

Malcolm Adiseshiah

Award

2002

Presented to

Bina Agarwal

Bina Agarwal stands foremost amongst scholars who have extended the frontiers of development studies. Her explorations have shifted gender and environmental concerns from objects of study to constitutive categories of analysis. Her inquiries resonate with a refreshing and original touch. What sets her apart is her mastery in weaving a seamless web, which illuminates the interaction between gender, property rights and the environment. It is this conceptual framework that places her work in a genre of its own where, in her own words, gender becomes not an additive category but "a lens through which the approach to development itself should be examined".

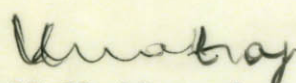
Bina Agarwal's study of the woodfuel crisis in the third world, evocatively titled *Cold Hearths and Barren Slopes*, is an outstanding reflection of her intellectual sweep and insights. She elaborates patriarchy and its structural configurations as well as the appropriation of natural resources by the privileged few, all of which impact with maximum incidence on women. Her research draws upon theoretical constructs and empirical data from a formidable array of disciplines, insightfully interpreted.

In her exploration into the nexus between gender and property rights, Bina Agarwal breaks new ground by demonstrating the strategic importance of effective ownership and control of land for women who will gain in "bargaining strength". In another departure from conventional treatment of gender she posits the view that, for women, class is coloured by impermanence since it is a derivative from the class of the spouse. Using a wealth of data she is able to rebut the view that the conferment of land rights on women will result in loss of efficiency and decreasing production. Her willingness to confront conventional wisdom reflects in her position that even in the absence of private property the subordinate status of women would persist. And therefore she seeks an analysis of the dialectical link between women's material context and their status.

In recognition of these distinguished contributions to Development Studies,
the Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2002 is presented to

Bina Agarwal

at Chennai this twenty first day of November 2002.



V. K. Natraj

Director

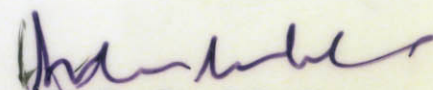
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