INTRODUCTION

In the large framework of geography, human occupancy, manifested in the form of either rural or urban areas, claims a significant place for study. Inspired particularly by the current trend of rapid urbanisation which brings in its wake a series of problems including the inherent evils of city growth, the social scientists have discovered enough scope not only for the study of physical structure but also the functional organisation of the cities, as brought about by a complex interaction of historical, physical, social and economic factors.

In this the geographer has to cover a common ground with many other social scientists particularly the sociologists. There is no denying the fact that there is a noticeable overlap though difference in the point of view and approach is unfailingly obvious. The geographer, however, is primarily concerned with interpreting the patterns and relationships that exist within the urban areas, on the one hand, and between the urban areas and the non-urban areas that the cities serve on the other. Equally important as the relationships in, or oriented to, a particular city, is the non-specialised study of the distribution of urban settlements in their spatial relationship kindred to the distribution study of any other phenomenon on the earth.

(1)
The case study of individual cities makes a useful addition to the existing mass of literature on towns as it frequently though not necessarily provides clues for conceptual generalisations, in addition to its focussing attention on many of the urban features which by careful analysis provide reliable base for planning the city's future and are in themselves of great academic value.

The choice of Bombay for the present study is not very arbitrary. No study of Bombay city has been seriously attempted from a geographical point of view. This is a city, where the characteristic features typical of a metropolis have developed to the maximum - at least in India - and offer opportunities for their study. The growth of the city - its build and plan, its demographic features, its functional organisation, including that of industry and services, all present fascinating problems. The rapid development of the city and its expansion into the suburbs have given rise to features like the 'ribbon-development' and the satellite towns which are not to be found in most of the other Indian cities.

The thesis is the case study of the core of the metropolitan region, where both form and functions have been examined in detail. The whole thesis is presented in two volumes. The first covers in detail the city
proper, while in the second the creep of the city into the adjoining suburbs and the city's regional relations have been examined. The four main facets of the study viz. the physical and cultural conditions involved in the origin of the nucleus of the settlement, the reactions of this nucleus in its functional and morphological development to the impact of historical events, the life and organization of the contemporary settlement viewed areally and the interrelations between the settlement and the surrounding area, - have been covered in the ten chapters.

The first chapter incorporates the historical outlines of the city, the historical impact of the principles and policies of lands and peoples abroad, as they have promoted or retarded the development of the city in its initial stages. The second chapter gives an account of the physical environments of the city that have, to a considerable degree, affected the layout and the later growth of the city. These two chapters make 'the historical and physical background for the city's growth'.

The growth and physical structure of the city are discussed in the third chapter. It includes the chronological growth of the city, the layout of the streets and buildings and their characteristics. Included in the chapter are also the areal growth and reclamation and a brief description and interpretation of the non-residential
structural units. 'The arrangement of morphological features of the city does not lend itself to some of the generalizations': this has been examined at some length.

The fourth chapter of the thesis is the longest and has given room for inclusion of all the urban activities. 'The Functions of the City', the title under which the chapter goes, aims at a systematic functional analysis of the city not ignoring the development of individual function to the present stage. The length of this section through apparently wearisome, can not be helped because of the enormity of functions that the city performs. It, nevertheless, has to be admitted that the length of the chapter has been instrumental in adding monotony to the descriptive accounts in many places despite the latter's being accurate and necessary.

The study of the functional areas as expressed in the grouping of structural units devoted to similar functions has been made in chapter V. This is followed by the study of the demographic features of the city in chapter VI. The distribution, density and composition of population being dynamic phenomena, have been studied in a historical order.

The second volume starts with an analysis of the factors responsible for the expansion of the suburbs in chapter seventh, and ends with a sample study of the
functional nature of the city. The all too rapidly expanding pace of the suburban spread is more than what the planning authorities can effectively cope with. The rural urban interaction is illustrated in the 'Regional Relations Of the City'. The port of Bombay a necessary appendage to the thesis because of its role in strengthening the economic base of the city and expanding the hinterland has been discussed, to portray the inseparability of the port in all phases of city's development.

Though the multilateral survey has been followed by a critical examination of the attitude of the planning authorities and recommendatory suggestions based on the facts of the study, the whole thesis has been summed up briefly by some bold strokes of outstanding facts. The necessity of the sample survey conducted by the author occurred as a second thought to the discussion of functional areas in chapter V. In contrast to simple observations, samples showing the functional nature of buildings have been taken, to establish the distribution of functions in the city, and a brief integrated account of findings has been given in the chapter concerned.

At many places in the body of the thesis some general observations have crept in. These may seemingly appear unwarranted, yet they are the necessary outcome of the sincere attempts made to find a way out of the controversial
opinions in order to determine the line of approach. All the maps and illustrations come from the author's pen except the one in the jacket. All the photographs are taken personally though not very successfully. Efforts have been made to compile a bibliography of the references that were found useful during the work.

Many difficulties were experienced during the field work though most of them were not insurmountable. With a few exceptions where the officials seem to be labouring under the feeling of self importance, most of the Govt. authorities are quite co-operative. As a field worker, one, however, dreads the ghost of 'confidentialism' haunting many public and private offices making many things invisible and inaccessible.