*)

It is rather surprising that as Fernando Henriques points out, "A



people with an elaborate civilisation, they yet have no place in their scheme of sexual play for the kiss." This supports the view held by many that the sexual kiss of Europe, America, and India is not the result of a higher form of culture or civilisation.

The Ainu maidens of Japan are ignorant of the kiss, according to A. H. Savage Landor. He writes: "Loving and biting went together with her. She could not do the one without the other. As we sat on a stone in the twilight she began by gently biting my fingers without hurting me, as affectionate dogs do their masters. She then bit my arm, then my shoulder, and she had worked herself up into passion, she put her arm around my neck and bit my cheeks. It was undoubtedly a curious way of making love....Kissing, apparently was an unknown art to her." (*Alone with the Hairy Ainu.*)

Commenting on the fact that the Chinese, Japanese, and the Annamese do not kiss in our sense of the word, Dr. Theo. Van de Velde points out that among them, even if there be no contact of lips, there is a nasal contact, a deliberate and delicate inhalation somewhat akin to the "nose kiss" of primitive races. Actually, the "olfactory" or "nose kiss" is well exemplified among the orthodox sections of the Chinese. d'Enjoy, who had made a careful study of it, has suggested that it actually consists of three stages. The nose is touched to the cheek of the beloved, followed by a deep inspiration and lowering of the eyelids; the last stage is a slight smacking of the lips, though the mouth never touches the cheek.

Dr. Van de Velde has drawn attention to a Toyko newspaper report that appeared in September 1924, expressive of the difference between Western and Japanese feelings regarding the kiss—how the lip-to-lip kiss is considered indecent among them. According to the report, at an exhibition of European works of art, there was a reproduction of Rodin's famous sculptural piece, "Le Baiser" (The Kiss). This particular piece, though of the highest artistic merit, was concealed behind a bamboo screen to hide it from the public gaze.

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Have things changed in Japan? We read in *The Practice of Sex* by Drs A. Willy, A. Costler, R. Fisher and others, that as the marriage day approaches, the girls from good families are presented by their parents with a fine volume of pictures in full colour, known as "The Woman's University," "Guide Book to Womanhood," etc. It contains reproductions of erotic paintings portraying in the fullest detail all aspects of sex life, "Kissing on the mouth, the breasts, the genitals, takes up the first pictures." And these authors further state that if a Japanese girl permits a man to kiss her, it means that she is ready to consent to even greater intimacies. According to the Japanese, the degree of intimacy inherent in a kiss is no less than in intercourse itself. Therefore everything is done to prevent kissing and embracing. "Japanese visitors to Europe are always shocked by the first sight of a man and woman kissing each other good-bye."

Even till recent times, the lip-kiss was considered indecent in Finland, though mixed bathing in the nude was allowed in common steam baths. On the other hand, in neighbouring Norway of old, it was the custom for the hostess to tuck up her male guest in bed for the night, and then give him a resounding "good-night" kiss on the lips!

As mentioned elsewhere in this book, according to Surgeon Rear-Admiral C. M. Beadnell, the primitive "nose kiss" originated in India in Vedic times and it was only later in the Mahabharata period that the lip-kiss became popular. From India, the kiss in its many forms may have spread westwards to Iran, Assyria, Syria, Greece, Italy, and Europe, and eastwards to China where it was looked on with abhorrence. For some unexplained reason, however, the kiss took no roots in Egypt, although it may not have been unknown there.

To recapitulate, during the Middle Ages, the kiss of homage was not only popular but held in high esteem. In Europe upto the eighteenth century, only equals kissed one another on the cheeks. Inferiors kissed their lords and masters on the hand, foot, or the clothes. Similarly, in Assyria and Palestine, the lowly kissed the hem of the garments of their



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superiors, but equals kissed on the cheek. In the Christian faith, the kissing of the feet was an act of humility, as for example, the kissing by Christ of his disciples' feet. The same may be true of the custom of kissing the foot of the Pope, although it has been maintained that this may have originated in pagan worship. It is said that the first Duke of Normandy, Rolf the Granger, when he received the fief of Normandy from the French King Charles, kissed the latter's foot as he stood, by lifting it to his lips.

Perhaps it is this idea of kissing in homage that may have led to the custom of prostration and kissing of the earth before the exalted, so common among Orientals of the past, and in some Oriental countries even today. Arabs used to, and perhaps even now in some parts, salute their high and mighty by kissing the earth between their hands, just as the Persians once prostrated themselves before their superiors.

The history of the kiss is long and tortuous and very little is really known about it except that in courtship it has become a token and seal of love. It has become also a part of the Christian marriage ceremonial, and has evolved into a symbol of hope and love and tenderness—of courtship and marriage.

## 4

### THE KISS IN THE WEST

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"A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth and love,  
And beauty, all concentrating like rays  
Into one focus kindled from above;  
Such kisses as belong to early days,  
Where heart and soul and sense in concert move,  
And the blood's lava, and the pulse ablaze,  
Each kiss a heart-quake—for a kiss's strength,  
I think it must be reckoned by its length."

Thus wrote Lord Byron, convinced that as an expression of true love, the kiss must carry the fire and sincerity of the lover's overwhelming passion. And perhaps these lines reflect to a certain extent the sentiment regarding kissing prevalent in the West today.

Yet, it must be admitted that in the present age, kissing is taken rather lightly by men and women in the West. Today, it is often only slightly more important than a handshake, especially among the young. But there was a time when it was considered distinctly improper for a girl to allow herself to be kissed by a man till he had asked her to marry him—a proposal that she had accepted. However, even today the casual good-night kiss passing between a boy and a girl is very different from the kiss given as a pledge and one that a boy and girl may exchange when really in love. It is so true that the kiss is "the seal with which lovers plight their troth—a symbol of the union of souls," as the physiologist Burdach has said.



In the West, kissing as an end in itself before marriage, combined with more intimate touches, has come to be popularly known as "petting," and is freely indulged in by the young of both sexes. In America especially, petting in automobiles, in secluded places, and at parties, has become a common sight, and seems to be tolerated by all, though frowned upon by the elders and most writers on love and marriage as conducive to marital unhappiness.

However, petting is not such a modern form of mild love as may be supposed. It is nothing but a modernised version of the "mooning" or "spooning" of the last century, when kissing in the horse-buggies of those days was fairly common. Lovers have since time immemorial hugged and kissed down the country lanes, and made Robert Burns, the famous Scottish poet, to sing :

"Gin a body meet a body,  
Coming through the rye;  
Gin a body kiss a body,  
Need a body cry?"

Actually, the literature of the West is full of the theme of kissing. Popular songs like the above abound in references to it—kisses of all sorts and every kind, sweet kisses, passionate kisses, kisses under the soft light of the moon, by candle light and fire light—kisses at all times and under all conditions.

Western writers cannot conceive of love without the rapture of the kiss. "The kiss sets off the reverberating, electrifying spark of voluptuous sensation that permeates to the innermost parts of our being," says William Fielding. "It is part and parcel of the love-play that leads normally to the realization of the sexual acme. However innocent a lover's kiss may appear, it is never wholly asexual, and constitutes a stage between desire and possession.

"Surfaced by a tissue of full-blooded, sensitive membranes, moistened by the honey of salivary sweetness, shaped at their loveliest into a curvature that has been likened to Cupid's Bow, the lips seem



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The nose-kiss! Rod Taylor and Yvette Mimieux in "THE TIME MACHINE," a George-Pal Production (An MGM Release).

*(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)*





14

The hesitant kiss on the cheek of young lovers. Robert Wagner and Natalie Wood in MGM's "ALL THE FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS."

*(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)*



Passionate kiss with a close embrace, the arms round each other's shoulders. Rock Hudson and Doris Day in "PILLOW TALK," an Arwin Production (A Universal-International Release).

*(By courtesy of Universal-International Films)*





16

Passionate kiss with the arms round the other's neck. John Saxon and Sandra Dee in Universal-International's "PORTRAIT IN BLACK."

(By courtesy of Universal-Inter-

## THE KISS IN THE WEST

especially contrived by nature for their role of allurements into the labyrinths of love." (*Strange Customs of Courtship and Marriage.*)

Like the ancient Indian writers on sex, the Western authorities also feel that the kiss—the tactile kiss given with the lips—plays a very important part in the refinement of the art of love, and as a prelude to its more intimate aspects. This has been fully emphasised by Dr. Van de Velde in his famous work, *Ideal Marriage*.

Among the Western races, the "second stage of act in love's drama" generally begins with a kiss. The erotic kiss, as Dr. Van de Velde calls it, is always mutual, given and taken by both partners with a certain amount of pressure and mutual pleasure. "This is its signature and its significance."

The erotic kiss has naturally many subtle degrees of variation. It may range from a mere stroking of the lips with hardly any contact, and run the whole gamut to the intensity of the "deep kiss," the "soul kiss," "French kiss," or "Maraichinage," as it has been severally called. Here the couple will explore and caress the inside of each other's mouths with their tongues as deeply as possible and for a long time. The learned doctor suggests that the word "Maraichinage" comes from the Maraichins of the district of Pays de Mont in the Vendee (Brittany)—hence also the "French Kiss" — where this form of kissing was widely practised by young unmarried men and women. Marcel Baudouin, a local mayor and doctor, is supposed to have recommended it as "a real antidote against depopulation," in an essay submitted by Debove to the Parisian Academie de Medecine. However, Dr. Van de Velde feels that a more learned term for Maraichinage would be "Cataglottis" or "Kataglossism."

The use of the tongue is of paramount importance in the "deep kiss" and all its variations. And, says Dr. Van de Velde, the "deep" or "tongue" kiss is most effective when the tip of the lover's tongue gently caresses the tongue and lips of his beloved.

"Changing course and with mounting excitement, the partners may choose to begin mouth exploration introduced by the affectionate,



clinging, and sustained kiss, called euphemistically some fifty years ago 'the soul kiss'," write Jerome and Julia Rainer in their book *Sexual Pleasure in Marriage*. "Of all erotic foreplay, kissing seems to have become most popular in Western countries and one for which partners are usually well prepared by courtship. In other cultures lovers have made of mouth exploration a minor source of pleasure but in the West it appears to be employed with more extensive variations that stimulate, reflexively, the genital regions of both male and female. Among the inexperienced, it may even trigger orgasm.

"The lips, tongue, and surfaces of the mouth's interior are all involved. There may be prelude stages and climactic stages, as in the total pattern of foreplay. For the mouth and the tongue approximate in sensitivity the vulva and the penis, and in a sense foreshadow the sensations of insertion, with its vaginal clasp and its intermingling of secretions.

"Spouses may eschew or abbreviate other phases of fore-pleasure, but it is seldom that they omit this form of lip and lingual fusion that presages final fusion. In the popular arts there are increasingly bold revelations of this intimate practice.... In the marital embrace, the opening of the lips, their sidewise and circular motions by both partners, the deepening inhalations of each other's breath, the intermingling of saliva, initiate some of the keenest erotic sensations of foreplay.

"The husband's lips will enter the parted lips of his wife, and his tongue stopped by the gate of her closed teeth, will seek entrance. She will part them and admit his tongue to the mouth's interior; both tongues will meet, darting in rapid flicks. Then the mouth will open widely and clasp the tongue of the other, first the tip, and finally the most that can be contained in a single clasp. The latter might be termed the climatic phase of mouth-play and the spouses may take turns in assuming the clasping role."

In common with many other authorities, Dr. Van de Velde also agrees that the senses of touch, taste, and smell, are blended in the

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kiss. The last is of some importance as every individual has a certain personal aura, especially round the mouth and emanating with the breath. Naturally, involving a contact of the sensitive mucous surfaces of the lips, the sense of touch is most important. Taste "is a factor which most people fail definitely to perceive, and there are only very few connoisseurs who can discriminate and describe the individual flavour of their beloved's kisses." That the ancient Romans laid special stress on this is evident from the *Song of Solomon* in which the kisses of Emperor Nero's second wife, Poppaea, are described as having the taste of wild berries.

"What is a kiss?" asks Giacomo Casanova, the notorious lover of old. "Is it not a fervent attempt to absorb, to breathe in, a portion of the being whom we love?"

Dr. Van de Velde maintains that there are definite differences in the kisses of different individuals or in the same individual at different times though these differences may not always be noticeable to the sense of taste. This is probably due to the natural moisture of the salivary glands of the mouth, and that is why, he advises, a kiss between lovers should not only be of long duration, but *moist* so that an imperceptible though definite exchange of saliva takes place. Let the lover's kisses be drunk, not merely sipped. As sang the poet,

"And I will drink thy kisses, as oft, of yore."

The sense of taste also takes an important part in kissing by suction whether given or received. Suction applied to the kiss invariably gives pleasure to lovers and forms a good variation with the other types of kisses, for surely the sense of taste runs in a minor key through the universal song of love.

Poets have written about "tasting" the lips of their beloved. In all kisses in which the tongue plays a part, whether given upon the lips or the body, taste must play a definite even though a subordinate role.

According to Dr. Bernhard Bauer, the sense of smell also plays an important role in the eroticising effect of the kiss—both the body odour



and the mouth odour. These are specific to each individual. Listen to the description of the beautiful maiden Draupadi in the immortal *Mahabharata*: "Her eyes were black, and large as lotus leaves, her complexion was dark, and her locks were blue and curly. Her nails were fair, and her bosom was deep.... *Her body emitted a fragrance as that of a blue lotus, perceivable from a distance of full two miles.*" (Pratap Chundur Roy's Translation.)

The ancient Indian writers on the art of love have dealt extensively with body odour—the ideas about its effects were widely developed in the early centuries of our era.

The *Mahabharata* mentions how King Shantanu was attracted by a peculiar fragrance coming from quite a long distance. When he traced the smell to its source he found that it emanated from the body of the beautiful maiden Dasheyi.

In the same epic we have the story of Matsyagandha, the mother of its author, Maharshi Vyasa. As a fisherman's maiden daughter she came in contact with the sage Parashara from whom she asked for a boon that would make her body fragrant and desirable. The sage favoured her with a physical union and as a result she became sweet smelling for the rest of her life. People renamed her Gandhavati and Yojana Gandha, the latter name meaning that her sweet smell went ahead as far as a Yojana (over three miles) so that people would know in advance about her coming.

Draupadi, the main heroine of the *Mahabharata* epic, as mentioned above, is described as possessed of a lotus smell from her very birth. This smell could be enjoyed from as far as a Krosha (two miles).

Shakuntala, the heroine of Kalidasa's world-famous play of the same name, is described by one of his commentators as a lotus smelling type.

Parvati, the consort of Lord Siva, is characterised by Kalidasa in his famous epic *Kumarasambhava* as breathing out the perfume of lotuses.

In another play by Kalidasa, the *Vikramorvasheeya*, the hero King Pururava asks of the bees whether they have enjoyed the sweet smell

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of the breath of his beloved Urvashi.

The *Shreemad Bhagavata* is an important Purana wherein we find many references to lotus-smelling maidens. A thousand maidens having the lotus fragrance impressed Devahuti to such an extent that her own daughters to whom she gave birth at a later stage began to have the sweet scent. Uddhava, the great devotee of Lord Krishna, came in contact with nymphs having the lotus smell. Indra is described as having been pursued by a fish-smelling old hag.

Shri Harsha, in his famous epic *Naishadha*, describes Damayanti, the heroine, as lotus-smelling.

Kokkoka, the ancient Indian writer on the art of love, the author of the *Rati Rahasya* of the 12th century, mentions different body smells of women according to their standard physical types. Thus, whereas a Padmini is lotus-smelling, a Chitrini is honey-smelling. A Shankhini has an acid smell, while the Hastini gives out a smell like the ichor of an elephant. A Mrigi and the Yadava are also described as having specific body smells.

For the sake of comparison it will be interesting to mention Western ideas regarding body odour. According to European authorities different individuals and different tribes have different odours. The Monbuttu women exude a strong cheese-like smell, the smell of Australian aborigines is like phosphorous, the Chinese give out a stale mouldy odour, and the smell of many Europeans is pungent and strong. At least so they say! The strength of the body odour depends upon the depth of body colour and the extent of the growth of hair on the body, they further believe. The deeper the pigmentation, the stronger the smell. Western writers have classified body odours according to the different parts of the body which exude them. Thus the skin, the scalp, the breath, the arm-pits, the feet, the perineal region, give out different kinds of odour. There may be some truth in this.

No wonder women will try to improve their own body smell and try to eliminate all unpleasant odours. The ancients anointed their bodies



with perfumed oils, and the woman of today subtly dabs herself with expensive perfumes. A further proof of this trend to improve the body odour, both in men and women, is the large annual sale in European and American countries of cosmetics, perfumes, hair oils, scented powders and face creams, mouth washes, dentifrices, skin tonics and lotions.

Writes Dr. Bauer: "We might almost go so far as to say that the intelligence, refinement, and subtlety, of a woman are indicated by the means she uses for disguising her body odour. The more discreet and subtle the means, the more intelligent the woman; more intelligent because she shows that she appreciates the eroticising influence of odour on the male." (*Woman*.)

The following anecdotes go to support the belief in the eroticising effect of body odour, sometimes even a slightly unpleasant one.

"Henry III (of France) was seized with a passionate lifelong love for the Princess Marie of Cleves, when, on the day of her betrothal with the Prince of Conde (18th August 1572), he happened to dry his face with a kerchief which the Princess, heated by the dance, had removed from her person and left in the ante-room. Henry IV would perhaps never have experienced his great passion for the lovely Gabrielle had he not, at a ball, happened to wipe his forehead with her handkerchief immediately after she had used it." (Ploss-Bartels, *Das Weib*.)

