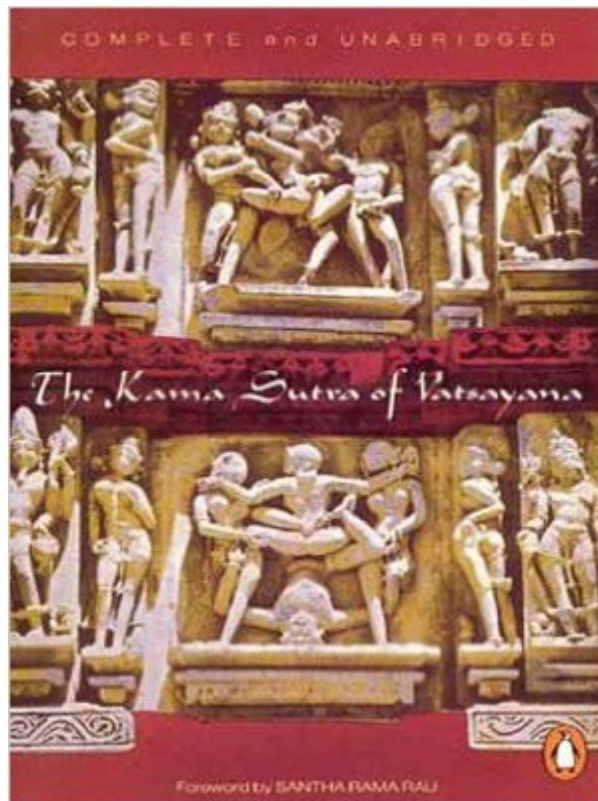


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Kama Sutra Of Vatsayana



Synopsis

The 1964 publication of Sir Richard Burton's translation marked the first wide appearance in English of the Kama Sutra and was celebrated as a literary event of highest importance. As vital to an understanding of ancient Indian civilization as the works of Plato and Aristotle are to the West, the Kama Sutra has endured for 1,700 years as an indisputable classic of world literature. Written with frankness and unassuming candor, the Kama Sutra remains one of the most readable and enjoyable of all the classics of antiquity. A work of philosophy, psychology, sociology, Hindu dogma, scientific inquiry, and sexology, the Kama Sutra's importance is so great that it has at the same time both affected Indian civilization and remained an indispensable key to understanding it.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book has a wide reputation among English-speaking readers, especially among those who haven't read it. That explains why its reputation is so completely mistaken. Vatsyayana's reputation for describing couples' gymnastics comes from just a few pages out of 200 or so. The rest of this book is about all the other social aspects of men and women in each others' company. It emphasizes the "64 arts", a liberal education including literacy and literary games, as well as carpentry, cooking, and other domestic skills. It talks about courtship and courtesanship, monogamy and polygamy, brides and widows, and suasion and seduction. It discusses the dark side of human passion, including capturing the object of one's love by main force. There are even love-charms and potions for ensuring faithfulness. I'm not forgetting the discussion physical affection. Yes, there are

the many ways for a man and woman to come together. A few are familiar, others acrobatically improbable. Vatsyayana pays attention to many kinds of caresses as well. Some, including love-bites, seem suited only to the most passionate of lovers seeking the strongest sensations. Such acts may not appeal to some readers, but the author keeps coming back to the precept that what's right is what's right for the people involved and for their time and place. Vatsyayana mentions oral sexuality, by and for men, by and for women. He addresses all combinations, but same-sex couples get very little attention. He discusses, in passing, limited use of toys. He also mentions relations with 'eunuchs', apparently a euphemism for homosexual men. I suspect that this confusing usage was introduced by the Victorian translator, sir Richard Burton. I also suspect that the medicinal recipes have lost something in translation.

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