The thesis was submitted in the University of Calcutta for Ph.D. degree in the year 1981. One of the learned Examiners, however, pointed out a few shortcomings and could not recommend for awarding the degree. While rewriting the thesis I have tried scrupulously to follow and honour the advices and valuable criticisms of the learned Examiners which they made in their reports and which I could see with the permission of the Registrar of the University.

The result of the thesis was communicated to me early in January, this year. I started rewriting but before could complete my previous guide Dr. H. L. Chatterjee all on a sudden left this world for heaven. The work in its present form has been completed under the supervision of Dr. M. Chakraborty, In-charge, Deptt. of History, Post-Graduate Centre, Calcutta University (Agartala Centre).

The aim of the study is to show that realpolitik in its basic character changes little in any age and one who, in establishing political theories, depends on facts and experience can create something that gets an eternal
value. Such a thing is proved "by Kautilya and Machiavelli. Though they lived in countries that are distant from each other by thousands of miles and lived in ages separated from each other by a gap of eighteen hundred years their analysis and conclusions based on realpolitik were similar. The spirit of dandaniti of Kautilya is amply perceivable in the central theme of Machiavelli's The Prince.

Both Kautilya and Machiavelli dealt with what Shakespeare called the "practic part of life", the cult of the useful. In a land where realpolitik had been continuously subordinated to a sense of the mystical, where the ideal of life's end was retirement to the forests and sāramas, where conceptions of chronology were expressed in terms of 'Kalpas', where matters of political science could create little interest, the importance of Kautilya's work was undoubtedly great.

The first chapter gives a general description of the authors' life, education and achievements. It is examined how Kautilya, who later became Chandragupta Maurya's Prime Minister, was the motivating power behind Chandragupta Maurya's early attempts on the throne of Magadha. On the question of the authenticity and date of the Arthasastra attempt has been made to examine all the available theories of various scholars — both Eastern and Western.

The second chapter contains a somewhat detailed account of the
political condition of the two countries during the period when the authors lived. It is seen that both the lands were under a pernicious moral laxity which Kautilya tried to fight by installing Chandragupta Maurya on the throne but in which attempt Machiavelli failed. The factors and forces that shaped the ideas of the authors have been examined. The chapter ends with bringing Kautilya’s established monarch and Machiavelli’s new prince into limelight who would work for the solution of their country’s problem.

In the third chapter attempt has been made to show that both Kautilya and Machiavelli believed in the indispensability of the use of force. Kautilya’s dandaśī has a real counterpart in Machiavelli’s realpolitik. The chapter also throws glimpses of light on the nature of the monarch’s duties and responsibilities.

The fourth chapter deals with the authors’ views on the forms of government. Both held that a monarch’s ability was proved by his competence to select the right persons as ministers and advisers. The last pages deal elaborately with their views on ‘the national military organization’.

The fifth chapter examines at length the views of the authors on the place of religion in politics. Machiavelli was not against using religion in politics, as is generally supposed. Religion can be used provided it helps the prince in his
materialistic achievements. An attempt has been made to show
the conflict of pagan morals with Christian ethics. Machia-
velli opts for the former and is prepared to commit crimes
for its sake. A State and a people are governed in a diffe-
rent way from an individual. Public life has its own morality,
to which Christian principles sometimes tend to be an obstacle.
It is a mistake to say, as many critics do, that Machiavelli
is unconcerned with the ethical questions. The question of
means and end is very important here.

In the final analysis it appears that both the Indian master-
politician and his Italian counterpart spoke for an autonomy
of politics — 'politics which is beyond good and evil' — but
the immediate impression is that they did not ignore the force
of religion but treated it as subservient to the command of
politics. The chapter also includes the authors' views on the
authority of the King and shows that the people have no right
against an erring King.

The sixth chapter is the last chapter. However, it is also
one of the most important chapters. It has shown the authors'
originality in their ideas and precepts and has particularly
examined the various theories on the originality of Machiavelli
and the real meaning of his works and finally has discussed the
vitality of the Arthasastra and The Prince and their influence
on posterity. Kautilya and Machiavelli, though distant from us
in time and culture, still stir passion, enthusiasm or indignation or debate, and that is because both of them had propounded theses which upset some deeply established ideas of their time. Machiavelli in his Discourses observes that men are "neither utterly wicked nor perfectly good". Like everyone else in this world, Machiavelli and Kautilya also are neither simply good nor simply bad.

In rewriting the thesis necessary details have been included and repetitions avoided. Special care has been taken to ensure that conclusions are based on an analytical treatment and supported by balanced and adequate comments. I have gone through all the available up-to-date works of both Indian and western stalwarts on the subject and have mentioned their masterpieces either in the footnotes or in the bibliography.