In the Philippines, engaged lovers will often exchange their under-clothing when about to be separated for a duration, to keep and smell.

Fazil-Bey gives good advice in his classic *Zenan-Nameh* :

"Let us pass to the question of perfumes; I do not decry them upon a woman, but rather find them agreeable and quite in place. Let her have no fear of using them on her body and sometimes, on her clothing, for their effect is delightful and even intoxicating. None, among all the artifices of the toilet, is so suitable to excite love and to increase desire, but they must not be abused; there must be no imitation of those Arab women who keep pure musk about them until it

## THE KISS IN THE WEST

produces giddiness and migraine."

In *The Perfumed Garden*, Sheikh Nefzoui (or Nefzawi) stresses the importance of the sense of smell as an erotic stimulant: "Scents have the power of exciting sexual desires in both men and women."

\*                     \*                     \*

Balzac wrote, "If a man cannot afford distinct and different pleasures to the woman he has made his wife, on two successive nights—he has married too soon." To which Dr. Van de Velde adds, "And the husband has indeed married too soon, if he does not know how kisses may vary between those who love each other—or cannot make use of this knowledge, in practice."

The lip-to-lip kiss is not the only kind practised in the love-play. Kisses may be given on other parts of the body, especially the more erogenous zones. The erogenous sensitivity increases from outwards towards the centre, from the forehead downwards to the cheeks and the throat; from the tips of the fingers upwards towards the arms and the arm-pits; from the toes of the feet, along the insteps and ankles, the calves and thighs, towards the body centre.

Shakespeare perhaps was referring to such kisses when he wrote:

"Within the circuit of this ivory pale,  
I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer;  
Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale;  
Graze on my lips; and if those hills be dry  
Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie."

—*Venus and Adonis*

Not only may the kisses be showered on the many erogenous zones of the body, apart from the mouth, but the intensity of the kisses may be widely varied, from lightly touching contacts to kisses accompanied by buccal suction and delicate nips with the teeth. For few caressing contacts are as capable of such subtle intonations as the kiss, provocative of many degrees of excitation, from the first pleasurable moment to the culmination of love.



The pleasure multiplies when the kisses, starting from the lips, travel to other parts of the body and especially the erogenous zones. Thus a gentle kiss may develop into the prelude to the ultimate in love through the whole gamut of love-play.

"Kisses on all parts of the body of a woman are recognised as normal in sexual caressings by most writers on the subject," says O. A. Wall. "In one of the letters submitted as evidence in the celebrated Caillaux trial in Paris (1814), Caillaux wrote to Mrs. Caillaux: 'With a thousand million kisses on all parts of your adorable body, I am yours, etc.' " (*Sex and Sex Worship*.)

The one who is kissed on the body receives his or her pleasurable sensations only through the sense of touch; but the active partner, the one who kisses, receives his impressions through the three principal senses of touch, smell, and taste, as elaborated above.

Dr. Van de Velde recognises four stages in the whole sequence of sexual relations: the prelude, the love-play, the actual connection, and the postlude. And kissing constitutes a major item in the second stage, the love-play. From limited and furtive touches, hand-clasps and such other contacts, the love-play becomes dominant and of importance as soon as lips meet lips for the first time.

As mentioned before, according to many well-known authorities, three senses take part in the kiss—the senses of touch, smell, and taste. The first plays a very dominant role in the usual lip-to-lip or lip-body kiss. Though there may be types of asexual kisses, like those of a mother on her baby's face, kisses of affection rather than passion, this distinction can hardly be drawn in the case of a lover's kisses. There is no Platonic form of kissing, and as Dr. Bernhard Bauer has said, "a loving kiss can never be chaste; the two things are incompatible. To love Platonically and to kiss is as absurd as a hunger-striker who would carry out his purpose by becoming a vegetarian." (*Woman and Love*.) Truly, to love Platonically and to indulge in kissing as a sign of such love, is a form of self-deception, or as Mantegazza has cynically said, "Platonic love

## THE KISS IN THE WEST

is the squaring of the circle"—an impossibility.

The same idea of the sexuality of the lover's kiss is also expressed by Ovid: "He who has snatched a kiss and knows not how to steal the rest deserves to forfeit his advantage and all that has been granted him." No wonder, the kiss has been called an intermediate step between desire and its fulfilment.

\*                     \*                     \*

The American attitude towards kissing has perhaps been best summarised by Dr. Albert Ellis in his book *The Folklore of Sex*, published in England under the title of *Sex Beliefs and Customs*. He makes the wise observation:

".... to kiss or not to kiss is one of the most important questions of the twentieth century: a question which is normally answered no and acted yes." He is of course referring to pre-marital kissing.

According to *Woman's Life* magazine, the Kansas Public Health Service published "Rules for Kissing," starting with: "If you must practise the art of kissing, do it on the quiet and do not tempt others." In other words, in America, conservative mores frown on a too liberal use of the kiss, but allow kissing in practice, thinly covering it with the mantle of "romance."

Writes Dr. Albert Ellis:

"Two items in *True Story* magazine nicely sum up the traditional American twentieth-century attitude toward kissing. In the first item, a story, the sixteen-year-old heroine, Tibby, whose 'mouth seemed afire with a new strange burning' when her young love introduced her to the osculatory art, gets some advice from her mother: 'If a boy tries to kiss you—or—or if you want to let him kiss you, then—then you'd better stop seeing that boy right away. Do you understand, Tibby?' Not wanting to understand Tibby rushes to her favourite schoolteacher, Miss Reynolds, and asks: 'If a girl is sixteen and she wants a boy to kiss her, I mean wants it a lot, how bad is that?' 'It isn't bad at all,' Miss Reynolds reassures her. 'It's perfectly natural, if she likes the boy.'"



According to Dr. Ellis, American literature of the cheaper sort is full of extravagant and often completely fallacious statements like:

The kiss of the person who really loves you is very different from that of the one who doesn't.

The kiss of the one who merely pretends to be in love with you, but is really not, is "flat, tasteless, and easily recognised for its (non-) true worth."

The kiss of one's true love produces feelings that kisses from no one else will. It spreads a divine warmth, electrifies with a thrill.

There is no pleasure in kissing someone you do not love sincerely and whole-heartedly.

Kissing by the one who is destined to be your true love, however short the acquaintanceship, will produce a feeling that will convince you that you were born for each other.

Mutual kissing between two really in love with each other will cement that love for good.

Sexual folk-lore of the America of today !

Dr. Ellis concludes that the American people are kiss-starved, kiss-scared, and kiss-crazy. A very apt summing-up, considering the great popularity of kissing in that country, especially among the young of all social orders. In America at least, "while kissing is just the thing not to do, not to do it is just simply awful."

Writes Clement Wood, presumably with the tongue in his cheek:

"The state of kissing in the United States today is generally well known: it is a far cry from our liberality to the old Blue Laws of Connecticut, with a heavy penalty for kissing one's wife on Sundays or fast days, and, for all we know, boiling in oil for kissing the wife of another. It is still unlawful to kiss a girl against her will: the courts awarding damages to the girl varying from \$750 in Pennsylvania and \$2,500 in New York, to \$1.15 in New Jersey. And while there are Anti-Osculation Leagues, with stern medical warnings of the danger of kissing, the custom shows no evidence of diminution." (*Art of Kissing.*)

## THE KISS IN THE WEST

In *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* (popularly known as the Kinsey Report), the authors, Drs. Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde Martin, give a few facts and figures about American couples. According to them, 99.6 per cent of American men and women belonging to the upper social levels kiss not only during intimate relationships, but also during the day as a show of affection. On the other hand, kissing, although it does occur, is very limited among the lower social strata.

The Kinsey Report is also rather interesting regarding the frequency of indulgence in the "deep kiss" and the social strata in which it is most freely practised. Among American males, deep kissing is the chief method of arousing desire and passion among about 87 per cent of the better educated classes and those belonging to the higher social levels. This may extend from tongue contacts to a prolonged and thorough exploration of the insides of each others's mouths. On the other hand, American men from the lower social strata, as a rule, considered the practice of deep kissing as dirty and unhygienic, though they showed little aversion to drinking and eating from common utensils.

Investigations by Dr. Kinsey and the others of American females provide some interesting statistics. About 70 per cent of the girls and women investigated in this monumental study and who had no premarital experience of sex, admitted to deep kissing as a part of petting. But among women who had pre-marital sexual experience, the incidence of deep kissing rose to 83-90 per cent. Significant differences were also noticed in relation to age groups. Women born before 1900 and who had pre-marital experience had also little knowledge of the deep kiss, only 44 per cent admitting to it. From this it has been concluded that the incidence of deep kissing is increasing in America as a part of the technique of sex.

It must be remembered that mouth and tongue contacts often accompany other sexual activities among reptiles, birds and mammals. Among the vertebrates at least, mouth contacts seem to be definitely of



an erotic nature. In that sense, those of the upper cultural strata seem to have reverted to nature. This is strange as one would rather expect those from a more uninhibited milieu in life to be the more primitive in behaviour, and especially in love-play—perhaps the earliest form of human behaviour and certainly the most important from the point of view of the preservation and continuation of the species.

No book of this nature could be considered complete without an expression of the thoughts and beliefs of Havelock Ellis, the author of that classic, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, and many other authoritative works.

"We have in the lips a highly sensitive frontier region between skin and mucous membrane, in many respects analogous to the vulvo-vaginal orifice, and reinforceable, moreover, by the active movements of the still more highly sensitive tongue," he writes. "Close and prolonged contact of these regions, therefore, under conditions favourable to tumescence sets up a powerful current of nervous stimulation. After those contacts in which the sexual regions themselves take a direct part, there is no such channel for directing nervous force into the sexual sphere as the kiss. This is specially marked for the so-called columbine kiss, widely practised by lovers in classic as well as in modern times. A form of it called *marachinage* is generally practised in a part of France, though some theologians would regard it as a mortal sin.... In man, the kiss has two elements, one tactile and the other olfactory, but the tactile element is at once the most ancient and in Europe the most predominant part of the kiss; the olfactory kiss, however, or smell-kiss, has a much wider distribution over the world than the European (or Mediterranean) tactile kiss; it reaches its most complete development among peoples of Mongolian race." (*Psychology of Sex*.)

Havelock Ellis believed that apart from the sexual regions, which take a direct part in the culmination of love, the most important channel "for directing the nervous force into the sexual sphere" is the kiss. The lips form a secondary sexual focus, especially in the tactile connotation.

## THE KISS IN THE WEST

It must always be borne in mind that the kiss of lovers is very different from the chaste kiss which parents might give their children or friends exchange on parting or reunion after a long absence. The kisses of lovers, involving a mutual contact of highly sensitive areas, have an eroticising as well as an erotic effect. The first kiss may awaken love and mark the beginning of sexual desire.

"There is no woman who does not really desire, and who would not willingly permit, these kisses. Even the woman who has been chaste all her life; even the woman who, in the very climax of passion, still pursues that phantom, modesty; even such women will easily be brought to the point where they cannot forgo the pleasures of these 'unchaste, unaesthetic' kisses, when once they have been fully and completely eroticised by means of them." (Dr. Bernhard Bauer, *Woman*.)

It has been rightly said that the kiss lies on the boundary line. As Bolsche would say, it is a transitional form of love, standing between fusion-love and distance-love. It diminishes and at last destroys the distance between two persons, till their love for each other fuses together in one pulsing whole. The kiss thus represents a longing for complete fusion-love, for ultimate surrender.

The love-kiss, the kiss exchanged between lovers and husbands and wives, is mutual at least in the longing to give and to receive, if not always in its expression. Therein lies its chief attribute. Rich in its variations, it ranges in form, duration, and passion—from the brushing kiss of the nervous suitor to the lover's enduring kiss, long of duration and intense in character, in which the tongue will sooner or later play an important part.

To conclude, in the West today, the kiss has come to be a lover's bond, a symbol of affection between the members of a family, mother and child, and to a certain extent, among friends of the same sex. Kissing does not usually survive adolescence between brothers or father and son. The formal use of the kiss, derived from the court life of Renaissance times, as for example, kissing a lady's hand in token of



#### KAMA-CHUMBANA

respect, is no longer popular except to a limited extent in France where a token kiss on the cheek may be given by great personages during the conference of honours or awards. But, a clear distinction must always be drawn between the kiss of honour, of affection, and the kiss of true love.

Writes Haliburton :

"There is the kiss of welcome and of parting; the long, lingering, loving, present one; the stolen, or the mutual one; the kiss of love, of joy, and of sorrow; the seal of promise and receipt of fulfilment."

## 5

### THE LOVE-BITE

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When a kiss is intensified under the force of sensual excitement, it turns into the "Love-bite." It may be thought that this forceful mode of kissing would be common only among persons of a low social strata, but that is not true. Even among highly civilised and cultured persons, it is not uncommon, accompanied by a more passionate form of love.

It is said that among the Southern Slavs, the love-bite is fairly common. It is perhaps allied to sadistic instincts on the part of the one giving it, and masochistic tendencies on the part of the recipient. That such kisses are not unwelcome is evidenced by the remark of the heroine of Kleist's *Penthesilea*: "*Kusse* (kissing) rhymes with *Bisse*, and one who loves with the whole heart may easily confound the two." *Bisse* means "biting" in German.

The world famous authority, Dr. Van de Velde, extols the use of the love-bite as a prelude to love. He details two contributory factors to the kiss. The first is suction which imposes a special tactile sensation and which is always present in some degree or other when lovers kiss. It may be experienced by only one party or the other, or by both simultaneously. The second contributing factor is imparted to the kiss by the subtle and gentle use of the teeth. As the celebrated specialist believes, the teeth not only form a support for the lips, but in the more passionate types of kisses, often take a very active part. In this respect, he is in accordance with the writers of ancient India on the art and technique of love.



## KAMA-CHUMBANA

Quoting the *Kama Sutra*, Havelock Ellis writes :

"If she is very exalted, and if in the exaltation of her passionate transports she begins a sort of combat, then she takes her lover by the hair, draws his head to hers, kisses his lower lip and then in her delirium bites him all over his body, shutting her eyes."

Both the partners feel a sharp erotic pleasure in the delicate, gentle or sharp, but never really painful, nips that the man and woman give to each other during the love-play, especially when such nips are imparted in rapid succession and in different places. Dr. Van de Velde maintains that there is nothing abnormal in this and that many ardent lovers are apt to use the teeth gently to give tiny bites or nips, when at the height of passion.

"If only Pain brings ecstasy

—Thanks, thanks to Nature, yet again,

For having given to me such Pain."

—Matilda Wesendonck

However, Dr. Van de Velde emphasises over and over again that the normalcy extends only to gentle, almost painless nips; once blood is drawn, we are in the field of sexual perversity. There is a border line which one may not cross, the first inclinations or signs of cruelty or pain.

The love-bite generally takes place at the height of passion—often during the prelude to love. The bite is rarely ever given on the lips, but on different parts of the body, the shoulders, the collar bone, the neck, bosom, or the sides.

Dr. Van de Velde has made a rather interesting statement that women are relatively fonder of love-bites than are men; that it is not unusual for passionate women to leave marks of sexual union on their lovers' shoulders in the form of small slanting oval outlines of teeth marks.

"And on his shoulder she beheld three scars,

And kissed them once again : wounds of no wars,



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The shoulder-kiss, with the arms round the waist, in the one-behind-the-other posture. David Niven and Doris Day in MGM's "PLEASE DON'T EAT THE DAISIES."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-





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The kiss on the side of the lips, with the hands on the shoulders. Robert Wagner and Eleanor Parker in MGM's "HOME FROM THE HILL."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)



Pressure-kiss with crossed lips, the head supported by the other's hand. Aldo Ray and Elizabeth Sellars in "THE DAY THEY ROBBED THE BANK OF ENGLAND," a Summit Film Production (An MGM Release). (By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)





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Adolescent love: the first kiss. Robert Wagner and Natalie Wood in MGM's "ALL THE FINE YOUNG CANNIBAL."

(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-M

## THE LOVE-BITE

No foeman's brand had smitten—

Three little scars, her own white teeth had bitten."

—Heine, *On Hastings' Battlefield*

Discussing the origin of the kiss in his *The Sexual Life of Our Time* (1919), Iwan Bloch puts forward the belief that the primitive sadism inherent in the love-bite has probably originated from the lower animals, who often bite each other during the sex act. Earlier authors like Nohnike and others have inferred from such passionate accompaniments to the kiss that the latter may have a close relationship with the nutritive impulse. After all, do we not have such common expressions as "I could eat you up for love"?

Vatsyayana and the other ancient Indian writers who came after him have devoted a certain amount of space to the love-bite in their classical works on sex and love.

Vatsyayana advised that the places proper for biting or for teeth marks are the same as those fit for kissing, with the exception of the upper lip, the tongue and the eyes. In other words, the places most suitable are the forehead, the lower lip, the neck, the cheeks, the bosom, the arms and the navel.

Eight different varieties of teeth marks have been described in the *Kama Sutra* by the above mentioned writer :

1. *Gudhaka* or "Hidden teeth mark": this is the one which leaves no red mark and is only given at the height of passion.

2. *Uchchhunaka* or "Swollen bite": this is name of the bite when the above teeth mark (*Gudhaka*) is made with force.

3. *Bindu* or "Spot bite": this is made by making the marks with two teeth on a small area of the body. On the neck it is the size of a mudga grain; on the lower lip, of the size of a sesame seed.

4. *Pravalamani* or the "Coral Chain": this mark results when the "swollen bite" is given on the cheeks using the upper teeth and the lower lip. Immediately after, the mark may be red, but leaves no scar.

5. *Manimala* or the "Jewel Chain": this is the name given to the





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Adolescent love: the first kiss. Robert Wagner and Natalie Wood in MGM's "ALL THE FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS."

