Religious Law, Secular Law, and Sexual Deviation in Ancient India
MLA, Saturday 12:30 to 12:30 PM, Winter 2016
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The Laws of Manu, the Arthasastra, and the Kamasutra
This course will compare these three important ancient Indian scientific texts (Shastras) in order, first, to understand the social norms for religion and sexuality in ancient India (in The Laws of Manu); and then to discover how two widely accepted scientific texts (the Kamasutra, on pleasure, and the Arthasastra, on politics) challenged those norms. A 10 to 15 page paper will be due at the end of the quarter, addressing some conflict between Manu and either or both of the other texts on a particular point of religion and/or sexuality.

Schedule:

Week 1: January 9: Background: The Shastras
Reading: Read both my introduction and Patrick Olivelle’s, and as much of Manu as you can, in either of the two translations.
Class: I will largely present background material, and explain the philosophy of the course.

Week 2: January 16: Religion in Manu, part 1
Reading: Finish reading Manu
Class: Dharma in the first half of Manu

Week 3: January 23: Religion in Manu, part 2
Reading: Start on the Introduction to the Arthasastra in either the small or the full translation.
Class: Dharma in the second half of Manu

Week 4: January 30: Sexuality in Manu
Reading: First half of Arthasastra, in either concise or full version.
Class: Sexuality in all of Manu.

Week 5: February 6: Religion in the Arthasastra
Reading: Second half of Arthasastra, in either concise or full version.
Class: Pro-religion arguments in the Arthasastra.

Week 6: February 13: Resistance to Religion in the Arthasastra
Reading: Introduction to the Kamasutra.
And start nosing around for a paper topic if you don’t already have one.
Class: Anti-religious arguments in the Arthasastra.
Week 7: February 20: Sensuality in the *Arthasastra*
Reading: First half of the *Kamasutra*
Class: Resistance to sensuality in the *Arthasastra*.

Week 8: February 27: Resistance to Religion in the *Kamasutra*
Reading: Second half of the *Kamasutra*
Class: The absence of religion in the *Kamasutra*

Week 9: March 5: Sexuality in the *Kamasutra*
Reading: None. Work on your papers.
Class: Sex and sensuality in the *Kamasutra*

Week 10: March 12: Presentation of short abstracts of papers.
Full papers due electronically by midnight.

**Books to buy, all inexpensive paperbacks:**

   His translation has better notes than mine, but doesn’t read as well.

**A book to consult in the library if you don’t want to buy it [it costs over $100]**