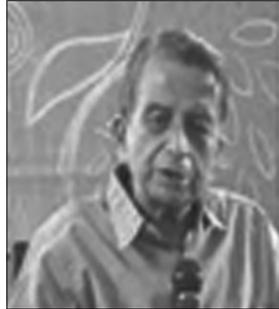


Obituary - 2



Prof. Bireswar Banerjee

(1930 - 2017)

Professor Bireswar Banerjee a renowned geographer of International repute and one of the doyens of Indian Geography passed away on the 17th of June 2017 at the age of 87. A very popular teacher and erudite scholar, he will always be remembered as a very friendly and approachable teacher who will always remain in our hearts.

Born on 15th August 1930 at Bongaon, Professor Banerjee received his initial education from the District High School and stood first in the District and received the District scholarship. He completed his Intermediate and Bachelor of Arts from Presidency College with a first class and stood first for which he obtained a Gold Medal from the University of Calcutta in 1949. Subsequently he obtained his Master Degree in Geography from the University of Calcutta in 1951 and again he stood first in his class. He also did his LLB from the

University of Calcutta but never practiced law which was wish of his family members. Professor Banerjee did his PhD from Wisconsin University, Madison, USA under the guidance of Professor G. Trewartha and obtained his degree in 1954 at a young age of 24 years. His PhD topic was Agriculture of West Bengal: A Geographical Analysis which was later on published as a book. He obtained his D.Litt. degree in 1958 from the University of Calcutta and was the first to obtain this degree in India in Geography. During his career he has guided more than 36 research scholars who have obtained their PhD degree under his guidance. He was one of the first Human Geographers who insipid and cultivated a liking for various branches of Human geography. His work on agricultural geography was a pioneering work and an inspiration for many geographers.

Professor Banerjee started his teaching career at Loretta College and St, Xavier's college where taught for a brief period before joining the Department of Geography, University of Calcutta in 1963. He taught in this Department for thirty two years before his retirement in 1995. He became Reader in The Department in 1972 and Professor in 1977. He was the Head of the Department in 1983-85 and I was fortunate enough to study my masters at that time. He became a UGC national Lecture during 1984-85. He was also Emeritus Professor from 1995 to 1998. Professor Banerjee was awarded the Eminent Teacher award from University of Calcutta in 2008.

During his long career Professor Banerjee has published five monographs, edited several books and published more than 90 research articles in reputed National and International journals. The interdisciplinary nature of his work was clearly reflected in his publications. He completed two UGC minor and one major research project. He was actively associated with the UGC Curriculum Development Programme in geography during 1989 and was also a member of the UGC Syllabus committee for framing NET syllabus in Geography during 1984-85.

Professor Banerjee was a visiting Faculty at Nagoya University and Hiroshima University, Japan during 1973 and 1989 respectively. He was also a visiting Professor at Utkal University, Bhubaneswar in 1982. He was also associated with IIT Kharagpur, Department of Architecture and Regional Planning as Honorary Professor during 1972-75. He went to Singapore

with the British Team of Geographers on their invitation and represented India in the International Seminar on South East Asia. In 1990 he represented India at the International Conference of Asia and Pacific countries in an International Seminar held at Dhaka University. He also attended International Geographical Congress held in United Kingdom and Seoul.

Professor Banerjee was also associated with The Geographical Society of India and was the honorary editor of the Journal Geographical Review of India from 1980-85. He was also the Vice President of the Geographical Society of India from 1987 to 2006. He was also associated with the Asiatic Society, Calcutta and was their general secretary in 1976. He was also the founder President of the Indian Society of Spatial Scientists.

Professor Banerjee was one of the Indian geographers who was well known nationally and internationally. As an academician he has left an indelible mark among Indian geographers and his passing away has indeed created a void in the world on Indian Geography. May his soul rest in peace.

Lakshmi Sivaramakrishnan
Professor and Head
Department of Geography
Jadavpur University