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mark when the *Pravalamani* is made one after the other.

6. *Bindumala* or "Line of Points": this mark is said to have been made when the teeth marks appear in a row, having been made by all the teeth. The "Jewel Chain," and the "Coral Chain" are only to be made on the neck, the sides, and the joints of the thighs, but the latter may also be given on the forehead and the thighs. Vatsyayana says that on the thigh the *Bindumala* should appear like a row of sesame seeds.

7. *Khandabhraka* or the "Broken Cloud": here small, medium, and large teeth marks are made together to form a circle on the chest. "This is an easy process, and considered to lend great beauty to that part of the body. The woman may use this method on the man's arm-pits...."

8. *Varahacharvitaka* or the "Biting of the Boar": here the teeth marks are placed close together and are reddish in colour. This is given on the chest only.

Vatsyayana advises that the last two varieties of teeth marks should be practised only by those whose passion is intense. He further writes that if these love-bites are frequently given, the teeth should be in good condition. "Good teeth should have the qualities of being even, shiny, of an attractive colouring, proportionate, close-set and pointed." And again:

"Teeth are considered rather defective when they are blunt, protruding from the gums, hard, uneven, sticky, broad, and loosely set" as not only are such teeth ugly to look at but they are also unsuitable for making teeth marks and giving love-bites.

In Sutras 37-39 of Chapter V, Part II, of the *Kama Sutra*, Vatsyayana advises :

"If a man persists in making nail and teeth marks in spite of the woman's resistance and beyond her endurance, she should retaliate by making similar marks on the man with double the force. (When the woman can endure them, she should respond in a similar way — not with greater force, since there is no quarrel.)

"In retaliating, the women should pretend to be angry in a quarrel

## THE LOVE-BITE

and make the following marks :

1. A 'coral chain' in answer to the 'spot bite,'
2. A 'broken cloud' in return for the 'coral chain,'
3. A 'biting of the boar' in return for the 'broken cloud,'
4. A 'swollen bite' in return for the 'hidden bite,'
5. A 'spot bite' in answer to the 'swollen bite,'
6. A 'line of points' for the 'swollen bite,'

and so on. (The 'broken cloud' and the 'biting of the boar' get deep into the skin, while the rest are superficial marks.)" (Tr. S. C. Upadhyaya).

In the Kama Shastra literature of ancient and medieval India, the love-bite is termed "Dantachchedya." It has been dealt with, with slight variations, by most of the writers and commentators apart from Vatsyayana.

According to Vatsyayana the love-bite heightens the lovers' passion and incites them to more love-actions if the bite is effected while the female is engaged in beautifying herself or doing her hair. On such an occasion the female is generally unwilling to allow indulgence in love-bites. But if the male forces these bites on her she should immediately pay him back in double measure by imprinting suitable love-bites on him. She should catch hold of the male's hair and stamp a love-bite on his mouth after a strong kiss. She should embrace his neck and make a circle of bite marks on his chest. If the man tries in the course of the day not to allow these bite-marks to be seen by any one else, she should ridicule him by making faces at him! Occasional resorts to these playful antics will keep the love-life of lovers ever green — even for a hundred years, assures Vatsyayana.

Kokkoka, Vatsyayana, and Padmashri have described eight types of love-bites. In addition, Kokkoka prescribes certain tests for good teeth and mentions parts of the body suitable for the love-bite.

Jyotirisha suggests that the woman should make a lasting mark of the boar-bite type on the body of her beloved so that it would preserve the memory of their love. He also insists that the women's love-bite should be accompanied by a hissing sound or a sigh or a grimace



on her part.

Kalyanamalla of the *Anangaranga* fame, suggests, while agreeing about details of the love-bite with other authors, that the boar-bite should be resorted to by the male just before he leaves home for a fairly long period so that his lady-love may remember their love-life through this bite mark throughout the period of his absence and heighten her longing for his speedy reunion.

## 6

# 1001 WAYS OF KISSING

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In this chapter fifty ways of kissing and forty-five modes of holding the partner during the duration of the kiss have been described. An attempt has next been made to summarise the ten different kinds of kisses, the twenty-six places suitable for them, and the holds classified according to the nineteen basic positions of the two partners.

With the help of these three summaries, based on Indian and Western sources, a little ingenuity, discretion, and the use of the simple principles of permutations and combinations — taking as the basis the modes and kinds of kissing and the holds described — literally hundreds of different kisses and holds can be evolved.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* explains the meaning of the common idiomatic phrase "a thousand and one" as "myriad" or "numberless," as for example, "a thousand and one small worries of life." In this figurative sense as well as literally speaking, the heading of this chapter is true and correct in every sense.

The right selection from the following to meet the occasion is left to the wise discretion of the reader.

Balzac has said :

"To grasp quickly the subtleties of pleasure, to develop them, to give them a new style and an original expression, therein lies a husband's genius.

"Between two beings who are not in love, this genius is lasciviousness, but caresses over which love resides are never lascivious."



And this applies to kisses and kissing as to any other of the more intimate forms of love.

The different types of kisses mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit literature on sex and love have been dealt with in the following Chapter on "The Hindu Art of Kissing."

*In what follows, no attempt has been made to separately classify the kisses and holds suitable for unwed lovers and those possible only between married couples. The right choice is left to the wise discrimination of the reader.*

1. Simple lip-kisses given with moderate pressure.
2. Simple lip-kisses given with much greater pressure on the lips.
3. The "love-bite" dealt with in detail in Chapter 5.
4. The "deep kiss" or "tongue kiss" or "Maraichinage," described in Chapter 4 on "The Kiss in the West."
5. Kisses given on the eyes with very light pressure.
6. Kisses given on the throat. This is supposed to be especially pleasant to the female sex, when the recipient of the kiss.
7. The Long Kiss. Instead of the lips remaining in contact for a short period of time, the kiss is continued for a much longer duration by keeping the lips in contact with, if preferred, alternate light and heavy pressure.
8. The Corner Kiss. Kissing alternately the two corners of the mouth. This can be reciprocal.
9. The Pulsing Kiss. The lips and the nose are laid in contact with the girl's cheek and a gentle vibrating movement imparted to the cheek with the lips and the nose.
10. Showering of light kisses on the inside of the arm, progressing upwards from the wrist to the upper arm and the arm-pit. This is capable of generating a great deal of love.
11. The kiss on the cheek may be devotional in origin, but a good deal of pleasure can be derived, and imparted, to the other party, by showering light kisses on different parts of the face—

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excluding the lips — *in quick succession*. The speed is of great importance here.

12. A good variation is to give kisses on the lips of the partner, with one's own lips pouting.
13. The above can be varied slightly by pouting and puckering the lips and kissing the *pouting* lips of the partner.
14. The lobes of the ears are not normally very sensitive; but a very pleasurable feeling is invoked by lightly kissing the beloved's ear lobe or just underneath in the hollow. This is especially liked by men when the recipient of such kisses.
15. A variation of the above is to greedily suck the ear lobes instead of kissing them.
16. Kisses showered all over the chest or bosom, starting higher up and progressing downwards at different speeds. Some of the kisses may be long and others of a short duration. They are possible only between married couples, especially when the woman is the recipient of such kisses.
17. The insides of the thighs are especially responsive to kisses.
18. Many writers of romantic fiction have extolled kisses given on the beloved's shoulders. Men may not always enjoy such kisses, but like to give them.
19. A good preliminary to the stage of lip-kissing is to kiss the tips of the fingers, in fairly quick succession. Surprisingly enough, such kisses are very effective.
20. A common modification of the kiss is to suck the lips of the beloved gently instead of pressing on them with the lips.
21. A good variation of the above is to lightly suck the lower lip only.
22. Still another variation is to suck the upper lip only. This sucking of only one lip at a time has been mentioned by ancient Indian writers.
23. Variety can be introduced by sucking the upper and lower lips



- alternately. Care must be taken not to use any undue force. Gentleness can lie even in passion.
24. The Brushing Kiss. The lips are applied lightly on one side of the beloved's forehead, and then brushed softly across to the other side where a kiss is imprinted.
  25. The same type of brushing kiss can be given on the mouth. The lips are placed on one corner of the lips of the other person and then lightly brushed along to the opposite corner, where a light kiss may be given.
  26. Funny as it may look, a very light kiss on the tip of the nose is very welcome, both by the man and the girl. This may act as a prelude to the more intense forms of kissing.
  27. The man may pass the tip of his tongue along his beloved's lips, from left to right and then from right to left. This may be continued for some time. There is no reason why such kisses cannot be given by the girl also.
  28. The lips and the mouth may be enclosed with the teeth, taking care to see that no hurt is caused to the other.
  29. A gentle form of the above is to enclose the lips of the beloved with one's own lips, the teeth playing no part in this variation.
  30. A gentle meeting of the tips of the tongue can be very pleasurable. This is a milder form of the "tongue kiss" or "Maraichinage".
  31. The above may be followed by a mutual successive touching and withdrawing of the tongues.
  32. Suction applied when giving kisses invariably gives a lot of pleasure to lovers. Such kisses should be actively given and passively received. Sometimes one partner gives them, sometimes the other, and varied by both giving them simultaneously. In the case of married lovers, the suction is very effective when given by the husband on the other's bosom, and especially the

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nipples. Suction kisses may be varied with pressure kisses to achieve variety.

33. Many persons of both sexes are considerably sensitive to kisses, stroking and other tactile impressions in the limited area where the neck joins the shoulders, both front and back.
34. As to body kisses, in most men and women the whole back is highly sensitive to tactile impressions like the kiss, especially the lumbar region, towards the lower region of the spine, and all along the spinal column. The hips also are sensitive and form a mild erogenous zone. Such kisses are of course only possible between married lovers, as are kisses on the bosom.
35. Simultaneous kissing and skilful gentle stroking with the fingers of the erogenous zones, form a perfect combination and is highly desirable.
36. The kiss may be given just underneath the chin with the head of the other turned upwards.
37. The throat is considerably sensitive to erogenous influences and therefore a kiss in the hollow of the neck is often very welcome.
38. A variation of the simple lip-kiss is to kiss just above the centre of the upper lip and below the tip of the nose.
39. A variation of the above is to kiss just below the centre of the lower lip.
40. A quick "licking" kiss with the tip of the tongue inside the opening of the ear often has a greatly stimulating effect.
41. The Profile Kiss. A series of light kisses are given all along the profile of the face, beginning from the centre of the forehead, down the ridge of the nose, the centre of the mouth and lips, and ending with the point of the chin. This may be followed by a pressure kiss on the lips.
42. Kisses on the girl's chest are highly stimulating, but their intimate nature only make them possible between married couples



who are really in love with each other.

43. The nape — back of the neck — is an erogenous area in most men and women, and lightly brushing the lips up and down the nape can create a very pleasurable reaction.
44. A variation possible only between married couples is the Backbone Kiss, enjoyed by both. This consists of a series of light kisses along the whole backbone, beginning just underneath the neck and travelling downwards to the lowermost vertebrae of the spinal column.
45. A reverse variation of the above, where the man is the active participant, would be to shower light kisses in the front, beginning from just under the chin, down the throat, and downwards towards the narrowing area between the busts, to end at the navel or even lower down.
46. A brushing kiss on the eyebrows is often very welcome. The lips lightly brush across the brows.
47. A slight variation of the above is to suck the eyebrows alternately in turn, instead of kissing them.
48. Allowed to married lovers, kisses given on the areas where the thighs join the body are very stimulating and conducive to love. Men generally like to be the active participants in this kiss, the girl to receive them.
49. Also possible only between married couples, brushing kisses from the navel downwards to the meeting of the thighs with the body will give a lot of pleasure to those who are really in love. The lips should be made to lightly "brush" along the skin. No pressure is applied at any one point. Men especially like to give such kisses; women love to receive them.
50. To end on a very light note, let us borrow from the young. Like them let us kiss our own fingers and press them on our beloved's lips. In spite of lack of buccal contact, this simple gesture is capable of arousing a good deal of affectionate feeling.

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Kisses can vary from the chaste kiss of affection on the forehead or cheeks, to the deep, throbbing tongue-kisses of lovers; from mere light brushes of the lips to almost painful pressure, not only with the lips but the whole closed mouth; kisses lasting but a fraction of a second to many minutes at a time.

It must always be remembered that even the kiss of love, the kiss of lips upon lips between lovers, may be nothing more than a mere expression of their affection for each other, a reflection of the spiritual concord and harmony existing between them. The erogenous element does not dwell so much in the form of the kiss, but in the manner in which it is given, its duration, and the feeling and love with which it is expressed.

Kissing is an art in itself and has its own technique. One must know not only how to kiss, but also when and where. Remember that not only are the more passionate kinds of kisses alone capable of arousing love in the opposite partner. Often gentle buccal and lingual caresses can achieve the aim better. A soft contact of the tips of the tongues, a fleeting kiss on the lobe of the ear, will often arouse a cold woman to a very high degree of pleasure and excitement.

### TO SUMMARISE :

*Kisses may be —*

1. Light and gentle.
2. Given with moderate pressure.
3. Implanted with force and passion.
4. Great pressure applied not with the lips so much as with the whole almost closed mouth.
5. "Deep," with the tips of the tongues meeting.
6. "Deep," with the tongue caressing the inside of the other's mouth. This can be mutual alternately.
7. "Nipping," like the love-bite.
8. Sucking.
9. Brushing.



10. Given with the lips pouting.

*Kisses may be given on —*

1. The top of the head.
2. The forehead.
3. The temples.
4. The eyes.
5. The tip of the nose.
6. On the lips.
7. On the corners of the mouth.
8. On the chin.
9. On the cheeks.
10. On the throat.
11. On the back of the neck.
12. On the shoulders.
13. On the shoulder blades at the back where they meet.
14. Down the backbone.
15. In the hollow of the neck.
16. On the ears.
17. On the lobes of the ears.
18. In the hollows behind the ear lobes.
19. On the finger tips and the palms.
20. On the chest or bosom.
21. Along the inside surfaces of the arms.
22. Along the front and inside areas of the thighs.
23. On the hips.
24. On the navel, proceeding downwards along the centre line of the abdomen.
25. On the junction of the thighs with the body.
26. On the lowermost end of the backbone.

A knowledge of the different ways of holding the beloved while imparting kisses is as important as the ability to vary the kisses indefinitely. Here are a few suggestions, mostly based on ancient Indian art and

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literature, capable of many different combinations that with the diverse forms of kisses described above make a very large number of variations possible.

1. The man's arms are passed under the girl's as she is clasped tight to him, her own holding him at the sides. The body is tilted slightly backwards as the kiss is imprinted with some force.

2. The two partners to the kiss clasp each other round the waist, with the girl's body tilted slightly backwards as the kiss is imprinted.

3. Standing face to face, the girl places her two arms round her lover's neck, while he clasps her right round the waist.

4. The man encircles the legs of his beloved with his own while she holds him pressed to her with her arms round his waist or body.

5. The girl entwines her arms round her lover's neck while he clasps her round the waist.

6. A rather chaste manner of kissing is for the couple to hold hands tightly, standing face to face in the act of kissing.

7. Standing behind the girl, the lover entwines his arms round the upper part of her body, while kissing her on the back of the neck and between the shoulder blades.

8. The arm position is like the above, but the girl bends her head backwards to enable her lover to kiss her on the lips or the mouth.

9. Standing side by side, the two encircle each other round the waist; with the girl's face lying on her lover's shoulder, he kisses her on the cheek and the corner of the mouth.

10. Standing behind his beloved, he clasps her legs with his own, his hands round her chest, kissing the shoulders and the available parts of the face.

11. While the girl entwines her two arms round her lover's neck, drawing him towards her, he places his hands on her shoulders in the act of kissing.

12. During the kiss, intended to be given with pressure, the lover may place his hands round his beloved's head, pressing it to him, while



she lays her hands on his shoulders or clasps his upper arms.

13. Standing side by side, with his left arm round the girl's waist, the man tilts up her face gently with his right hand placed underneath her chin, in order to kiss her lips fully. Her right arm is also entwined round her lover's waist.

14. The girl, standing sideways to her lover, is tilted back over his left arm, his right hand tilting her face still backwards while imprinting kisses on her lips. She clasps his right lower arm with her right hand.

15. The man reclines with his head on his sitting beloved's lap, her body pulled downwards towards him under the pressure of his encircling arms round her neck, showering kisses on the lips, mouth and chin. The position may be exchanged for variety.

16. The lovers sit side by side, their arms round each other's waists, kissing alternately in succession.

17. The position is the same as above, but with the arms round each other's shoulders.

18. The girl seats sideways on her lover's lap, her one arm round his neck or head, pressing his lips to hers. His one arm may rest round her waist or higher up.

19. A delicate form of kissing is the one where the giver of the kiss places his or her hand underneath the chin of the other and thus supports the head while he or she kisses either gently or with pressure.

20. The girl sits in front and slightly to the left of the man who also is sitting, her back towards him. She then leans backwards and lays the back of her head on his left shoulder. He places his left arm round her, turns his head towards her and kisses on the cheek and side of the mouth.

21. Standing face to face, her body and face tilted considerably backwards, her hands on his shoulders or round the neck. He holds her by the upper arms and kisses her upward-tilted lips.

22. Standing sideways, she literally falls backwards, his one arm ready to support her weight, the other holding her hand on the other

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side of his body. He bends down to kiss her avid lips, throat and bosom.

23. Possible only between married couples and those very much in love with each other, the girl sits on her lover's lap facing him, her hands twined round his neck. He holds her to him tight, his arms round her waist, accompanied by mutual kisses on the face and chest.

