

Human Development and the Catholic Social Tradition

Towards an Integral Ecology

Séverine Deneulin

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This book brings development theory and practice into dialogue with a religious tradition in order to construct a new, transdisciplinary vision of development with integral ecology at its heart.

It focuses on the Catholic social tradition and its conception of integral human development, on the one hand, and on the works of economist and philosopher Amartya Sen which underpin the human development approach, on the other. The book discusses how these two perspectives can mutually enrich each other around three areas: their views on the concept and meaning of development and progress; their understanding of what it is to be human – that is, their anthropological vision; and their analysis of transformational pathways for addressing social and environmental degradation. It also examines how both human development and the Catholic social tradition can function as complementary analytical lenses and mobilizing frames for embarking on the journey of structural and personal transformation to bring all life systems, human and non-human, back into balance.

This book is written for researchers and students in development studies, theology, and religious studies, as well as professional audiences in development organizations.

Séverine Deneulin is Director of International Development at the Laudato Si' Research Institute, Campion Hall, University of Oxford, UK; and Associate Professor of International Development at the University of Bath, UK.

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This book was written between August 2020 and January 2021, but the process of thinking about it started many years earlier, and a large number of people have helped me in this process. I first presented a paper on Amartya Sen's capability approach in dialogue with the Catholic tradition at the fortieth anniversary conference of the Second Vatican Council document *Gaudium et Spes (Joy and Hope)* in Rome in April 2005. I had just finished a DPhil in development studies on Amartya Sen, and someone invited to the conference insisted I should attend too. I thought I had nothing to contribute, but, with his insistence, set myself the task of engaging Amartya Sen's thought with the theology of the Second Vatican Council. The participants' encouragement proved to be a turning point. One of the conference organizers, Johan Verstraeten, has continued to be a strong support since then.

Shortly after the conference, Susy Brouard, then at the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), invited me to write a reflection on Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (PP, *On the Progress of Peoples*) and the UNDP *Human Development Reports*. I renewed work on the dialogue between Amartya Sen and the Catholic social tradition a few years afterwards when Augusto Zampini-Davies did a master's dissertation on the topic at the University of Bath, and then a PhD. Consequently, we organized several workshops with social scientists, theologians, and development practitioners bringing the two into conversation. The discussions at these workshops underpin a lot of this book's arguments.

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Abbreviations

CA – *Centesimus Annus*: On the Hundreth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum (Pope John Paul II, 1st May 1991)

CV – *Caritas in Veritate*: Charity in Truth (Pope Benedict XVI, 29th June 2009)

EG – *Evangelii Gaudium*: The Joy of the Gospel (Pope Francis, 24th November 2013)

FT – *Fratelli Tutti*: On Fraternity and Social Friendship (Pope Francis, 3rd October 2020)

LS – *Laudato Si'*: On Care for our Common Home (Pope Francis, 24th May 2015)

PP – *Populorum Progressio*: On the Progress of Peoples (Pope Paul VI, 26th March 1967)

QA – *Querida Amazonia*: Beloved Amazon (Pope Francis, 2nd February 2020)

RN – *Rerum Novarum*: On New Things (Pope Leon XIII, 15th May 1891)

SRS – *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*: On Social Concerns (John Paul II, 30th December 1987)

These documents will be referred throughout the text by the initial of the first two letters of their title, followed by the corresponding paragraph.