This work is the result of a research programme carried on by me for the last few years under the kind guidance of Dr. Mukunda Madhava Sharma, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., Kāvyatīrtha, Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Gauhati University. In fact, I have been toying with the idea of doing some research work in the field of Ancient Indian Polity ever since I had passed the B.A. examination of the University of London with Honours in History. As a result of this, I had made private studies for a long time, which also resulted, in the mean-while, in my taking the M.A. Public Administration examination of the Utkal University. I intended to continue my studies in the University of London itself, but circumstances did not permit me to do so, and I had to take an assignment in the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and thence in the BOC/0.I.L. Despite of the unacademic atmosphere of the spheres of my service, during all these years, I have been studying some original and modern critical works on Ancient Indian political ideas and institutions. My studies, however, did not take a proper shape until I came in contact with my learned and kind guide, Professor M.M. Sharma, a few years back. I received the first inspiration for research from Professor A.L. Basham, who was my teacher in the London University, and subsequently I have been receiving the most
useful guidance from Professor M.M. Sharma. I also had the inspiration and encouragement from Shri D.K. Borooah, at present Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals, Government of India, New Delhi. I could draw in from his vast treasure of erudite scholarship covering a wide variety of subjects. It is my great pleasure to put on record my deep sense of gratitude to these learned Professors and Shri D.K. Borooah. I am grateful to my guide and his illustrious wife Mrs. Elma Sharma, for ungrudgingly helping me in putting the diacritical marks in the type copies of the thesis. With the ritual of doing reverence to the preceptors, I now present this work to the world of scholars with a very appropriate quotation from Kālidāsa (Raghuvaṇa, I.10):

\[\text{teśa santah śrotuṁ arhanti sadasaśvaktihatavah}
\]  
\[\text{hymnah saślakṣyate hvamanu viśuddhīḥ śvēśikkāni vē.}\]

(The learned men, capable of discriminating between the good and the bad, may kindly listen to this work, because, the purity or impurity of gold can be ascertained only by putting it into the fire).

Pabitra Kumar Chaudhuri