24. Both lovers clasp their hands round each other's necks, kissing lightly and alternately, to end with a long deep kiss with the lips pressed together tightly.

25. Standing face to face, either slightly apart or with the thighs in close contact, the arms of one are passed underneath those of the other to the back, and pressure thus applied by the active participant to keep the bodies close together in intimate contact, while kisses are imprinted on any part of the face, in any manner desired.

26. A variant of the above is for the lovers to stand one behind the other instead of face to face, while the back of the neck, the shoulders and the top part of the back are kissed by the one behind. This is a pleasing variation.

27. Standing opposite each other, slightly apart or with bodies lightly in contact, the left and right hands are clasped together while the other arms are placed round each other's necks or on the shoulders.

28. With the girl sitting behind her lover with her legs stretched out and outside his, and the upper part of her body leaning forward in close contact with his back, she fervently kisses the back of his neck, the sides of the face, and the shoulders if desired. In this the girl is the active participant.

29. The lovers stand face to face, with one leg of the man thrust slightly forwards between hers, the lower parts of their bodies in contact, the arms twined round each other, the lips in forceful contact. This is an intimate attitude and is permissible only to those very deeply in love and to married couples.

30. Allowed to married lovers is this very stimulating position for



kissing. The girl sits on her lover's lap who is firmly seated himself, facing away from him, with her legs and thighs drawn up and resting on his. His two hands encircle the thighs under the knees to hold the girl firmly and pressed right back into him. Deep passionate kisses are showered on all parts of the body that can be reached with the lips—the nape, shoulders, back, the sides of the face and the temples.

31. The position about to be described is possible for married lovers when sitting on a bed, divan, mattress or carpet on the floor. The girl, sitting behind, clasps her legs round her husband's waist, her arms encircling his chest. She kisses him on the back of the neck and the shoulders.

32. A slight variation of the above is similar in the way of sitting but the husband bends back his head to rest it on one of her shoulders, making it possible to be kissed on the cheek and the side of the mouth. In this variation and the last, the initiative lies with the girl.

33. Seating or standing, the man bends slightly forwards to press his cheek on his beloved's breast. Encircling him with her arms, she kisses him on the forehead, and the other cheek, if possible.

34. Married couples may try this dual lying-down position. It is quite relaxing. The girl lies face down on the stretched out supine figure of her husband, her arms passed under his, with the hands behind his head or shoulders. He, in turn, clasps her to him with his arms round her body. The lips are thus in a position for mutual kissing, and the relaxed position enables kisses of a very long duration to be easily given and received. Some may prefer just to lie like this with the lips in close contact, instead of actually kissing.

35. Another supine position consists in the lovers lying together sideways face to face, embracing each other with their arms, with the lips in close contact. This position is also very relaxing and makes possible long mutual kisses without fatigue.

36. The girl sits on the left thigh of the man who also sit down, her legs dangling between those of his. The latter's left hand is placed



The kiss of affection on the cheek. Dean Martin and Judy Holliday in MGM's "BELLS ARE RINGING."

*(By courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)*





Times may change,  
but the kiss remains.  
Richard Carlson and  
Barbara Stanwyck in  
Universal - International's "ALL I DE-  
SIRE."

*(By courtesy of  
Universal - Inter-  
national Films)*



23

Tightly clasping her lover, she pulls down his head to bring their lips together. Sculpture from Khajuraho, 11th century.

*(Photo: Shama Kilanjar)*





24

He kisses his beloved  
on the side of the lips  
as she stands almost  
with her back to him.  
Sculpture from Linga-  
raja temple, Bhuba-  
nesvar, 11th century.

*(Copyright, The  
Archaeological Sur-  
vey of India)*

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round the girl's shoulders, his right hand on her cheek, tilting the mouth towards his for easy kissing.

37. A position similar to the above is depicted in a figure sculpture on one of the pillars in Ramaswami Temple at Kumbakonam, with one difference: the man's right hand is on the girl's bosom, having been clasped round the wrist by the left hand of the girl.

38. The girl stretches her arms above and slightly behind her head, her hands clasped together, the body bent slightly backwards. The lover encircles her round the waist, kissing her lips, throat and bosom.

39. With the girl sitting on a stool with the head tilted backwards, her lover, standing behind, bends down over her with his hands on her shoulders or clasping the upper arms, kissing thus her upturned lips, nose and forehead.

40. The girl sitting down, the man kneeling by her side, his arm round her shoulders, kissing her on the ears, cheeks, the corner of the mouth and the side of the neck.

41. The man sits on a mattress or carpet on the floor or the bed with his legs stretched out in front or folded, his beloved lying across his lap, her arms raised and circling his neck. He lays his left hand underneath her neck and thus the two pull themselves together close to bring the lips in contact.

42. The girl sitting with her legs stretched out, her lover lying sideways on his back to her right, places his head on her lap. His right arm is raised and circles her neck, his left hand clasps her right. She places her left hand under his neck or shoulders thus allowing of a mutual drawing together; the lips come in contact and remain so as long as desired, or she may kiss him wherever she wishes on his face.

43. The following three positions are not so much for kissing as for a relaxed interlude to enable affection to grow. The couple sit facing each other, the legs in any position found most comfortable. Placing his arms round his beloved's body, the man lays his head on her chest, while she places her cheek on his head or kisses the top of the head.



44. This is the same as above, but the girl lies on top of the other and facing him. She clasps her lover round his neck or body, while he keeps his hands on her upper arms, his head buried lightly in her bosom.

45. Similar to the above, the lovers lie side by side and facing each other. The man presses his face on his beloved's bosom, his one arm round her body. The girl presses her lover's head into her body by placing one of her hands on the back of his head.

(The reader is advised to refer also to the Chapter on "The Kiss in Indian Art," where some of the ancient temple figure sculptures, depicted in the act of kissing or embracing, have been described; and to the Chapter on "The Hindu Art of Kissing" in which twelve embraces mentioned in ancient Indian literature have been dealt with).

\* \* \*

Kiss how you like, hold her as you will, so long as her soul mutely declares :

"I felt the while a pleasing kind of smart,  
The kiss went tingling to my very heart;  
When it was gone the sense of it did stay,  
The sweetness cling'd upon my lips all day,  
Like drops of honey, loth to fall away."

—Dryden

Remember always that "kisses are the messengers of love," that "It is the passion in a kiss that gives to it its sweetness; it is the affection in a kiss that sanctifies it." (Bovee.)

Let the spirits rush together at the touching of the lips, let soul merge into soul on lovers' lips.

TO SUMMARISE :

The different convenient attitudes that could be adopted for the act of kissing or embracing can be grouped under the following main headings :

I. *Both Persons Standing*

(a) Face to face

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- (b) One behind the other
- (c) Standing side by side
- (d) One sideways to the other
- II. *Both Persons Sitting*
  - (a) Face to face
  - (b) One behind the other
  - (c) The girl sitting sideways on the lap of the man
  - (d) Sitting side by side
- III. *Both Persons Supine*
  - (a) One on top of the other
  - (b) Both lying side by side and facing each other
  - (c) One lying flat on the back, the other lying on the side
  - (d) Both lying side by side, but facing in the same direction
- IV. *Mixed Attitudes*
  - (a) One sitting, the other standing in front, facing the former
  - (b) One sitting, the other standing behind the other
  - (c) One sitting, the other standing to the side of the other, both facing in the same direction
  - (d) One sitting, the other at the side, facing the profile of the former
  - (e) One supine, the other sitting on the other, face to face
  - (f) The man sitting, with the girl lying across his lap, or *vice versa*
  - (g) One supine with head in the sitting partner's lap, both facing each other

A few hints now regarding the placement of the arms and the hands in the different Kissing Attitudes given above. This is not supposed to be an exhaustive classification, but merely a ready-reference guide for the reader.

### *Standing face to face :*

The arms may be, individually or mutually, clasped round the waist, the upper part of the body, round the shoulders or the neck; the hands may be placed on the waist or clasp the other's upper arms just above the elbow or rest on the shoulders. The two partners



## KAMA - CHUMBANA

may use different holds, in which case many more variations are possible by adopting different arm placements at the same time.  
*Standing one behind the other, both facing in the same direction :*

All the arm and hand placements given can be used by the one standing behind. The person in front may place the hands on the other's hands, or bend the arms backwards and place the hands on the other's waist.

*Standing side by side :*

The arms may be mutually placed round each other's waist or shoulders, the right arm of one and the left of the other. The other hands may be clasped together in front. The arm of one may be round the waist of the other, the latter's arm round the shoulder of the former. The right arm of one and the left of the other may be entwined, the other hands clasped together.

*Standing, one sideways to the other :*

The arms of the one standing sideways may be clasped round the other's waist, body or neck, the latter's one arm round the former's shoulders or neck. Or, one arm of the person standing sideways may be placed round the waist of the other, the other arm on the shoulder on the far side.

*Sitting face to face, side by side, or one behind the other :*

The arm positions are the same as given above for standing attitudes, depending on whether the two partners are sitting face to face, one behind the other, or side by side.

*Lying, one on top of the other :*

The arms may be mutually clasped round each other's necks, the upper part of the body, or the waist; or one of the partners uses one of the arm positions just mentioned, while the other lays the hands on the other's shoulders or clasps the upper arms above the elbows.

*Lying side by side and facing each other :*

The arms at top of both may mutually encircle the waist, upper

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body or neck, or both arms may be used for the same purpose though not so comfortably due to the pressure of the body on the lower arm. Different placements may be used by the two, one clasping the arms round the waist, the other round the body, and so on. Or the right hand of one and the left hand of the other may be clasped, the fingers interlocking. It is possible for the man to place his hand on the lower part of the back to draw the girl closer to him.

### *Lying side by side but facing in the same direction:*

The right arm of the one on the right—generally the man—may be placed round the waist or the upper part of the body. Or the arm may rest almost vertically on the girl's body, the fingers stroking underneath the chin. There is little the girl can do with her arms or hands in this position, but may rest her right hand on that of her lover's.

### *One lying flat on the back, the other lying on the side:*

The one lying on the side may place the arm round the middle of the other's body or diagonally across the chest. The latter may place the arm under the other's body and round the side, the other hand resting on the body.

### *One sitting, the other standing, facing the former:*

The sitting one can place the arms round the other's waist, lay the hands on the shoulders or clasp the upper arms of the other above the elbows, or place the hands on the sides of the thighs. The standing partner can lay the hands on the shoulders of the other, place the hands under the arm-pits and round the body, or clasp the hands round the neck or the head. Different combinations are thus possible.

### *One sitting, the other standing behind the other:*

The arm and hand positions possible for the standing partner are as given above when the two face each other. There is no comfortable way for the one sitting in which to hold the other.



*One sitting, the other standing to the side of the other and facing in the same direction :*

The sitting one can place one arm round the waist or thighs of the other, or place one hand on the shoulder or back from behind. The standing partner can place the arm round the back of the other's neck or shoulders, or place one hand behind the head or on the back. In this position, only one arm of each can be usefully employed.

*One sitting, the other at the side, facing the profile of the former:*

The sitting partner can place one arm round the thighs or waist of the other, or place one hand on the shoulder from the front. The other who is standing can clasp both hands round the former's chest, shoulders, or neck, or place the arms in two different places at the same time. Many variations are thus possible.

*One supine, the other sitting on the other, face to face:*

The supine partner can clasp the arms round the other's neck, shoulders or waist; or lay the hands on the thighs or encircle the upper arms. The other partner can clasp the arms round the other's neck, shoulders, or waist, place them on the chest, or clasp the other's upper arms. Different combinations are thus possible, depending on the placement used by the two partners.

*The man sitting, with the girl lying across his lap, or vice versa:*

The man's one arm may be placed round the back of the neck or underneath the shoulders, thus supporting the other; the other hand may be placed on the girl's bosom or waist. The latter may stretch upwards and encircle her arms round her lover's neck or body, or place her hand on his as it lies on her body; or one hand may lie on his, the other arm round his neck or shoulder. Various variations are possible.

*One supine with the head in the sitting partner's lap:*

This is a position of great comfort for the one lying down, and in which the requirements of comfort and the expression of affec-

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tion and love for each other will automatically dictate the arm positions adopted by the partners. Hence, to make suggestions would be superfluous.

\*     \*     \*

With kissing, as in all other forms of love-play, it is necessary to experiment to find out what kinds of kisses give the greatest pleasure to the other. Naturally, the kiss will start with the lips; then the tongue may come into play as in the "deep kiss," to be followed by mutual kissing of the neck and the chest, thus slowly progressing downwards towards the thighs in the case of married lovers. But it must be remembered all the time that it is not sufficient merely to derive pleasure, but also to give it through the active and passive sensations manifest in the loving kiss.

What we love, we long to fondle and kiss and thus it is that the beloved's hair, forehead, eyes, lips, cheeks, bosom, and other parts of the body, will longingly receive the stimulating caresses of the lover's lips.

A word of warning is necessary, especially for the male lover. Never rush towards your final goal. Let the intensity and duration of your kisses grow with your beloved's rising passion. A greedy, too passionate kiss right at the beginning of the love-play may set the woman on the defensive and kill her love. At the beginning of the preliminaries, the kisses should be light and gentle and should cover the face and neck. Do not kiss any one spot too long or too often, but go slowly through the whole gamut of love-play and vary your kisses and your technique, as much as possible.

An American writer on The Art of Kissing points out that the object of a kiss should be mutual pleasure. That "there is no pleasure, except in a man slightly perverted, in kissing a girl entirely against her will." (Clement Wood.) So, he says, it is necessary to find out from the very beginning, if she desires to be kissed, not by asking her bluntly, but by more subtle means like talking about kissing and noting her reactions carefully. Sitting close, playing with her hands, kissing her



shoulder lightly will all help to show if his kisses would be welcome. The same writer, however, adds that a certain amount of resistance on the part of the girl may be only pretence to lure the man on.

If the girl is willing to be kissed, *do not hurry*. If it is intended to kiss her on the lips, hold her close with at least one arm round her shoulders. Keep the lips shut at first. The first kiss, especially with an inexperienced girl, should not be too passionate. Repeat the kiss if possible; but break off as soon as it is felt that the girl has had enough.

Speaking of the sophisticated kind of girl, this American writer advises bolder steps: "The general rule is to give as much as you are expected to give . . . it is better to err on the side of giving too much than too little." She may be clasped more closely, even with the arms round her waist. The kiss may last longer, it may be more passionate, the lips may be slightly open, till it merges in the Soul Kiss. "Kiss with your whole heart, or not at all." Remember Thomas Carlyle's advice: "If you are ever in doubt as to whether or not you should kiss a pretty girl, always give her the benefit of the doubt"!

But, when all is said and done always bear in mind that—

"The dearest remembrance will still be the best,  
Our sweetest memorial the first kiss of love."

—Byron

## 7

# THE HINDU ART OF KISSING

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The importance of the kiss was fully realised by the ancient Indian writers on love and sex. They paid great attention to the subject in their famous classics, as much as to the other aspects of the sexual technique.

The first kiss is important, Vatsyayana believed. It should not be hurried and certainly should not be insisted on till the newly-made bride is ready for it. She should first be embraced and only when she has learnt to tolerate this that the first kiss should be implanted on the mouth itself, not on the cheeks or any other part of the body. The husband is advised to hold a piece of betel-nut or *pan* (the leaf eaten with the betel-nut) between his lips and insert it gently into the mouth of his bride. He should induce her to open her mouth with sweet words and gentle caresses, if necessary even kneeling at her feet. In the act of placing the betel-nut or *pan* into her mouth, he should take the opportunity of silently and gracefully kissing her on the lips. So he advises.

According to Vatsyayana, the places most suitable for the kiss are the hair, the forehead, the eyes, the upper lip, the inside of the mouth (the "French" or "deep" kiss of Western writers), the man's chest and the female bosom. According to him, although not prescribed as a suitable universal practice, the people of Lata province also kiss the arm-pits, the navel, and the joints of the thighs with the body.

Vatsyayana has described three kinds of kisses as suitable for the



still inexperienced and rather bashful young maiden in his famous *Kama Sutra* :

*Nimitaka* or the Nominal Kiss. This is the kiss when the man forces her towards himself and presses his mouth on hers; but she herself does nothing and does not reciprocate.

*Sfuritaka* or the Throbbing or Tremulous Kiss. Now the girl is a little less bashful and responds to the man's advances by tremulously pressing his lower lip, but without moving her upper lip. The man may take the girl's lower lip between his two lips, if he so wishes.

*Ghattitaka* or the Touching Kiss. In this, the girl holds the lip of the man between her own, shuts her eyes, and covers his with her hands. And then presses his lips with her tongue or brushes the latter lightly against the lips of her beloved.

It will be noticed that the three kinds of kisses described above follow in order of their intensity.

"These three varieties of kiss were regarded by the Hindus as indicating a measure of the desire of the woman for the man," Dr. Bernhard Bauer points out. "The world has gone on for thousands of years since, but the kisses of our women are still strictly in accordance with the ancient Indian erotic formulae, though they are unaware of it. Instinct, love, eroticism, teach them how to kiss. The woman knows quite well what she wishes to express, and the lover grasps her meaning quite well." (*Woman.*)

Many other types of kisses have been described by Vatsyayana and the others who followed him :

*The Straight Kiss.* This is the kiss when the lips are in contact and the couple face each other.

*The Slanting or Oblique Kiss.* Here one of the partners slants the lips diagonally to the lips of the other, the man standing or sitting behind or beside the girl.

*The Turned Kiss.* This is the kiss when one of the two turns up the face of the other and then kisses the lips.

