

Editor's Note

Brij Mohan

Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr., the 46th POTUS, declared June 19 a national holiday to celebrate Juneteenth. Reactionary media obsessively called to ban the teaching of American history as Critical Race Theory. “The trouble with history” (*Book and Arts*, 2021) is that it’s a puzzle with ambiguous links to be hooked up by historians, neither saints nor scoundrels. James Baldwin was right: Mythologies of history must be resisted. Eric Foner rejects determinism of history. History as an end and a means meander through the “dots” of time which historians seem to link up with fictionalized events and characters.¹ French Economist Thomas Piketty theorizes about two kinds of people, the Brahmin Left and the Merchant Right.² Piketty’s copious analysis reveals a trend about 60 years old: nexus of education, demography, and ideology explains the rise of Trump, Johnson, and Modi from New York to New Delhi. These snapshots of life have compelling implications for the prevailing theories and practices of global-social development, policies, and programs.

Combating the forces that call for aggressive social development strategies often reminds us of human conditions which thwart progress. The persistence of such a developmental phenomenon is still not unheard of in the 21st Century. Haiti is not the only “failed state.” There is a revolt in Cuba. Chaos in Afghanistan marks the end of “nation-building.” Cultural and political failures abound around the globe. No society is ideally “developed”. Also, suffering extreme weather is no longer an underprivileged country’s fate. Stark realities of a fragile planet may force humanity to live with the fury of fires and floods. This nonending struggle for freedom is a continued challenge. There are countries where vaccines against COVID-19 are not available. The G-7 summit held in June 2021 failed to afford to vaccinate the underdeveloped nations. But in the United States, billionaires have begun flying off to space for entrepreneurial fun and excitement. Mother Earth is in trouble.

¹Books and Arts. (2021, June 12) *The Economist*, p. 78.

²Educated voters’ leftward shift is surprisingly old. (2021, May 29). *The Economist*, p. 81.

“There were humans long before there was history,” writes Yuval Noah Harari (2015: 3).³ Fukuyama became the instant world-class pundit of the ‘end of history’ school. It was a hasty and exaggerated “rumor” which served Reagan-Thatcher orthodoxies. Decolonization is shaping the ethos in the Third World. Digital revolution, Coronavirus pandemic, and an increasing gulf between the rich and poor-developed and developing nations confound the genesis of plausible human extinction. It is wiser to think about biodiversity in a planetary context.

This third issue is the ultimate issue of volume 43, 2021. It has been my privilege to serve as the Editor of “Social Development Issues.” I thank ICSD’s President and his associates for their cooperation and help during this brief albeit challenging transition. This issue includes six articles, received from various corners of the world, encompassing a wide range of subjects adding a few wrinkles to our existing knowledge. My sincerest thanks to reviewers⁴ who graciously undertook the peer-review task.

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³Harari, Y.N. (2015). *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. New York: Harper.

⁴On behalf of SDI and myself, I am deeply indebted to Drs. Satish Sharma, Priscilla Allen, Mas Biswas, Mark Lusk, Sanjay Bhatt, Antonina Dashkina, Sonia Kapur, Rana Hong, Vijayan Pillai, Tejaswini Prasanna Patil, Manohar Pauer, and Shweta Singh for their time and energy that helped assemble these outstanding contributions.