



Department of Economics, Presidency University, Kolkata
Presents

Bhabatosh Datta Memorial Lecture 2022

14 October 2022 (Friday)

7:00 pm IST via Google Meet

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INAUGURAL LECTURE

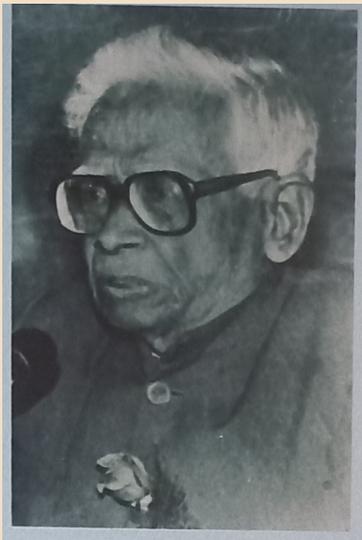
Behind the crisis: Two histories of knowledge production for Indian agriculture

BARBARA HARRISS-WHITE, FACSS

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ABSTRACT

The orthodox history of India's Green Revolution privileges the international relations of agriculture - ideas and technologies from the Ford Foundation and the CGIAR system - as straw men for a critique of its intended political effects to stave off 'red' revolution and its unintended social and environmental effects - some of which have indeed been destructive. In this lecture - which is presented as work in progress for discussion - I wish to trace India's own agricultural knowledge creation back a century, to argue that the GR was the result of an extraordinary concatenation of public and private institutions in India and to trace a second and different history of Indian agricultural knowledge which is of ever more relevance to the future while its institutional pre-conditions remain elusive.



BHABATOSH DATTA

Professor Bhabatosh Datta was a noted economist, academic and writer. He studied BA in Economics at the Presidency College and later obtained his Ph.D from the London School of Economics. His dissertation was later published as the much celebrated book *The Economics of Industrialisation* (1952). He had taught at several institutions across West Bengal and also served for a year at the International Monetary Fund before embarking on a long and distinguished career as Professor of Economics at Presidency College. During his tenure at Presidency, he produced a galaxy of eminent students like Amartya Sen, Sukhamoy Chakraborty, Bimal Jalan and so on. Subsequently he served the government with distinction in various capacities namely, as the Director of Public Instructions and the Secretary of Education for the Government of West Bengal and as a member of the Finance Commission of India during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1990, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award, by the government of India. Till his death in 1997, he continued to publish regular columns on the state of Indian economy and society.



BARBARA HARRISS-WHITE

Professor Barbara is the Director of Wolfson College's South Asia Research Cluster and of Area Studies Research Project on the Materiality of India's Informal Economy at Oxford University. She was the Founder-Director of Oxford University's Contemporary South Asian Studies Programme in the School of Area Studies and organiser of the world's first MSc in Contemporary India. She has written, edited or co-edited and published 40 books and major reports, published over 270 scholarly papers and chapters and over 100 working papers. Her book 'Rural Commercial Capital' won the Edgar Graham prize. She works on India's political economy, in particular food and energy, and aspects of deprivation – all through field research. She is Emeritus Professor of Development Studies, Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, and a Professorial Research Associate at SOAS.