The theory of economic planning has been taking a definite shape and form in recent years, but it is still in the process of growth and evolution. Planning has now become a distinctive branch of economic study, but the problems it poses are a challenge to the economic theorists who feel called upon to utilize whatever tools of analysis - old and new - they have (and also as far as possible to forge fresh tools) in an endeavour to solve them.

In the present study I have sought to analyse and correlate the different strands of thought that have developed in regard to planning, and also to indicate the possible lines of its development in the future. I think I may claim to have covered new grounds in the following respects:

(1) I have presented a thorough analysis of the historical background of economic planning, because the distinctive character of planning cannot be
appreciated without reference to the long history that lies behind it. (2) In most of the studies of economic planning there is a mixing-up of planning and "socialism-capitalism controversy". Following the hint given by some distinguished writers I have sought to work out the principles of planning as an independent branch of study not necessarily connected with the question of "isms". (3) A two-fold approach to planning has been made with reference to advanced countries and underdeveloped countries. The theory of planning nurtured in the economic environment of advanced countries cannot be bodily transplanted to under-developed countries. The distinctive problems of planning in a backward country need special investigation. A modest endeavour has been made to explore the peculiar problems and possibilities in this regard. (4) My Chief object has been to explore the problems and prospects of