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*The Pressed Kiss.* This is like any of the kisses mentioned above, but given with much greater pressure and more ardently. It is the "Pure Kiss" when the lips are merely pressed together with some force. But when the tips of the tongues of the lovers come into play, it becomes the "Tongue Kiss" and is thus identical with the "deep kiss" of Western writers. A variation of the "Pressed Kiss" has also been described. The corners of the lower lip are held between the thumb and the index finger and pressed to the shape of an "O", followed by the kiss, using the lips only.

It is advised that during the period of kissing, mock contests should be held as they are likely to increase the pleasurable feelings induced by the kisses. The one who grasps the other's lower lip first is supposed to be the winner. But such mock contests are not for those who are not too ardent in their passion.

Dr. Edwin W. Hirsch writes : "Lovers also play a kissing game in which they wager with each other as to which one will catch hold of the lips of the other first. When the woman loses, she pretends to cry and ask for a return match. When she loses a second time, she appears very much distressed and waits her chance until her lover is off his guard or asleep. Then she gets hold of his lower lip and holds it tight with her teeth until he is well aware of the fact that his lip is in a vice. After that she entrances him by moving her eyes and joking about their encounter. Such wagers and quarrels may also be applied to pressing with the nails and fingers, scratching, biting, and striking." (*The Power to Love.*) However these games — apart from the game of the kiss — are only for experienced lovers of passionate temperament.

He further quotes : "Whatever things may be done by one of the lovers to the other, the same should be returned by the other, that is, if the woman kisses him, he should kiss her in return, if she strikes him, he should strike her in return." Or as Swami Ram Krishnanada puts it :

"No matter what one lover does,  
The other must return the favour,



If the woman kisses the man,  
The man must return her kiss,  
If she bites or if she beats him,  
With twice the force he must beat her in return."

The ancient love classics describe many other kinds of kisses :

*Samputaka* is the "Clasping Kiss" resulting from the man grasping the lips of the girl with both his lips and kissing them. The actual kiss may be "Straight," "Slanting," "Turned," or "Pressed," as already described above. It is amusing to be told that the woman should not indulge in this type of kiss with a man who wears a moustache !

A kiss with a rather pretty name is "The Fighting of the Tongue." When one of the lovers has been kissed with the *Samputaka*, he or she rubs the tongue against the teeth of the other. This is followed by an exploration of the inside of the mouth with the tongue, and then a caress of the tongue itself.

Some of the other types of kisses described or prescribed by Vatsyayana and others may now be enumerated :

*Udbhranta* or the "Erratic Kiss." One of the couple takes hold of the head and chin of the other and twisting and turning it in different directions, kisses the face from different angles. Rather a sweet and loving gesture.

*Uttarachumbita* or the "Kiss of the Upper Lip." The man sucks the upper lip of the girl, and the latter the lower lip of the former.

*Abapidita* or the "Compressed Kiss." The lips of the husband are pressed very hard on those of the girl.

*Jihvayuddha* or the "Tongue Kiss." The lovers suck each other's lips and inserting their tongues into each other's mouths, caress the tongues and the palates. This is the "Pressed Kiss" described above and the "Deep kiss" or "Maraichinage" of the West.

*Akristra* or the "Drawn-up Kiss." The lower lip is gathered together and pressed between the thumb and forefinger and thus sucked with the lips and the tongue. Note that in the "Pressed Kiss"

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only the lips are used.

So far we have dealt only with kisses given on the lips. Among those imprinted on other parts of the body may be mentioned the following as given in the ancient Kama Shastras.

*Sama*—this is the kiss given on joints where the thighs meet the body, on the chest or the bosom, and the sides.

*Pidita*—this is the kiss pressed on the bosom, the navel and the cheeks.

*Anchita*—this is the kiss given on the bosom and the sides.

*Mridu*—this is the kiss given on the eyes and the forehead.

These kisses are according to their intensity. The *Sama* is "balanced," the *Pidita* is "forceful," the *Anchita* is "lightly touching," while the *Mridu* is "affectionate or gentle."

Vatsyayana further states that when a woman, of her own free will, longingly looks at and kisses her lover when asleep, thus intensifies her love for him. She may also kiss him when he is absorbed in some artistic pursuit like painting or music, or even when he is in a quarrelsome mood, or when he is inclined to be sleepy, in order to keep him awake. This is the *Chalitaka* kiss. It is only allowed to the woman.

On the other hand, when a man returning home late at night, finds his beloved asleep and kisses her passionately, it is called the *Pratibodhaka* kiss.

The woman may kiss the feet of the man sleeping near her, although, according to the ancient classics, it would be undignified for the man to do so. Kissing the fingers of the hand is allowed, especially at night or in a public place where others may be present.

Perhaps the most charming and romantic of the kisses discussed in the ancient classics is the *Chhaya-chumbana*, when the man or woman kisses the reflection of the beloved in a mirror, in the calm surface of water or on the wall. The *Sankranta* is slightly different. Here the man kisses by proxy either a child or a painting or an image in the presence of his beloved. Which reminds us of Thomas Wright's sly remark, "Many



kiss the child for love of the nurse." These two kisses are really only for those who cannot meet and kiss in the normal way.

A kiss allowed to a married couple is the "Demonstrative Kiss." This is done by the woman when massaging her husband's body. While gently rubbing his thighs, she places her face on them and kisses them in order to convey her love to him.

Kalyanamalla's *Ananga Ranga* is comparatively a much later work on the science of love and sex, and here also the importance of the kiss has been stressed under the section of *Chumbana* (Kissing). The sites of the kiss are given as the eyes, the cheeks, the throat, the bosom and the sides of the body. However, Padamasri, the author of *Nagara Sarvasvam*, believes that the whole body is a possible place for the love-kiss, but does mention the individual parts as well, some as being more suitable than others. For example, according to him, the *Samhatoshtham* is the kiss on the thighs and the lower part of the abdomen.

Kalyanamalla more or less follows the classification of kisses given by Vatsyayana, although there are some minor differences, among which may be mentioned the following :

*Uttaroshtha* : When the wife bites the lower lip of her husband with her teeth while kissing, he in his turn bites her upper lip. This is like Vatsyayana's *Uttara-chumbita* except that here there is biting instead of sucking.

*Pidita* : the wife squeezes the lower lip of her husband with her fingers and rubs her tongue over it; or may even bite it with her own two lips or by pressing the husband's lower lip between her upper lip and the tongue. Thus, in a way, it is a "Squeezing Kiss."

*Samputa* : the man sucks the lower lip of the girl between his own lips, the girl doing the same to the other. This is similar to Vatsyayana's description.

*Anuvaktra* : both the man and the girl explore the insides of each other's mouths and is thus similar to the kiss described by Vatsyayana where he advises that the couple should caress each other's palates

## THE HINDU ART OF KISSING

and teeth with their tongues.

A rather nice variant is described by Kalyanamalla that he calls *Samaushtha* or the "Coupling of the Lips." Here the girl holds the lips of her husband with her own two lips and presses and sucks with her tongue while dancing lightly with joy.

One of the famous commentators, Padamasri, has described kisses according to their site and the mode of kissing :

*Nipiditama*—kisses on the chest, the upper part of the body, and the navel, the pressure being light.

*Bramitama*—brushing of the forehead or the lips lightly with the lips.

*Unnamitakama*—kissing of the eyes and the cheeks with the lips pouting.

*Sphuritama*—kissing of the cheeks, chest and the navel with the lips trembling.

*Samhatoshtha*—kissing of the chest, the lower part of the abdomen and the thighs with the lips kept closed together.

*Vaikratakama*—kissing of the throat, the cheeks, and the bosom with puckered lips.

*Nataganda*—kissing of any part of the body with the lips puckered as much as possible.

Padamasri has also dealt with those kinds of kisses in which there is an insertion of the tongue into the mouth. It may be inserted flat and to a certain distance (*pratata*), only the tip of the tongue may be inserted (*suchi*), or the inserted tongue may be moved about and made to quiver within the mouth of the lover (*kari*—elephant).

According to the same commentator, there may be suction accompanying the kiss. He describes four forms of this.

*Samputama*—the simultaneous sucking of each other's lips by the two lovers.

*Chumbitakama*—while in the act of kissing, the tongue of the partner is pulled into the mouth and sucked.

*Ardhachumbitama* — the lower lip only is pressed with



the teeth and sucked.

*Oshthavimrishtakama*—only the tip of the tongue is inserted into the mouth and which is sucked by the other partner.

The above will show how deeply the kiss, Chumbana, was studied by the ancient writers on love and sane sex living, what importance it was given in Hindu erotics. Of course, there are minor differences in the different texts, but these are not of any great importance.

Thus Vatsyayana, the world famous author of the *Kama Sutra*, deals in full detail with twenty-six varieties of Chumbana. Of these, three are meant exclusively to be initiated by maidens; five may be initiated by either sex, the remaining eighteen varieties being classed according to the parts of the body and the moods of the lovers. The upper lip, both the lips, the inside of the mouth, the forehead, locks of hair, the cheeks, the eyes, the bosom — these are the specific parts of the human anatomy mentioned by him as suitable for Chumbana. He specifies three special varieties of Chumbana for heightening excitement; two for developing the feeling of pleasure; two for inculcating a sense of respect, and so on.

This author advises the man to make a special effort to woo the woman in stages, and not to be in a hurry about implanting kisses on her. According to him, she is first to be aroused and only after the creation of a suitable atmosphere should a man start the Chumbana game.

The Lata people, according to Vatsyayana, enjoy planting kisses between the thighs, the arm-pits and the depth of the navel. But this practice is not common in other parts of the country and is not specifically recommended.

Vatsyayana advises maidens to be adept in wiles and guiles so as to heighten the pleasure in a kissing duel. But he says that only highly passionate lovers should go in for such duels. The kissing of the upper lip is sometimes not enjoyable. Females and clean shaven males can implant resounding kisses on each other's lips and Vatsyayana has named these forms Samputaka Chumbana.



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Clasped round the waist, with her back towards her lover, she tilts her lips upwards towards his, her left hand resting on his head. Sculpture from Khajuraho, 11th century.

(Photo : A. Banerji)





26

Her left hand round  
her lover's neck, she  
presses his head and  
lips towards her with  
her right hand, the  
expression on their  
faces full of love and  
tenderness. Sculpture  
from Devi Jagadamba  
temple, Khajuraho,  
11th century.

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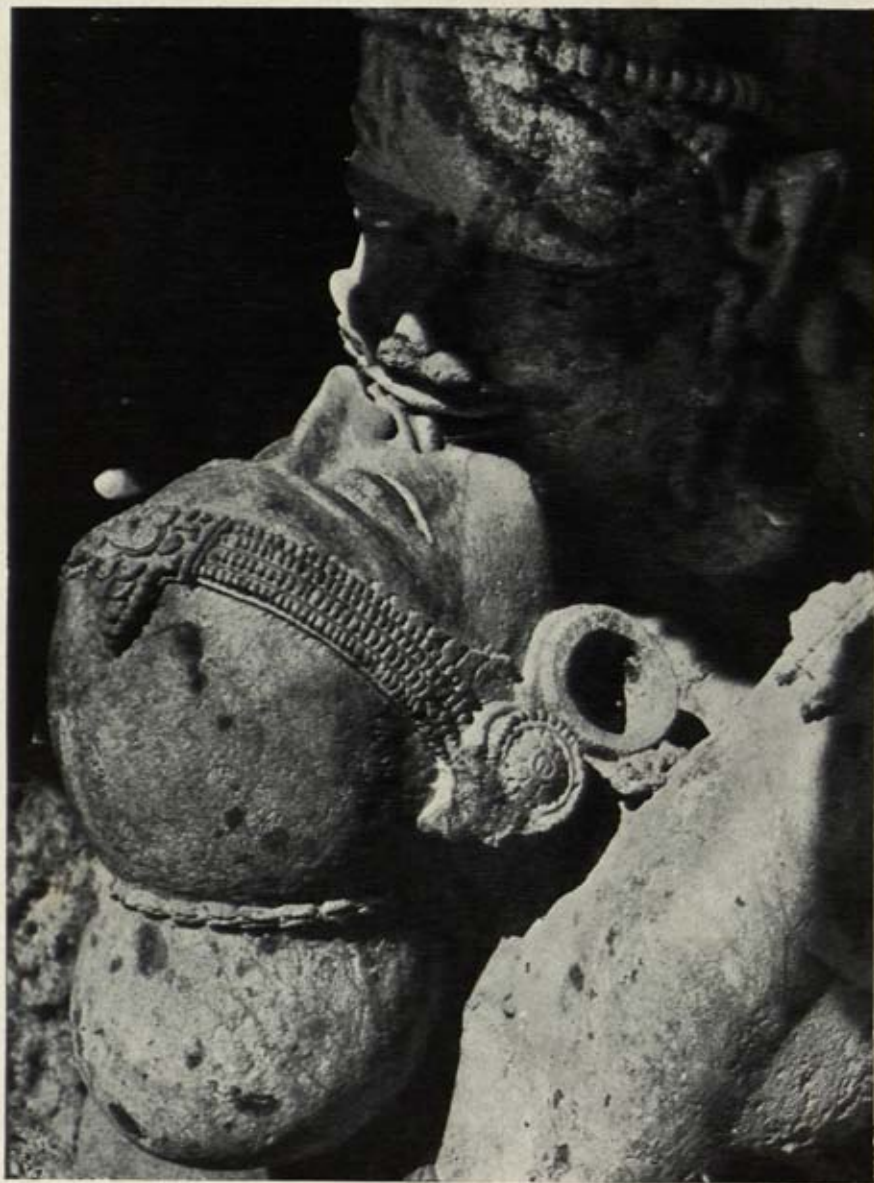


27

A rather uncomfortable pose speaking of the intensity of love, the girl half-twisted as she is clasped in her lover's arms. Sculpture from Devi Jagadamba temple, Khajuraho, 11th century.

*(Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India)*





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The passion of the kiss, the lips pressed hard together. Close-up of sculpture from Konarak, 13th century.

(Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India)

## THE HINDU ART OF KISSING

The kissing game is described as rising to a crescendo in the "war of tongues."

Kisses assume different names according to the postures in which they are given or received. The sleeping lover is kissed by a woman at the tips of his toes and way up on the thighs. The sleeping female is kissed by a man on his late homecoming by planting kisses on her hands, fingers and feet so as to arouse her with a view to be paid back in the same measure.

Another authority on erotics, Padmasri, divides Chumbanas into two main categories, "voiced" kisses and "voiceless" kisses. The voiceless kisses of seven types mentioned by him are meant to be practised by men only. On the other hand Vatsyayana gives another list of seven voiced types of kisses as specially meant for women only.

Jayadeva, the author of *Ratimanjari*, lists the eyes, the throat, the cheeks, the heart, the posteriors, the neck, the navel, the mouth, the thighs, the groins, "the home of the god of Love," and the bosom, as parts to be kissed. He tops this list by referring to the mouth as suitable for a resounding voiced kiss.

\* \* \*

As a matter of fact, these ancient classics tell the lovers all that they should know and do in the way of kissing and other aspects of the love-play. It is therefore surprising to find a statement by R. Lewisohn that "all in all, however, it must be said that Indian love technique adds nothing to what young people in other countries find out for themselves without scientific instruction." (*A History of Sexual Customs*, A. Mayce Translation.)

Even more surprising is the statement of William Fielding :

"The contact of the lips in the kiss is an inspired discovery and development of the Western World. Strange as it may seem to us of European heritage, the kiss was unknown in many parts of the world until Western explorers, traders and missionaries carried their customs to the remote parts of our planet." (*Strange Customs of Courtship and*



*Marriage.*) Yet, the *Kama Sutra* was written over 1500 years ago !

Verily, according to the ancient Indian writers, those who are experts in the art and technique of love may kiss a thousand times, and yet each kiss will be different. If they have described infinite variations on the theme of kissing, it is possible that they may have understood individual likes and dislikes, as kisses which give the greatest pleasure to one may produce feelings of revulsion in another.

## THE EMBRACE

Vatsyayana and the other ancient Indian writers and authorities who followed him have rightly paid as much attention in their writings to the embrace as to the kiss, and correctly so. If the kiss involves a mutual contact of the lips, or the lips against some other part of the body, the embrace is a contact of the different parts of the body—involving a much more extensive area than possible with the kiss. It may thus be considered as a body-kiss in comparison to the lip-kiss.

The reason for dealing with the embrace in a book on kissing is that the two go together. One may kiss while one embraces and thus a large number of combinations of kisses and embraces can be evolved and practised. The different kinds of kisses can be varied with the many types of embraces described in the ancient books and thus a greater variety can be introduced in the technique of the kiss.

The following are the twelve embraces, some only suitable for married lovers, advocated by Vatsyayana :

1. *Sprishtaka* or Mild Contact. This can be done in public, the two bodies merely touching each other without pressure. When the woman is ahead of the man and cannot be embraced, he passes by her side, lightly brushing his body against her. Others may not notice this passing contact, but the girl will feel the pleasure of the light touch of her lover's body.
2. *Viddhaka* or Bust Pressure Embrace. This also is a secret move in which the woman takes the initiative. Finding her beloved sitting or

## THE EMBRACE

standing, she moves in front or behind him, allowing her bosom to lightly brush against his body. Or she may press against his body on the pretence of picking up something from the ground. In return, the man holds her tightly.

