



## TRIBUTE

### **Tribute to M. S. Swaminathan (1925–2023)**

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In this issue of the *Review of Agrarian Studies*, we pay tribute to M. S. Swaminathan, India's most distinguished agricultural scientist and one of the world's greatest policy experts, policymakers, and institution-builders in the spheres of food, agriculture, and agriculture-related activities. He devoted his life to the improvement of the lives of farmers, to farming, and an end to the misery of hunger and undernutrition all over the world.

M. S. Swaminathan was the scientific leader and a transformative force in what has come to be known as India's Green Revolution. Over his long life, he continued to reflect on its evolution, and to lead its further development in the light of lived experience and new scientific knowledge, emphasising the importance of dealing with productivity, profitability, and sustainability in an integrated way. One of the contributors to this section observes that Swaminathan, along with Norman Borlaug and Yuan Longping made up a triumvirate who provided outstanding scientific leadership to the agricultural transformation that occurred after 1963, and that these six decades will be seen as "the single greatest period of food production and hunger reduction in all human history."

Over his career, M. S. Swaminathan held important positions in Indian and international institutions, led and participated in the most important agricultural and environmental initiatives of the last 70 years, supervised 77 doctoral students, was honoured by the world's leading professional organisations and learned societies in the fields to which he contributed, and was a member of the world's leading scientific academies (a detailed list is available at <https://www.mssrf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Awards-honours-received-by-Prof.M-S.-Swaminathan.pdf>)

The contributions to this Tribute illustrate the enormous range of the life and work of M. S. Swaminathan. We have grouped the contributions into four broad sections: Swaminathan's contribution to Indian agriculture (Himanshu Pathak,

C. Rangarajan, R. Ramakumar, R. V. Bhavani, Harish Damodaran, and Venkatesh Athreya); to science (Bruce Alberts, K. C. Bansal, T. Jayaraman, Kenneth Quinn, Rajeev Varshney, Rutwik Barmukh, A. K. Singh, S. Gopala Krishnan, Ranjith K. Ellur, M. Nagarajan, K. K. Vinod, P. K. Bhowmick, H. Bollinedi, E. A. Siddiq, and V. P. Singh); to building collaborations in Asia (Wenbang Tang, Yeyun Xin, Glenn Denning, and Bui Ba Bong); and to rice cultivation and rice economies (Gurdev Singh Khush, Jauhar Ali, Thelma Paris, and Virendra Pal Singh). The contributions also describe Swaminathan's commitment to the welfare of rural women and youth. Each of the contributors deals with a specific aspect of his work, and all of them write of the magic of his personality – his humanity and kindness, his humility, and his utter dedication to the tasks he set himself.

For all of us at the *Review of Agrarian Studies* and Foundation for Agrarian Studies, MSS's death is a personal loss. MSS was a source of strength for RAS – our first subscriber, a contributor to volume 1, number 1, and an engaged reader of every issue. He inaugurated our new office in Bengaluru, delivered the first Annual Oration of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies, worked in a room at our office when he was in Bengaluru, and left, with every person with whom he worked, that particular and indelible memory of having worked with M. S. Swaminathan.

I am grateful to all our authors for their contributions, and to members of our RAS editorial team, particularly Parvathi Menon, for helping me process and put this package of tributes together.

Editor