

depictions of Jesus's enemies through the framework of Jesus's teaching on love to construct a Christian ethic of allyship. She detects an analogy or rhyme between unlikely characters. Similar to the Canaanite who recognizes both Jesus's status as Israel's messiah as well as her own outsider, enemy status, White anti-racist allies must come to grips with the protracted history of conflict and institutional racism that complicate interactions between Whites and African Americans. In her reading of John 4, she argues that Western racialized feminine stereotypes of foreign women have caused many commentators to read the text with "sex on the brain" and assume that the woman was morally and sexually promiscuous (132). Sechrest instead offers a reading that sees intertextual rhymes between Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan and the Isaac-Rebecca betrothal narrative in Genesis 24. She interprets Jesus as the agent sent by God in search of a suitable bride and the Samaritan as that bride.

Sechrest's exegetical depth and interdisciplinary breadth may be dizzying for students as she moves from current events to explanations of relevant concepts and terms to her exegesis of biblical texts and back again. I assigned the book in my masters-level Introduction to the NT Course. According to one student, the book helped broaden her perspective and make new connections between her context and the biblical text while making her squirm with discomfort. Another student appreciated Sechrest's unique interpretations of biblical passages but found the book hard to read due to its academic language and extensive footnotes. Nevertheless, Sechrest's engagement with diverse domains of knowledge is a gift in and of itself. Although Sechrest's *Race and Rhyme* is not an easy read, I consider it essential for those who desire to integrate their reading of Scripture, faith, and commitment to racial justice, interrogate their own biases and the ways White supremacist culture has seeped into their readings of the Bible, and imagine liberative solutions to complex problems of race and gender.

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*Enacting Integral Human Development*. By Clemens Sedmak. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2023. xxxiv + 234 pages. \$30.00 (paper).

doi:10.1017/hor.2024.53

Clemens Sedmak uncovers longstanding ambiguities in models of development since the 1960s. In doing so he makes explicit the Catholic social

tradition's worthy commitment to reinterpreting it under the banner of Integral Human Development (IHD). The term has its origins in a 1967 encyclical but is now central to Francis's papacy in the face of expanding inequality and an imminently endangered planet. The first chapter alone is worth the time; it is clear and accessible, just right as an introduction for students.

The examples and case studies of "enactment" that follow are evocative. Sedmak seems acutely aware of the many ways in which well-intentioned approaches remain partial, self-referential, and can fail, reduced to a strategy, a vulnerability competition, or a moral imperialism. The horizon is better conceived as a full-bodied humanism, approached in encounter and accompaniment. IHD, he argues, is an integrated approach that does not intend to integrate (187), rather it acknowledges a plurality of forms of the good life. He sensitively highlights the micro-geography of a neighborhood and its habitability: shelter, food, and rest in their legal and cultural dimensions, and material objects that are more than mere things. These are, we discover, the ground for "landscapes of imagination" in which to live freely, the intangible infrastructure at the heart of existence, the extraordinary in the ordinary.

To be faced are the many dimensions of distance that come with privilege and lead to equivocation, or to novel elite comfort zones, named ironically as "Adventures in Aidland" or "Peaceland", or "Human Rights Land" (and this is the case even in the switch in research focus to "lifeworld"). He acknowledges that change for the worse is always possible: the slow violence of lost resources, resilience undermined, the expropriation of land, the privileging of prosperity over the dignity of work, what he calls the many "crimes of peace" (169). Hearing the voices of the poor is not a substitute for researching the responsibilities of wealth and "choices" for the rich (53). The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) he argues follow a growth model, are not strong on human rights language, and are not ready to deal with diffuse responsibilities or how to prioritize (157). They can serve the already advantaged, while neglected groups suffer cumulatively over many generations. This advantage has misleadingly been called the *Matthew Effect* from Matt 25:29: "For to those who have, more will be given." Yet parables are full of paradox and hyperbole. They more often overturn the fates, disclose and reorient, provoke extravagantly to rethink of the demands of discipleship, and nudge us back to the heart of existence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare Paul Ricoeur, "The Specificity of Religious Language," *Semeia* 4 (1975): 107–148.

Sedmak revisits the Common Good tradition and some implicit understandings of justice, for better or worse, with which it has entangled itself. He also examines the compatibility of concepts of autonomy with IHD, contrasting two ‘moral ecologies’: choice-freedom with dignity-freedom (156). The first implies rational self-interest, the second dignity-as-interdependence. He favors the latter.

Ostensibly benign, the emphasis on interdependence has its own dangers for ethics and politics, not least an illusory sense of common purpose in Christian communities. Bonds of interdependence are also forged in angry apocalypticisms—addicted to “ruptures” or hankering for a “usable past.”<sup>2</sup> Sedmak is aware of the ambiguities in interpretations of autonomy, and these are not simply settled by rereading dignity as interdependence.

I would lastly venture that Amartya Sen’s capability approach might be closer to IHD than Sedmak allows. Undoubtedly, Sen’s work belongs in economics, a discipline that self-describes as the “science of choice” but that does not mean he reduces human agency to bare rational self-interest.<sup>3</sup> Capability is most relevant to IHD where it insists that needs to be met cannot be listed in the abstract, or apart from deliberation and participation, and this involves more than the faculty of choice. Interdependence is better characterized as the profound implication of our first recognizing our own subjectivity (dignity) as the condition of our being moral agents.<sup>4</sup>

Sedmak’s work is truly heartening; it registers the reality and brutality of poverty and resists naturalizing or legitimizing it at every turn. He takes the path of patience and humility, of civility and decency, which is not exclusive to but is rooted in the transformative power of the Christian message.

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<sup>2</sup> Compare Mark Lilla, “The Tower and the Sewer,” *New York Review of Books* 2024, June, 14–18.

<sup>3</sup> Amartya Sen, “Why Exactly is Commitment Important for Rationality?,” *Economics and Philosophy* 21, no 1 (2005): 5–14.

<sup>4</sup> Cathriona Russell, “Integral Ecology: Autonomy, the Common Inheritance of the Earth, and Creation Theology,” in *Integral Human Development; Catholic Social Teaching and the Capability Approach*, ed. Séverine Deneulin and Clemens Sedmak (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2023), 170–186.