3. *Udghrishtaka* or Rubbing Embrace. Vatsyayana recommends this when it is dark or the couple are in a crowd or are walking together. They rub their bodies against each other's, slowly and for a long time, the darkness hiding their actions. Sometimes only one of the lovers may indulge in this caress, the other remaining passive. This is *Ghrishtaka*.
4. *Piditaka* or Pressure Embrace. This is an advanced form of the above, also done when it is dark. Standing against a wall or a pillar, they rub their bodies together, the support of the wall or pillar allowing greater pressure to be applied. The lovers may also clasp each other tightly.
5. *Lata-veshtitaka* or Creeper Embrace. This has been aptly described as "Twining of a Creeper." It is always indulged in strict seclusion, the woman twining her arms round her lover, just as a creeper twines round a pillar or tree. She looks with love into his face, making him bend his head and kiss her. It will be noted that in this case, it is the woman who takes the initiative. (She may face her lover, stand behind him, or on one side or the other.)
6. *Vrikshadhirudhaka* or Climbing of Tree Embrace. The girl stands on one leg on the right foot of her lover, raises her right leg and entwines it round his thighs, at the same time raising herself for his kisses. By one arm she holds her lover by the shoulder and with the other laid on his waist or back, she heaves herself upwards. This is a difficult embrace to perform. All throughout the embrace she makes soft cooing sounds of rapture.
7. *Teela-tandulaka* or Sesame-Rice Embrace. The lovers lie side by side, embracing each other intimately. The one on the right passes the left hand under the right side of the other and *vice versa*. In



the same way, the left thigh of one rests on the right thigh of the other whose own left thigh rests on the right of the other. This way a very close contact can result.

8. *Kshira-niraka* (*Kshira-jala*) or Milk-and-Water Embrace. This also provides very close contact. Lying down the lovers clasp each other tightly as if trying to fuse their bodies together like two lumps of clay or the intermingling of milk and water. As a variation, the girl may sit on her lover's lap, facing him.
9. *Urupaguhana* or Pincer Embrace. Lying side by side, the lovers facing each other interlock their thighs in a close contact. One of the two clasps with his or her thighs either one or both the thighs of the other in a pincer movement, exerting considerable pressure.
10. *Jaghanupauhana* or the Hip-Thigh Embrace. With the male lover lying on his back, the woman on top of him, they clasp each other very tightly, the lower parts of their bodies in close contact.
11. *Stanalingana* or Chest Embrace. The girl clasps her lover tightly to her, the upper part of her body administering the maximum amount of pressure possible, throwing her whole weight on him. This embrace is indulged in with both lovers sitting down, both lying side by side or one on top of the other, or with the man alone in the supine position.
12. *Lalatika* or Forehead Embrace. Compared to the above, this is of a very mild variety in which the eyes, nose and lips of the lovers are pressed together in close contact, their foreheads touching. The woman may either herself lie down on the supine man, or face him lying side by side. *Lalatika* is also done with both standing up face to face.

Vatsyayana wisely advises the male lover to go slow with his embraces, especially with one unaccustomed to the passion of love. In the beginning, the embrace should be short and not too intimate, only the upper parts of the body being embraced. After she has had the requisite experience of the love technique, more intimate varieties of

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the embrace may be tried—if she desires them. Vatsyayana also advises that the girl-wife without experience should only be embraced in the dark; but the one who has already been wooed and won may be embraced in a lighted room. This is very sensible advice as intimate embraces are naturally likely to end in the ultimate of physical love in the case of married couples.

The best occasions for the embrace, according to the ancient writers, are after a quarrel, the appeasement of anger, in a time of danger and fear, before separations, and during the physical sex act.

"Even those who merely question and hear and those who narrate the details of the embrace, feel the urge for enjoyment gathering within them. If there are other kinds of embraces not described in this Text of Kama, they should certainly be made use of for greater enjoyment—with due regard to their utility.

"Texts on the Science of Kama are of help only when passion is not excited; but once the wheel of passion starts to roll, there is then no Shastra and no order."

Thus speaks the wise Vatsyayana.



## 8

# THE KISS IN INDIAN ART

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The reader is sure to be interested in the following brief descriptions of some of the exquisite sculptures of kissing and embracing couples in famous temples at Konarak, Khajuraho and Bhubanesvar, dating from the 10th to the 13th century. Not only do they depict some of the postures described in the ancient classics, but they will give creative ideas to the reader which he might put to practical use if he so desires. They are all possible of adaptation and variation with the different kinds of kisses mentioned in the earlier chapters.

### KONARAK

A pair of lovers on the walls of the Jagmohan of the Temple of the Sun at Konarak are depicted with the woman's arms entwined round her lover, who slightly above her has tilted up her chin with his left hand in the act of kissing. The left leg has been raised slightly and placed on a round form, it is not clear what.

There are many loving couples shown on the walls of the Temple of the Sun. In one panel the two lovers are sculptured facing each other, the left hand of the girl holding the right hand of her lover, her two legs clasped round his, their lips almost touching in love.

Another couple also stand face to face, the man as usual taller than the girl, with his left hand at the back of her head, and her left hand on the back of his. Apparently, the placement of the hands lends not only support but allows of greater pressure being applied to the mutual kiss.

## THE KISS IN INDIAN ART

### BHUBANESVAR

A loving couple in the Rajarani temple is seen kissing with the girl's right arm round the shoulder of her lover while he has placed his right hand lovingly on the side of her face.

Standing almost side by side but slightly facing each other, in one panel the girl has placed her arm round her lover's shoulders, his own arm round the girl's back with the hand resting on her chest, the other hand lying on the stomach. Though not actually shown in the act of kissing, there is a smile on their lips and it seems as if they are on the verge of a bout of kissing.

Both figures are shown standing in another panel, almost face to face, but with the girl slightly towards the side. Her left thigh has been placed over her lover's slightly lifted right thigh, her arms round his body; the male lover has his one arm round his beloved, the right hand resting lightly on her left thigh. Both faces tilted slightly backwards, the lovers are shown actually in the act of kissing.

A rather graceful sculpture of a couple embracing, though shown not actually in the act of kissing, but with the lips very close together, deserves mention. The girl's body is almost with her back to her lover, but with the upper part of the torso bent backwards a little to rest on his left shoulder, both her arms raised above her head. The man is shown standing with his legs rather apart and with those of the girl between them. The left arm is round her shoulders, the right is on the lower part of the abdomen, just above the top of the thigh.

### KHAJURAHO

A really charming sculpture is to be seen in the Parsvanatha Temple at Khajuraho. Although the figures are not shown kissing, the impression given is that they are on the point of doing so. Love flows from their faces. Her right arm is round his neck, her body sideways to his; the lover's left arm has been passed round her body and rests lightly on her left bust.



Another fine example of a couple embracing and kissing, though in a rather unnatural posture, shows the woman tilting backwards in her lover's arms, her left raised to his forehead. His right arm passes underneath her right with the fingers delicately touching the right side of the chest.

Another excellent piece of sculpture shows the girl with her arms lovingly entwined round her lover's neck, the tips of the noses and the lips in loving contact, his right hand lightly resting on the lower part of the girl's back.

A rather unusual embrace is seen in one panel where the girl faces her lover, her left leg raised and resting on his hip and supported in place by his right hand. Her two arms are shown round his neck. Though the lips are a short distance away and not actually touching, the loving look on the couple's faces denotes an ecstasy of love.

In still another sculptural piece, the girl lover is seen standing with her body almost backing on her lover, her face tilted upwards to his, the lips almost in contact, her left arm raised and the upward-turned palm resting on his head. His right arm is seen passed under her right arm-pit, the fingers pointing upwards.

There is one panel where the touching noses of the lovers are almost reminiscent of the "nose-kiss" of the primitive races dealt with in a later chapter. Standing facing each other, the man is shown grasping her arms just above the wrists.

A rather complicated and almost acrobatic pose is seen in one sculpture where the male lover is shown sitting with his right leg raised, and encircling the left thigh of the girl who is shown standing with her left leg between his, her right raised and placed over her lover's left thigh. Bending her head backwards to meet his lips with hers, the right hand rests gently on his head.

An attitude rather similar to the above has the girl lover sitting on her beloved's lap who also is shown in a sitting posture, her two legs encircling his waist, the arms entwined round his neck. The lips are

## THE KISS IN INDIAN ART

almost in contact, and the expression on their faces speaks of mounting love.

Rather an unusual pose is one where the girl stands with her back to her lover, but with the upper part of the torso twisted round so that the lips could meet. Her right arm is raised above and round his neck, while his right hand rests on the crotch of the girl's right thigh.

Lastly, mention may be made of just one more panel of lovers kissing. The girl is shown sitting on her beloved's lap, her legs slightly raised and encircling his waist, the left arm round his neck, the right raised to his head. On his part, he has encircled his arms round her thighs with the fingers clasped behind her back.

It will be realised from the above brief descriptions that many of the positions shown are possible only between married lovers. And some are suitable only for circus acrobats !

\* \* \* \* \*

So far, the author has not come across a single genuine miniature painting, neither Mughal nor Rajput, with the figures painted in the actual act of kissing, with lips on lips. The close proximity of the figures and the embrace may, in many cases, suggest that the lovers are about to kiss, but never is an actual contact of the lips shown. However, in some miniatures, kissing on other parts of the body of the girl has been suggested but not actually depicted.



THE KISS IN THE EAST

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An old Arab poet has said :

" The most intimate embrace  
Leaves the heart cold and unsatisfied —  
If the rapture of the kiss is wanting. "

Like the ancient Indians, the Arabs and Persian writers on the art and technique of love also have extolled the value of the kiss in the love-play. But they lay greater emphasis on the more intimate sexual aspects. For example, Azizaddin Al Masihi, in his *Ktab El-Munakahah*, warns that a large number of women find little pleasure in mere kissing and embracing without full love. Even the great Sheikh Nefzoui, the author of *The Perfumed Garden*, asserts that different kinds of kisses are of little avail without the final act of love.

N. K. Basu writes: "The Sheikh next proceeds to state that a superficial kiss impressed on the outer parts of the lips and making a noise like that of calling a cat, gives no pleasure. The most prolific kiss, he continues, is one firmly imprinted on humid lips combined with sucking. It is up to the man to slightly and softly nibble at her tongue when saliva sweet and fresh like honey will flow in profusion. The tongue will touch the other's palate lubricated by the saliva; the kiss will give out a sonorous sound from within the mouth. This manoeuvre will give rise to a strange quivering sensation that will run through every fibre of the body and prove more intoxicating than the mellowest wine." (*The Art of Love in the Orient.*)

## THE KISS IN THE EAST

It must not however be concluded from the above that in the East the kiss has always been only a token of love. In early days it was associated with sacred customs and rituals and the Arabs of old were enjoined to "kiss" the household gods on entering or leaving the house. It is possible of course that here the kiss was not as we construe it, but was only a token.

Ernest Crawley points out that according to Rabbi Akkiba, the Medes only kissed the hand. In Greece, inferiors kissed the hand, breast or knee of their superiors. But in ancient Iran, equals kissed one another on the lips and those slightly different in rank, on the cheek; but the person much inferior in rank prostrated himself before his superior.

Among the Hebrews the sites of the kiss were the forehead, the cheeks, the beard, hands and feet, but probably not the lips. In Palestine, the common kiss of salutation was of a more complicated nature. The head was placed face down on the left shoulder of the other and the right cheek afterwards kissed (a mere brief contact only). The whole action was then reversed; the head was placed upon the other's right shoulder and the left cheek kissed. Women also kissed their husbands in the same way, even if rarely, as did the child their fathers. The kiss that passed in cultured society between the host and his guests was rather different. The right hand was placed on the left shoulder of the other and the right cheek kissed, the action then being reversed by placing the left hand on the right shoulder and kissing the left cheek. Perhaps there was one more mode of kissing, "The giver of the kiss lays his right hand under the head of his friend and supports it while he kisses it." (J. Neil, *Kissing*.)

We are further told that there was also a more formal manner of salutation between persons of the same rank. The right hands were joined by being placed one on the other and then each kissed his own hand, putting it to his lips and forehead, or the forehead only, or placed it over the heart.

The Turks kiss their own hands in salutation and then place them



on their foreheads. The Moroccans, when meeting equals, will salute each other by touching the hands quickly, taking them away immediately, and kissing each his own hand. Ceremonial kissing among the Moroccans is being discouraged at present.

The Greek historian Herodotus has reported that in ancient Persia, persons of equal rank would kiss each other on the mouth, but if of unequal rank, the kiss was given only on the cheeks.

Many other instances of the hand-kiss, like that of the Turks and Moroccans, can be given. In ancient times, a Roman of a subordinate rank would pay homage to his emperor by touching the latter's toga with his hands and then kissing them himself.

According to Richard Burton of *The Arabian Nights* fame, the Moslems would salute the Kaabah by touching the stone with the fingers which were then kissed. Before the advent of Islam, Arabs kissed their hands to the gods of the storm, and the ancient Greeks to those of the sun and the moon. The Romans had a slight variation in their practice. The Roman devotee would kiss his right hand and then wave it towards the god he wished to pay homage to. This was known as *adoratio*.

That the hand-kiss is very ancient is testified to by a seal belonging to c.2850 B.C. (according to Langdon but more probably c.2500 B.C.) and dedicated to Naram-Sin, the fifth king of the Sargonic dynasty. The seal clearly shows a worshipper kissing the hand in homage. And the pictograph representing the word "to pray" among the ancient pre-Sargonic Sumerians was, suggests Langdon, a man "throwing a kiss" to his gods. Could this be the origin of the present-day custom of waving and kissing our hands to departing friends? Are we still following the ancient pagan customs of old?

This "throwing of the kiss" is perhaps an act of symbolism, transferring the essence of the kiss to a distant object. The "thrown kiss" is popular in the West today and probably has a common origin. This indirect kiss may have developed among different peoples independently. It can certainly be traced back to the Graeco-Roman civilisation and

#### THE KISS IN THE EAST

the custom quite likely descended to Europe where it is popular today with children and among lovers.

Among the Semites of early days, the ceremonial kiss was very common, but it was never given on the lips or the mouth. Actually, the ancient Rabbis strictly forbade kissing between the two sexes and its practice among the early Christians was strongly disapproved of by the Orthodox Jews as a most immoral and shocking custom.

There are sound reasons to believe that what inhibited the development of the kiss as a gesture of affection and love in the Middle East was its common use as a token of sanctity which must have prevented the discernment of its erotic potentialities. Or perhaps it was felt that a gesture used as a token of homage and in ritual worship should not also stand as a symbol of physical love.



THE KISS IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES

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Lip kissing is not universal among mankind, as we have already seen. Although it cannot be said that it is a feature only of highly civilised races, it is certainly unknown or not practised in many societies of a lower evolutionary grade of culture. On the other hand, there are primitive societies that have gone much further with it than common among us. It is however interesting to note again that according to the Kinsey Report, in America at least, kissing is more freely indulged in and more popular among the educated and cultured classes. Among the upper social circles kissing is very common as a mark of affection; but among the lower social levels, simple lip-kissing is not so popular. We have no corresponding information about Europe, but it may be presumed that the same holds true.

Ernest Crawley has pointed out that among the natives of the Harvey Island in the Pacific, the first-born son is forbidden to kiss his sisters. This avoidance of contact between brothers and sisters, perhaps based on "apprehension of mutual danger" (Malinowski), is rather widespread among primitive Australian cultures.

A lower category of the kiss as known among primitive peoples has been appropriately called by anthropologists and travellers as "rubbing of noses," or "the nose-kiss." This involves a mutual contact of noses as found among the Eskimos, the Laplanders, the Maoris, the inhabitants of Sandwich Islands, the Tongans, the Polynesians, and certain tribes of Malaya.

## THE KISS IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES

Charles Darwin, who has called the "rubbing of noses" the "Malayan Kiss," has related that the giver of the kiss lays his nose at right angles on the nose of the recipient and then rubs it for the duration of a handshake among Europeans.

According to Cook, among the South Sea Islanders, the rubbing of noses is rather vigorous and done with the tips of the noses. But among certain Australian tribes, the faces are mutually rubbed, so that the "kiss" is more a form of "face rubbing."

The nose and cheek may both be rubbed as, for instance, among the Yakuts, certain Mongolian peoples, the Khyoungtha, and the Lapps. As d'Enjoy says, the nose is pressed against the cheek, followed by a nasal inspiration with the eyelids almost closed. Then there may be a smacking of the lips, each phase of the "kiss" being clearly demarcated. The Samoan kiss is a sniff.

Tylor describes the "rubbing of noses" as a "salute by tasting"; Nyrop ascribes to it "taste and smell"; while d'Enjoy calls it "a bite and a suction." But these definitions really fall short of accuracy. Nor is the nose-rubbing a refinement of biting, though it is true that playful biting with the teeth is known among mothers of savage races. Ernest Crawley rightly points out:

"The kiss, therefore, is not to be referred to the bite, or even to gustation, much less to mastication, suction, or olfactory processes. The primary movement of the lips is simply transferred to a metaphorical use, so to say, and their sensitiveness is applied to a secondary object, whose stimulus is not hunger, but the analogous emotion of love, affection, and veneration." (*The Mystic Rose*.)

Nose-rubbing is thus materially different from what we commonly call a kiss and which consists primarily of the pressure of the lips on some part of the body of the other party, generally the face, lips, head, or the body. The tactile and the other senses do not here play a very important part although their significance should not be minimised. It is therefore very doubtful if the Western or Indian type of kiss could



be said to have evolved or been derived from the nose-rubbing of the societies on a much lower level of culture.

A rather imaginative suggestion has even been made that the kiss is a way of speech, based on the soft or loud sound often accompanying a kiss involving the sucking action of the buccal musculature. Nyrop compares this "inspiratory bilabial sound" to the "lip-click" of many barbarous languages.

The nose-kiss, or olfactory-kiss as it is sometimes called, may perhaps have evolved from older practices as exemplified among the aborigines of Australia who would kiss the ground, or breathe upon it, as a mark of respect. Among certain African tribes, the ground on which their chief has walked is kissed — again a sign of reverence and respect.

