

earlier critique of this poem. But for me the strongest part of this commentary remains its reading of *The Anathemata*. My hope is that it will invite more people to begin with *The Anathemata* in their approach to David Jones, and open up the unique beauty of that beautifully wrought and thematically important work. Throughout *Reading David Jones*, but especially in the chapter on *The Anathemata*, Dilworth's readings illuminate Jones's poetry as good programme notes frame a musical performance: their effect is to invite us into the experience of the work itself: to say, "these are some themes and patterns you can listen for, and there are riches here. But now, close the programme, and listen to this great work!"

Kathleen Henderson Staudt
University of Maryland,
College Park, MD

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A Path of Our Own: An Andean Village and Tomorrow's Economy of Values
by Adam K. Webb.
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This book is one of the more unusual that I have read in that it begins as a sociological and

historical study of one Andean village and ends as nothing more than a call for the reconstruction of the world's economy and even its culture. In a way, though, this makes sense, for Webb's call for reconstituting the global economy finds its origin in the small economy of that one Andean village, Pomatambo, in the Peruvian Andes, some 11,500 feet above sea level with a population of only a few hundred. Webb has visited Pomatambo off and on beginning in 1995 when the civil war begun by the Maoist Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas was winding down. Pomatambo is isolated, both physically and otherwise, with Quechua the everyday language of its inhabitants, some of whom hardly understand Spanish. Webb's initial interest in the village was for an undergraduate thesis "on how Ayacucho's [the province that contains Pomatambo] peasants had experienced Sendero—above all, how they had seen the alternative the guerrillas were offering them" (8). But in subsequent years his interests broadened. He developed "abiding sympathies for the best of traditional life and for social justice" (10). He began to see Pomatambo's problems as simply an instance of the problems that the world's remaining rural peasants were facing. "Between

a third and half of humanity are still peasants [but] one would hardly know that by reading *The Economist* or watching Hollywood films or CNN news broadcasts..." (10).

Webb, now a lecturer at Harvard, introduces his ultimate theme slowly, too slowly in this reviewer's opinion. His first five chapters are a leisurely survey of both the history and recent trends of life in the Andean highlands, beginning with the Inca heritage, the traditional poverty of the mountains and their equally traditional means of living amid that poverty, and going on to the beginnings of migration to the cities in the mid twentieth century, the Sendero rebellion, the tentative attempts of global capitalism to colonize the area, and various more or less misguided, more or less well-intentioned attempts by the Peruvian government to help the peasantry. Much of this is in the context of its effect on life in Pomatambo itself, and we are introduced to a number of residents and told their stories—those who stayed and were often mistreated by both the Senderos and the Peruvian Army, those who went to Lima and other large cities, either for economic opportunity or to escape the civil war, those who returned and those who did not, traditional village elders, local and provincial civil servants,

including Pomatambo's school teachers who play an important role in the village.

Webb's title is an obvious takeoff on the Sendero movement which offered a path to Peru's poor, but is a takeoff on another proposed path as well. This is the influential 1987 book by the Peruvian economist, Hernando de Soto, *The Other Path*, in Spanish, *El otro sendero*. In contrast to the Maoist Senderos, de Soto is an unabashed promoter of global capitalism who seeks to unleash market forces in an ostensible effort to aid the poor. Although de Soto focused mostly on the urban poor in shantytowns, his ideas could be applied as well to traditional mountain villages such as Pomatambo. But what would come of that? Webb is quite clear on this: "Capitalism rewards the relentless pursuit of efficiency. Over time, wealth gravitates towards those who push other considerations to the margin" (173). He understands that the traditional way of life of peasants in Pomatambo and elsewhere is threatened as much by market society as it would be by a Maoist revolution. And it is not just the economic traditions of these villages that capitalism threatens, such as communally owned land, consensus decision making, and similar practices. Capitalism promotes the

kind of individualism that erodes communities, families, all the old decencies of peasant life. He notes that "The teenage pregnancy rate has surged in recent years" (89) as modernity has more and more intruded upon these villages. A complete conquest by capitalism would pretty much seal the fate of the traditional mountain way of life. "If capitalism delivered—or at least convinced enough ambitious people it *could* deliver for them—these villages would have more entrepreneurially minded smooth operators contemptuous of traditional morality" (98).

This brings us to the author's real thesis, which is suggested in his subtitle, "Tomorrow's Economy of Values." For Webb not only wants to maintain the substance of peasant life wherever it still exists in the world, but to extend that, first by creating networks, economic and otherwise, among the world's various peasantries, then to extend this "parallel economy," as he terms it, to the rich countries of the north. Eventually this effort would become political. He suggests the establishment of what he calls a "Traditionalist International: an alliance of traditionalist parties or blocs across all countries where they have gained a toehold" (190). In short, his aim is nothing less than creating a new direction for

humanity, building a new economy based on peasant virtues of cooperation, thrift and restraint, and eventually changing humanity's thinking and culture as well. It is certainly an ambitious project.