The nose-kiss is prevalent in diverse parts of the world, forcing us to the conclusion that among many cultures, especially the more primitive ones, this "kiss" is really connected with the sense of smell, unlike the Western and Indian form which is primarily of a tactile nature.

There are different varieties of the nose-kiss. The nose may just be lightly pressed on the cheek of the other party. This may be followed by an inhalation and a lowering of the eyelids. Carried a step further, the touch and inhalation may be followed by a smacking of the lips, though without the lips touching the cheek of the other person.

Though the nose-kiss is also known among the Samoans, the North American Eskimos, and the Black-feet tribe of American Indians, it is perhaps most typical of the Polynesian cultures. In New Zealand, the *hongi* or nose-pressing, is the kiss of welcome and affection. In Borneo, kissing is a variety of smelling, and the word connotative of smelling is also used to indicate the kiss. Here a native will never kiss in public or in the presence of others. It is always done in private, as it is taken to be a very voluptuous act, to be experienced only when utmost privacy is possible.

The prevalence of the olfactory-kiss among the primitive societies, and in the animal world, is due to the fact that the sense of smell plays



Depicting tender love, the adolescent girl shyly clasps her young lover round the neck as she seeks for his lips. Sculpture from Chitragupta temple, Khajuraho, 11th Century.

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Her left hand round  
his neck, her right on  
his head, she presses  
herself against him.  
Close-up of sculpture  
from Khajuraho, 11th  
century.

*(Copyright, The  
Archaeological Sur-  
vey of India)*



Clasping her lover round the shoulders, she tilts her lips up towards his, as his left hand supports and presses her head. Sculpture from Chitragupta temple, Khajuraho, 11th Century.

(Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India)





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Young lovers in a close embrace. Close-up of sculpture from Khajuraho, 11th Century.

(Photo: Moti Ram Jain)

## THE KISS IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES

a more important part among them than in the so-called civilised races of mankind. Among the primitives, the zone most intimately connected with the idea of love is that of smell, being allied to the process of nutrition, so essential to them.

In birds especially, smell plays quite an important part in the sexual relations between the sexes. For example, it is quite certain that the powerful musky odour exhaled by the musk-drake, *Cairina moschata*, during the breeding season, acts as a strong sexual stimulus to the female of the species.

The emanation of a special odour by the male during the rutting or breeding season is found in many species, like the crocodile, the muskrat and the musk-deer, elephants, horses, dogs, and bats. In daily life this fact is commonly and frequently observable among dogs and cats.

According to Surgeon Rear-Admiral C. M. Beadnell, the home of the nose-kiss was Vedic India of c.200 B.C. (c.1500 B.C.?) and it was not till the period of the Mahabharata that the mouth-to-mouth kiss came to be practised. The Hill tribes of India say "smell me," not "give me a kiss," according to this authority. In Borneo also, the word for "to kiss" is "to smell," and in Malay, to salute a person is "to smell him."

The nose-kiss is also prevalent among the gentle Balinese. It has been well described by M. Covarrubias:

"The love technique of the Balinese is natural and simple; kissing as we understand it, as a self-sufficient act, is unknown and the caress that substitutes for our mode of kissing consists in bringing the faces close enough to catch each other's perfume and feel the warmth of the skin, with slight movements of the head. . ." (*The Island of Bali.*)

A few more variations of the kiss may here be noted, as compared with what may be called the European variety, though it has been classified and recommended also by the Indian sages since olden days in their manuals on love.

The kiss of the North American Indian has been described as consisting of the laying of the lips softly on the cheek, without any move-



ment or sound. (Ling Roth.)

It has been pointed out that the North Queensland tribes of Australia do practise the kiss and it is well developed among them, being common between husband and wife as well as mother and children. It is also practised among such societies as the Kwakiutil Indians of north-western America, and the Trobrianders.

A variation of the nose-kiss is to be found among the natives of Gambia in Africa. A man wishing to greet a woman will take her hand and place it on his nose, smelling the back of it twice. Lovers of the Niger coast also do not kiss in our sense of the word, though they are not averse to embracing and cuddling. The Niger mother does not kiss her babies though she may rub them with her nose or cheek, and sometimes with the mouth—the nearest approach to the full kiss with the lips.

On the whole, it may be said that the lip-kiss is not used among the majority of African tribes. Winwood Reade has described with what horror a native girl looked on him for daring to kiss her in the European manner. It is said that according to the Melanesians and the natives of Madagascar, with their respiration they breathe out an emanation of themselves, a *mana*, and therefore lip-kissing would result in an undesirable intermingling of souls.

I. Schapera, writing in *Married Life in an African Tribe*, says that the ultimate sexual act is invariably preceded with some form or other of love-play. But kissing is a recent innovation, introduced by children who have been to school and is confined to the "educated" classes. It is not always disliked — some girls actually do like kissing — but the general feeling is best expressed in the words of one girl who said, "It is a waste of time, and eating dirt, because you swallow each other's saliva."

Although the lip-kiss is not common among the Balinese, the Finians, the Manus of New Guinea, the Tinguish of Luzon, the Lepchas of Sikkim, the Thonga of Central Africa, and many other primitive societies, it must

## THE KISS IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES

not therefore be contended that it is completely unknown among primitive races. As a matter of fact, Dr. Fernando Henriques writes: "The Marquesans (of Oceania), whose domineering females demand that their lovers shall excite them by sucking their breasts and kissing their vaginas. Two societies in this group, that of Ponape and Sansol in the Caroline Islands, have carried this particular sexual technique to elaborate lengths." (*Love in Action*.)

The above-mentioned author also points out that among certain North American tribes as well as the natives of the Trobriand Islands and those of Alor and Truk in the East Indies, the lip-kiss has been carried a stage further than in the West. The tongue and the lips are sucked with great force and then, at the right moment, saliva is allowed to dribble from one mouth into the other. Such "kisses" are considered a normal part of the whole sexual technique.

Among the natives of the Trobriand Islands, the kiss plays an important part in the prelude to love, "although the indigenes regard it as foolish and tedious to kiss for a long time as do the whites, pressing their mouths together," says Dr. Curt Thesing. The lovers will first search for a suitable place for love-making in the bachelors' quarters or in the forest, spread a mat on the floor or ground—the man taking off his "fig-leaf" and the girl her grass skirt. "They sit down or lie down side by side, caressing one another with arms and legs. Then they come to the familiar rubbing of noses, also pressing cheek against cheek and mouth to mouth. As their mood grows more passionate, mouth and tongue assume leading roles. Sometimes they bite one another's lips until the blood flows. The most passionately contrectative is the woman, whose affection finds vent above all in scratching her mate. The scratch-marks a man bears after such an encounter will be proudly displayed by him, just as will the marks of a sucking-kiss be shown off by a young fellow among ourselves." (Curt Thesing, *Genealogy of Love*.)

The above reference to scratch-marks and the proud exhibition of them by the male is very reminiscent of the same as expounded by



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Vatsyayana and the other ancient Hindu commentators and sages who wrote so profusely and so wisely on the whole technique of love.

We can only conclude that the primitive races who do not practise kissing in our sense of the term, that is, involving buccal contacts, have yet to discover the erogenous possibilities of the mucous membranes of the lips. Or is it likely that among them the feelings aroused by the contact of sensitive mucous areas of the lips and the mouth are very feeble as compared to those aroused by intimate caresses involving even more highly erogenous zones, and therefore the buccal kiss is looked upon with disdain.

## II

# THE KISS AND ITS CUSTOMS

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The ancient romans recognised three types of kisses. The *osculum* was the kiss of friendship given on the face or cheeks. The *basium*, imprinted on the mouth, was the kiss of affection; given with the lips on lips, this was exactly like our mode of kissing. The third variety was the *suavium* or lovers' kiss, the passionate kiss with the lips. Even today the distinction is retained to a certain extent among Europeans—the kiss on the cheek being between friends and the lip-kiss given and received by lovers.

Speaking in general terms, it may be said that kisses on the forehead denote respect; kisses on the cheek, affection and friendly feelings; kisses on the hand signify homage; on the feet, reverence and humility; and lastly, love, when imprinted on the lips.

A custom that has come down to us from olden days is that of "Kissing the Book." It is said that among the ancient Jews it was customary, though not mandatory, to kiss a Hebrew book if dropped accidentally. And the custom of "kissing the book" seems to be a derivation from hoary conceptions of the oath. By kissing a holy object, the oath uttered at the time was charged with supernatural energy. "One method of charging an oath with supernatural energy is to touch, or to establish some kind of contact with a holy object on the occasion when the oath is taken," says Westermarck. This is strengthened when at the same time the name of a supernatural being is uttered. Hence the retention in English ceremony of the words, "So help me God." In British Courts



of Law, the jurors on taking the oath end with these very words, followed by a token kissing of the New Testament held in the ungloved hand.

Derived indirectly from the Graeco-Roman ritual of kissing of sacred objects and the Jewish reverence for the Scroll of the Law, the kiss developed among the Christians into their characteristic ceremony of oath-taking. Says Chrysostom :

"But do thou, if nothing else, at least reverence the very book thou takest in thy hands to administer the oath, and, hearing what Christ therein saith of oaths, tremble and desist."

However, the kiss was not always prescribed in oath-taking ceremonies in early days. While swearing, the Hebrews merely laid their hands on the Scroll. During the Middle Ages, it was considered enough to place the hands on the Missal while taking an oath. The Lombards swore less serious oaths by their consecrated weapons and the more serious ones on the Gospels, but kissing the Book was apparently not practised.

The above reference to swearing by consecrated weapons has a parallel among the Angami Nagas who "place the barrel of a gun, or a spear, between their teeth, signifying by this ceremony that, if they do not act up to their agreement, they are prepared to fall by either of the two weapons," (J. Butler, *Travels and Adventures in Assam*.)

It must however be admitted that even in early days an oath sealed by a contact of lips was considered more binding than by mere hand contact with a sacred object—"the corporal oath."

There are other applications of the kiss in folklore. In order to regain health, relics were and are kissed. Perhaps to this may be attributed the childhood custom in the West of "kissing the hurt part to make it well":

" Who ran to help me, when I fell,  
And would some pretty story tell,  
Or kiss the place to make it well."

Ann Taylor, *My Mother*

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The idea of "kissing the place to make it well" is perhaps a relic of the ancient custom by which poison was sucked out of wounds. According to a legend, when in Paris, St. Martin of Tours saw a leper full of sores standing by the city gates. Going to him, he kissed the sores and immediately the leper was cleansed of all his disease. Similar stories are also told of St. Mayeul and other saints.

Most primitive peoples cannot understand a man or woman dying a natural death, without being wounded either accidentally or in a fight. Natural death thus came to be regarded as a result of sorcery or magic, and from this probably originated the custom of "sucking out the evil"—the evil being a malevolent spirit that had entered the body and likely to cause death. Thus this evil was sucked out by applying the lips to the affected part of the body.

The above custom of "sucking out the evil" is very widespread among the primitive races of Africa, Australia, certain parts of South America, and among the Eskimos and some American Indian tribes. The prerogative of sucking out the evil often lies with the witch doctor or "medicine man" who of course can take advantage of the poor sufferer by exhibiting some small stone or other object as the evil sucked out of him! Perhaps, due to psychological reactions, this actually did some good and alleviated the pain to a certain extent.

This custom may have led in later days to the sucking out of the poison from wounds, and ultimately to the old nursery remedy of "kissing and making it well." A child, and often even adults, will automatically put an injured or bruised part of the body in the mouth, if at all possible, and derive some consolation from the act. This seems almost to be a natural instinct and if so may have led to the idea and custom of "sucking out the evil" among primitive peoples.

In our times, boxers shake hands before the commencement of the bout, tennis players before and after a match. So in medieval times, the knights kissed before an engagement or tourney. And enemies kissed each other on the achievement of a reconciliation, as a bond



of peace. Even today, it is not uncommon to see professional gamblers symbolically kissing their cards or the dice, or the hand holding them, before play. In the French Court, the young pages used to kiss any object or article they were given to carry just as the peasants of the Alpine region were in the habit of kissing the gifts given to them.

Among current customs that of "kissing the bride" is perhaps one of the best known in Christian countries. This refers to the kiss that is exchanged between the newly-made bride and the bridegroom's best man, after the marriage ceremony is over. Although today taken in a light-hearted manner by both parties, this custom goes back to the time when the bride was always a captive from a neighbouring or enemy tribe and thus considered common property of the males of the capturing community. It is said that in Britain, in the times of the Roman Caesar, brothers would often hold their wives in common. Even in the latter part of the last century, it was the usual practice in Taveta, East Africa, for the bridegroom's four attendants to first enjoy the bride before she was taken over by the husband.

In Scotland of old, the bridal kiss had a special importance. In some parts of the country, after the completion of the wedding ceremony, the bride was expected to go round the assembled guests, accompanied by her bridesmaids, kissing every man present. At Bourges in France, the bride would embrace every man met in the streets after the marriage ceremony, though in the Marche province this was done before the nuptials.

According to an old Scottish source, "the parson who presided over the marriage ceremony uniformly claimed it as his inalienable privilege to have a smack at the lips of the bride immediately after the performance of his official duties." (Quoted by William Fielding.) It was believed that the future happiness of the bride greatly depended on this pastoral benediction. And so William Fielding caustically remarks, "As the pastor found the duty agreeable, he saw no reason to take issue with this popular belief."

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Kissing under the mistletoe is a popular custom in Western countries, whereby, during the Christmas festivities, a man is allowed to kiss a girl under a branch of the mistletoe which is generally hung up during this festal season. Sir James Frazer connects this custom with the licence of the Roman Saturnalia and Surgeon Rear-Admiral C. M. Beadnell with the Roman goddess of fertility, Flora. He believes that the custom of dancing and kissing under the mistletoe originated in phallic worship and points out that in 1660, a writer alluded to "people dancing the morrice about a post in honour of a whore."

The mistletoe was considered sacred to Friga and Mylitta, the Scandinavian and Babylonian-Assyrian goddesses respectively of beauty, fertility and love. So perhaps the present-day tradition of a woman allowing herself to be kissed under the mistletoe, especially during the Christmas season, may have come down to us from the ancient Babylonian worship of Mylitta. According to this custom, a woman had to visit the temple of Mylitta, the Babylonian Venus, once in her lifetime, and standing beneath the mistletoe allow herself to be used by any stranger who tossed her a coin, pronouncing, "I invoke the goddess Mylitta."

The Babylonian custom was obligatory on all women, rich or poor, noble or of humble birth, beautiful or ugly, bold and passionate or of a modest disposition. It is said that those with wealth would ride to the temple in covered chariots and wait their turn under the watchful eyes of many attendants. And every girl and woman had to wear on the brows the symbolic crown of fig-leaves as she sat under the symbolic mistletoe—the plant sacred to the lovely Venus who has been worshipped under different names in most parts of the world.

Venus is no longer the Queen of Love, and the ancient Babylonians are gone for ever. But her cult survives in the privilege of Western man to kiss a girl underneath the mysterious shrub at Yule-tide.

It is said that on New Year's Day, the good burghers of New Amsterdam and their wives would dress themselves in their finery to visit the Governor who would then kiss all the women "A Happy New



Year." He would be followed by the head usher who would go about "embracing all the young vrouws" and giving all the young ones with "rosy lips a dozen hearty smacks," in return for their good wishes.

In mythology, especially the Teutonic, Greek and Latin, the kiss was often supposed to unbind or terminate a spell, as in the Arthurian legend where the enchanted maiden was changed back to her own true self from her spell by a kiss—*le fier baiser*. Among Western fairy stories, let it be remembered, one of the most popular is that of the Prince who awakened the Sleeping Beauty with a kiss.

Analogous perhaps, without being an actual derivation, may be the custom among primitive peoples of cancelling a taboo. Thus, for example, among the aboriginal Australians, a body contact—analogueous to the kiss—is supposed to remove the taboo between two persons concerned in a rite. Writes A. E. Crawley :

"Closely parallel to the magical power of the kiss in breaking tabu and restoring to consciousness is the myth-motive in which a kiss produces both forgetfulness and remembrance. This capacity is evidently based on human experience, and is significant in connexion with the practice of the kiss in religion. It brings to one focus the kiss of love and the kiss of adoration." (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 7.)

Elsewhere in this book we have mentioned that even today kissing of the Pope's toe obtains on ceremonial occasions. According to Matthew of Westminster, originally it was customary to kiss the hands of His Holiness. But in the 8th century, a woman devotee not only kissed the hand but squeezed it. Realising his moral danger the Pope cut off his hand and was thereafter forced to offer his foot. Actually any visitor to the Pope is entitled to kiss the cross embroidered on the right shoe; Bishops kiss his knee as well.

The kiss plays an integral part in many of the games of children in the West, games of yesterday and today; and it is a common forfeit awarded for losing in the party games of adults. In the days gone by, when the card game of Whist was so popular and Bridge unknown, it

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was a custom among certain circles of players that if during the play of one hand, the ace, deuce, three, and four fell in the right sequence, the last player, that is, the one playing the fourth card, could claim a kiss from the dealer if he so wished. And we dare say, if a man he always so wished when the dealer happened to be a young and fair maid!

Among the kissing games of yore was this one prevalent in England. On certain holidays, the young men and women of the villages would move about in a ring till one girl broke away and going to any man she fancied place a chip in his hand. She would then run across the green, chased by the man who if he caught her—and he always did, we presume!—could place his arm round her waist, bring her back to the circle, and kiss her a dozen times before the others.

Kissing as a sport was also common on Easter Monday in County Down, Ireland, when men and young women would congregate in pleasant surroundings. The game consisted of the men kissing the women. Where the sport came in, we just don't know!

Here is another rather amusing custom which used to prevail in England of old. Visitors to the famous Billingsgate fish market were ordered by the porters to salute a certain post with a kiss and pay sixpence in tribute. If met with refusal, the stranger was taken hold of and his posterior parts bumped against the post in lieu of the kiss and the fine. It is presumed that this quaint custom originated in the worship of the old Celtic god, Beli.

Then there is the custom that once thrived in New England of Colonial American times. If a man could take possession of a girl's gloves, by a ruse or otherwise, he could claim a kiss for their return. A nice friendly custom. But here comes the rub. If the girl kissed a man while he was asleep, she could claim a pair of gloves from him as a forfeit!

The common custom of putting "X's" at the bottom of love letters as symbolic of kisses hardly needs any mention. But the modern maid has gone a step further and often makes her "written kisses" even more



literal and realistic : she will rouge her lips well and thus actually imprint her kisses on her love epistles. How much more convincing than mere crosses and how much more representative of the beauty of her shapely lips !

But the origin of placing "X's" to represent kisses in a letter has a more dignified origin and takes us back to the place of the kiss in religion. The use of crosses probably dates back to the time when very few persons could read and still fewer could write. Yet, wills, contracts, deeds, and personal documents of all kinds had to be signed to be binding on the parties. Unable to write, such illiterate persons placed their mark on the documents, and as in those days religion played an important part in the daily life of the people, it was but natural that the signifying mark commonly used took the form of the holy cross. After it had been placed on the deed, the "signer" would kiss it as a pledge of his good faith. Thus, it is said, a cross made on paper came to be associated with the kiss. It has been further suggested that because of the motives of reverence connected with the marking of the cross and kissing it, the shape of the cross used was that of the cross of St. Andrew, which resembles our letter "X", and not of the cross of Calvary — like the one on which Christ was crucified. However, there is no proof for this belief and it is quite likely that in early days the shape of the cross as a signature took no definite and fixed form.

In medieval times, the kiss was also perhaps a seal of contract. It was symbolical of marriage as *initium consummationis nuptiarum*. The Latin *asculata pax* was a reconciliation or peace confirmed by a kiss. The gifts exchanged between engaged persons were the *osculum interveniens*. If one party died before marriage, the gifts had to be returned to the giver should no kiss have been exchanged at the time of betrothal to seal the pact.

Such are some of the Customs of the Kiss.

THE KISS IN RELIGION

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The kiss has played a very important part in religion, especially Christianity. The Kiss of Charity or the Kiss of Peace was common as a salutation in token of Christian Brotherhood. This was a rite practised rather widely and often promiscuously among the Christians of an early age. It is no longer current except among certain religious groups like the Dunkers and then only between members of the same sex. Dunkers, Dunkards, or Tunkers are popular names of the German Baptist Brethren, a group founded by Alexander Mack in 1708 at Schwarzenau in Germany. They used to practise adult baptism, hold love-feasts, emphasised simplicity in living, and of course believed in the Kiss of Peace.

The Kiss of Peace, first mentioned by Justin in the 2nd century A.D., came to be one of the most characteristic elements in early Christian ritual. Promiscuous kissing became a custom — probably a relic of ancient pagan rituals, and it seems to have shocked the Jewish Church. There is St. Paul's dictum to "Salute one another with a holy kiss" — to be given freely without any limitations as to rank or sex "among those who were all one in Christ Jesus." Later, the custom became so promiscuous that it was limited to kissing between women only or between men, but not allowed between different sexes. The love feasts of the early Christians, the Agape, were similarly criticised by contemporary clerics. Tertullian especially held very strong views on such matters. According to E. Crawley, the Kiss of Peace involved "a peculiar sentiment, if we consider it in connexion with the Christian ideal and practice



of love, in which passion was encouraged, though chastity was enforced."

St. Cyril wrote: "This kiss (the Kiss of Peace) is the sign that our souls are united, and that we banish all remembrance of injury."

Among other instances of the kiss in Christianity may be mentioned the kissing of the newly baptised by the celebrant on the conclusion of the ceremony; the kiss bestowed on penitents after Absolution; the king after his coronation; and the Bishop on his consecration received the sacred and ritualistic kiss; and let us not forget that even today the foot of the Pope is kissed during ceremonial audiences, ancient usage even by A.D. 847, and probably a derivation of the Roman emperor-worship. The ritual kiss however underwent a simplification in medieval times. In the 12th century was introduced the *instrumentum pacis* or *osculatorium*. This was a plaque made of wood, ivory, or metal, and carved with different designs. Fitted with a handle, it was brought to the altar for the celebrant in the ritual to kiss and then taken round to the members of the congregation.

Writes Charles Reade in his *The Cloister and the Hearth*: "Kissing of images and the Pope's toe is eastern paganism. The Egyptians had it of the Assyrians, the Greeks of the Egyptians, and we of the Romans whose Pontifex Maximus had his toe kissed during the empire. The Druids kissed their High Priest's toe a thousand years before Christ."

The Roman Catholic Church enjoins on the worshippers the solemn duty of kissing sacred relics, the Cross, the Gospels, all consecrated articles, the vestments and utensils of the Liturgy, the hands of the clergy, and the kissing of the Host. The Anglican clergy will kiss the cross of the stole before it is put on. Sacred relics are also ritually kissed in the Greek Orthodox Church.

There are many references to the kiss in the Bible. The kiss as a mode of worship is exemplified by "Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves" (Hosea xiii 2). And again, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (I Kings xix 18).

## THE KISS IN RELIGION

The kiss of salutation is common in the Bible. Jacob kissed his father Isaac, Aaron kissed Moses and the latter Jethro, Samuel kissed Saul when he anointed him King. And David kissed Jonathan and his son Absalom.

In "Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer" (Prov. xxiv 26), we have the kiss as a sign of approbation. Sinners kissed the feet of Jesus. The Judas Kiss, the kiss of treachery, has passed into proverbial lore.

Apparently, the kiss as a token of love between men and women was also current though rarely mentioned in the Bible: "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept" (Genesis xxix 11). And Rachel was young and beautiful.

The kiss as homage was apparently not restricted to the deity or the power considered beneficent. Many old pictures extant depict Satan receiving kisses on his posterior from his worshippers during a Witches' Sabbath.

In the days gone by when children were often chastised with the cane on the posterior parts for misbehaviour, they were ordered first to kiss the cane and mutter:

"Dear kind rod that's trusty stood;  
Without thee ne'er should I do good."

The kiss was used in worship even by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Cicero has recorded that the lips and beard of the statue of Heracles at Agrigentum had been worn away, more or less completely, by the kisses of the worshippers.

The above reference to the lips and beard of Heracles of Agrigentum has a parallel in Christianity. The toe of St. Peter's bronze statue in Rome which is kissed by the Roman Catholics has almost been worn away by the friction of lips of devout worshippers since the fifth century.

There is a rather pretty belief in Jewish lore according to which a righteous and pious person high in the esteem of God, dies as a result of a kiss from the latter. Thus, they believed, died Abraham,



Jacob, Issac, Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. There is a legend that when St. Monica was dying, a young child kissed her on the breast, and she peacefully passed away. The Rabbinical folklore is preserved even today in the Italian "Addormentarsi nel bacio del Signore" — "To fall asleep in the kiss of the Lord." According to Nyrop, however, even the kiss of a ghost could also produce death.

"It is very significant of the affectionate element in religion that the kiss should have played so large a part in its ritual. The meeting-point between the social and the religious aspects of the kiss is perhaps to be found in the application of the salute to saints and religious heroes. Thus, Joseph kissed Jacob, and his disciples kissed Paul . . . . All that can be said is that so fine a human sentiment is on the border-line between social and religious feeling. . . . The early Christians exploited the social value of the kiss. . . . It has been argued that the ritualistic 'kiss of peace' alone obtained among the Christians, and that the social salute was not practised. But the evidence is strong enough to prove the latter custom." (Ernest Crawley, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 7.)



Smiling lips about to  
indulge in a kiss.  
Sculpture from the  
Lingaraja temple,  
Bhubanesvar, 11th  
century.

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34

A tender, loving kiss.  
Sculpture from the  
Surya temple, Ko-  
narak, 13th century.

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vey of India)*



35

Clasped in the passion of the kiss. Sculpture from the Surya temple, Konarak, 13th century.

(Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India)





36

A rather exotic pose with the couple standing one behind the other, the girl's arm behind the head of the other. Sculpture from the Surya temple, Konarak, 13th century.

*(Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India)*

# 13

## THE KISS IN LITERATURE

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Considering the importance of the kiss, it is not surprising that it should have many connotations in literature, especially in that of the West.

The word "kiss" has a place in many English idioms and idiomatic phrases. Here are a few of them:

*Kiss and be friends* — be reconciled after a quarrel and seal the reconciliation with a kiss.

*Kiss away* — remove by kissing, as for example, "Mother will kiss the pain away."

*Kiss the cup* — drink alcoholic liquor.

*Kiss the dust* — be defeated; compelled to submit; be overthrown; be humiliated; be slain.

*Kiss the ground* — be humiliated; prostrate oneself in homage.

*Kiss the post* — be shut out due to arrival too late or after closing time.

*Kiss the rod* — accept punishment submissively and without complaint.

*Kiss the gunner's daughter* — being flogged on board ship. In olden days, sailors in the Royal Navy who were to be flogged were first tied to the breech of a cannon.

*Kiss of Judas* — a deceitful act pretending courtesy or affection. The phrase is derived from the Biblical reference to Judas Iscariot who betrayed his Master with a kiss (Matt, xxvi, 49.)



" So Judas kissed his Master,  
And cried, 'All hail!' whereas he meant all harm."

—Shakespeare, *Henry VI*

*Kiss the scavenger's daughter* — be put to torture. Actually, "the scavenger's daughter" was an instrument of torture, perhaps invented by Henry the VIII's Lieutenant of the Tower, William Skevington. The latter word got corrupted to "scavenger" and the invention came to be known as "his daughter."

\*     \*     \*     \*

In the nineteenth and the present centuries, the sexual kiss, the lip-to-lip kiss of love, is commonly referred to in literature and seen on the screen. It occurs only too frequently in modern romance and the art of kissing is glorified as an achievement of the ideal lover.

" A long, long kiss of youth and love  
And beauty, all concentrating like rays  
Into one focus kindled from above;  
Such kisses as belong to early days,  
Where heart and soul and sense in concert move,  
And the blood's lava, and the pulse ablaze,  
Each kiss a heart-quake — for a kiss's strength,  
I think it must be reckoned by its length."

Thus sang Lord Byron in the last century, the poetry and prose of which is full of the ecstasies of the meeting of lovers' lips. And how such poetic fancies must have stirred the soul of the nineteenth century Miss, as it continues to do even today. Probably, some of the poets and writers actually felt and had experienced what they wrote about, especially in nineteenth-century France, like the great Flaubert: "Yes, yes, kiss me, kiss me deep! Your kisses bring me new life!" Perhaps he was expressing his own deep feelings when he wrote these words, unlike many of the British writers of the time for whom there lay a wide chasm between theory and practice.

From Elizabethan England comes Marlowe's famous evocation from

## THE KISS IN LITERATURE

*Faust :*

" Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.  
Her lips suck forth my soul :  
See where it flies . . . "

And in eighteenth-century Germany, Johan Schiller, extolled the ecstasy of the kiss :

" And his kiss ! What ecstatic feeling !  
Like two flames that lovingly entwine ;  
Like the harp's soft tones together stealing  
Into one sweet harmony divine. —  
" Soul and soul embraced, commingled, blended,  
Lips and cheeks with trembling passion burn'd  
Heaven and Earth, in pristine chaos ended  
Round the blissful lovers madly twined."

Listen to the advice of Elizabeth Akers Allen to the blushing young maid :

" Blush, happy maiden, when you feel  
The lips which press love's glowing seal ;  
But as the slow years darklier roll,  
Grown wiser, the experienced soul  
Will own as dearer far than they  
The lips which kiss the tears away."

Perhaps you remember Ben Jonson's popular song *To Celia* :

" Drink to me only with thine eyes  
And I will pledge with mine.  
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
And I'll not look for wine."

One does not have to be rich to give kisses. They cost nothing, but give them with love, says J. G. Saxe :

" Give me kisses ! Nay, 'tis true  
I am just as rich as you ;  
And for every kiss I owe,



I can pay you back, you know.

Kiss me, then,

Every moment — and again."

From that immortal lover, Percy Shelley, comes this great evocation of *Love's Philosophy* :

" The fountains mingle with the river,  
And the rivers with the ocean;  
The winds of heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion;  
Nothing in the world is single;  
All things, by a law divine,  
In one another's being mingle.  
Why not I with thine ? —

" See the mountains kiss high Heaven  
And the waves clasp one another;  
No sister-flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother;  
And the sunlight clasps the earth  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea :  
What are all these kisses worth  
If thou kiss not me ?"

Perhaps the most touching and soul-stirring are the words of Mary Townsend, written in the last century :

" I believe if I should die  
And you should kiss my eyelids when I lie  
Cold, dead, and dumb to all the world contains,  
The folded orbs would open at thy breath,  
And, from its exile in the isles of death,  
Life would come gladly back along my viens."

To end this book on a very pleasant note, here are some famous and other little-known quotations on the kiss and kissing, to supplement the many scattered in the book itself.

## THE KISS IN LITERATURE

O Love, O fire! once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul thro'  
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

—Tennyson

Give me a kisse and to that kisse a score;  
Then to that twenty, add a hundred more :  
And thousand to that hundred : so kisse on,  
To make that thousand up a million;  
Treble that million, and when that is done,  
Let's kisse afresh, as when we first begun.

—Robert Herrick

Four sweet lips, two pure souls, and one undying affection,—these  
are love's pretty ingredients for a kiss.

—Bovee

What is a kisse ? Why this, as some approve;  
The sure sweet cement, glue, and lime of love.

—Robert Herrick

Tell me who first did kisses suggest ?  
It was a mouth all glowing and blest;  
It kisses and it thought of nothing beside.

—Heine

And steal immortal blessing from her lips;  
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,  
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin.

—Shakespeare

I throw a kiss across the sea,  
I drink the winds as drinking wine,  
And dream they all are blown from thee,  
I catch the whisper's kiss of thine.

—Joaquin Millar

.... And when my lips meet thine  
Thy very soul is wedded unto mine.

—H. Boyesen



KAMA-CHUMBANA

Then come and kiss me, sweet and twenty,  
Youth's stuff will not endure.

—*Shakespeare*

Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,  
Say that health and wealth have missed me.  
Say I'm growing old, but add,  
Jenny kissed me.

—*Leigh Hunt*

Mouth he remembered; the quaint orifice  
From which came heat that flamed upon the kiss.

—*J. Ransom*

I clasp thy waist; I feel thy bosom's beat. Oh, kiss me into faintness,  
sweet and dim.

—*Alexander Smith*

A thousand kisses buy my heart from me;  
And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.  
What is ten hundred touches unto thee?  
Are they not quickly told and quickly gone?  
Say, for non-payment that the debt should double,  
Is twenty thousand kisses such a trouble?

—*Shakespeare, Venus and Adonis*

And with a velvet lip, print on his brow such language as tongue  
hath never spoken.

—*Sigourney*

Upon thy cheek I lay this zealous kiss,  
As seal to the indenture of my love.

—*Shakespeare*

A soft lip  
Would tempt you to eternity of kissing!

—*Ben Jonson*

The kiss you take is paid by that you give:

The joy is mutual, and I'm still in debt. —*Lord Lansdowne*

THE KISS IN LITERATURE

Never to have been kissed is never to have lived.

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox*

I understand thy kisses, and thou mine,  
And that's a feeling disputation.

—*Shakespeare*

Oh! let me live forever on those lips!  
The nectar of the gods to these is tasteless.

—*Dryden*

Give me one kiss, I'll give it to thee again;  
And one for interest, if thou wilt have twin.

—*Shakespeare*

She brought her cheek up close, and leaned on his; at which he  
whispered kisses back on hers.

—*Dryden*

Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,  
Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.

—*Shakespeare*

Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy kisses shed  
On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so led  
Back to her mouth which answers there for all.

—*Dante Gabriel Rossetti*

I came to feel how far above  
All fancy, pride, and fickle maidenhood,  
All earthly pleasure, all imagined good,  
Was the warm tremble of a devout kiss.

—*Keats*

A pleasing trembling thrills through all my blood,  
Whene'er you touch me with your melting hand;  
But when you kiss, oh! 'tis not to be spoke.

—*Gildon*

Touch but my lips with those fair lips of thine.

—*Shakespeare*



KAMA-CHUMBANA

The lips that have been innocent of passion's kiss frequently ooze with gossip's poison.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

\* \* \* \*

Finally, here are a few extracts on the subject of kissing from the celebrated work *The Perfumed Garden* by Sheikh Nefzawi, often written Nefzoui (Editions de la Fontain d'Or) :

" First he will kiss my cheeks, then suck my lip,

\* \* \* \*

And with kisses set my blood on fire."

" And when I kissed her, I drank from her lips  
As doth the camel at a welcome stream;  
Till now I feel the sweet langor of death  
Steal through my limbs at her clinging embrace."

"A kiss should be sonorous. Its sound, light and prolonged, takes its rise between the tongue and the moist edge of the palate. It is produced by a movement of the tongue in the mouth and a displacement of the saliva provoked by suction."

"Kiss not my hand,  
But, let your luscious lips lie loose on mine,  
That I may drink the nectar which outflows  
From love's enchanted spring !"

" Heart pressed to heart and lips to lips cleaving,  
Thus would I live, all other joys leaving !"

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