His project reminds me of the formal title of Pius XI's 1931 encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, "On Reconstructing the Social Order and Perfecting it Conformable to the Precepts of the Gospel." Pope Pius also lays out an ambitious effort, much of it overlapping with Webb's. For the Pontiff is likewise critical of the dog-eat-dog ethos of capitalism and suggests many modifications and safeguards by which a new type of economy would be established, one which would be guided by both social justice and social charity. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that Pope Pius's project was not implemented. Even with the moral resources of the papacy behind him, even with the motivation of religion, Catholics generally did not respond with enthusiasm to a call to remake the social order. Today most Catholics, at least in rich countries, would not even understand the Pope's point, for they are either indifferent to such calls for reform or they are convinced that capitalism needs at most a few minor tweaks to make it perfectly acceptable to the demands of justice. All of which

makes me rather pessimistic about Webb's hope for reconstructing the social order, as much as I would like to be proven wrong.

Pope Pius understood well that a reform of morals must accompany structural reforms. And Webb as well wants to extend peasant virtues to the rich of the world. But it is not clear which virtues he has in mind. For the peasantries of the world, although doubtless sharing much in the way of that traditional outlook on life that preceded the capitalist revolution of the eighteenth century, are not united in other respects. Pomatambo is Catholic, many villages in Asia are Moslem, Hindu or Buddhist, Africa is similarly mixed in religion. Is there enough of a unity here, enough common motivation for such an enormous undertaking as Webb desires? Webb pretty much ignores religion in his book. There are passing references to the Pomatambans' Catholicism, to their desire for a new roof for their church, for example. I would have been interested in knowing more about their relationship with the Church and especially about their local priests. Has a Peruvian clerical or lay intelligentsia ever suggested anything along the lines of what Webb proposes or taken any steps to help the Andean peasants retain their traditional way of life?

Webb mentions that the leaders of the 1968 military coup that expelled an ineffectual civilian government were aware of and sympathetic to the tradition of Catholic social thought. But he is silent on any other religious connections to efforts to aid the Andean poor, except for "a Belgian-French couple, both devout Catholics, who had set up an orphanage in a forsaken shantytown on the outskirts" of Ayacucho (129).

Webb is aware that his is not the first proposal for a new economic system for mankind that avoids the evident evils of capitalism and socialism. In fact, he is widely read in the history of previous such movements and gives ample mention to the distributists, aware that many of them "were devout traditional Catholics" (135). He also speaks of Gandhi and Liang Shuming, a kind of early twentieth-century Chinese distributist who tried to apply a Confucian ethos to China's economic problems and "offered a third way against both capitalist Westernization and the class struggle of the Communists" (137). In the light of their failures I cannot help but commend Webb for his optimism, even if I do not share it.

In addition, Webb seems to me to be insufficiently suspicious

about the possible or probable effects of modern technology on traditional life. He says at one point that he wants both "decentralization [which] would allow people to rediscover a fairer and simpler lifestyle, with strong rural communities and local self-reliance, while enjoying all the efficiencies of the modern world" (194). The people of Pomatambo are certainly poor, some or most houses lack running water or have dirt floors. They do not have regular access to electricity, but they are not starving. They seem to have enough food, are not overworked, own their own homes and land, with access to communal village land as well. They enjoy considerable self-government, in part because of the neglect by the central and provincial governments. Is this relative material poverty part of the reason why they retain so many of the virtues that are now so scarce in the so-called developed world? I do not know, but I think that before we embark on a project to bring "all the efficiencies of the modern world" to the earth's peasantries, we need to make sure that in so doing we do not destroy the very base from which we hoped to conquer and remake the mental map of mankind in the first place. Technology almost always is developed in response to a specific social

and economic situation. People rarely invent devices for which no widespread need is perceived, or if they are invented, they languish in someone's garage. I think that the connection between the different aspects of what we call the modern way of life, between its religious and cultural aspects and its economic and technological aspects, needs to be more fully understood before we decide what will help and what will hurt our brethren who still enjoy some of the joys of traditional life, even if they likewise suffer from its inconveniences and drawbacks.

Thomas Storck
Greenbelt, Maryland

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Forgotten Founder, Drunken Prophet: The Life of Luther Martin
by Bill Kauffman
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History, it is often said, is written by the winners. The people who say that, however, have never met Bill Kauffman. Since his groundbreaking 1995 study of the America First movement Kauffman has been at the forefront of a new generation of writers for whom the American past is rich with opposition to the