Global Thought, Shadow Projection and Coloniality: A Quantum Case for Religious Practice

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Introduction

Carl Jung makes the counter-intuitive claim that religions seek to deny their adherents access to religious experience ([1938] 1984, 277). This is because, as he understands it, religious experience is revolutionary, while blind adherence to dogma is conservative, serving to uphold institutionalised religious authority ([1938] 1984, 238-239; [1957 [2010], 13). While Jung (1957 [2010], 13 & 17) acknowledges that the institutionalised form of religion has provided stability and cohesion to communities of increasing size, he views its heritage, a modern mind geared towards the uncritical following of collective doctrine, as posing an existential threat to humanity. This existential threat results from *shadow projection*, the projection of the negative qualities which we do not wish to see in ourselves onto the Other ([1957] 2010, 36; [1938] 1984, 87, 88 & 236). In this article I argue that shadow projection contributes to an ongoing crisis in global thought.

Writing, as I am, in the first issue of a *Journal for Global Thought*, it might be useful to begin with a definition of what exactly I think is generally meant by the term, and what it means to me. Rather than a nascent discipline in itself, global thought is a way of thinking that seeks to transcend both academia's disciplinary boundaries and any form of linguo-cultural centrism (Wang 2018). In seeking to understand what it means to *think globally*, I have drawn inspiration from Dussel's (2013, 25) thinking "from the planetary horizon" which takes into consideration both the centre and the periphery; and from Main et al.'s (2020, 7-8) Deleuzian reading of Jung's psychology as representing a critical holism: "one that challenges rather than reinforces the boundaries of systems" and which is "based on the concept of an open whole". I thus understand global thought as thought which never makes the dangerous, and

impossible, claim to see from God's-eye perspective of the whole, but which finds connection to the whole in the infinite responsibility evoked by the difference of the Other. When global thought is in crisis, it is as a result of an egocentric closure to the difference of the Other which casts a dehumanising shadow.

While I posit that religious practice is key to thinking globally**,** in modern secular societies a series of materialist ontological biases derived from a limited understanding of what "the science" says about the nature of reality mean that many understand religion as irrelevant to making sense of the world (Taylor 2007, 28; Habermas 2008, 139; Cavanaugh 2009, 42). I thus begin with a discussion of the metaphysical insights offered by quantum physics, with particular focus on the Copenhagen interpretation and the Pauli-Jung conjecture, as means of troubling epistemological certainty in our attitude towards religious practice.

I then explore Jung's understanding of shadow projection. With the help of Harald Atmanspacher and Dean Rickles (2022), I show that shadow projection represents a form of self-centredness that closes us off to transcendental meaning and to deeper connections with others. On the collective level, I posit that the maintenance of this self-centredness over time produces what decolonial scholars call "coloniality" (Quijano 2000; Maldonado-Torres 2007). Furthermore, those who have a material interest in doing so capitalise upon the widespread proclivity for shadow projection in the manufacturing of consent for endless war.

As we integrate the unconscious, religious practices help us to see beyond shadow projection and to discern the different forms of responsibility which call to us when we are not locked in unresolved antitheses [1]. It is the pervasive ignorance of this

[1] See Solomon (1994) for an exploration of the parallels between Jung's individuation process and Hegel's dialectic.

responsibility, resulting in coloniality's normalisation of genocidal violence, that defines the ongoing crisis in global thought. As an antidote, I embrace Enrique Dussel's liberation philosophy, which encourages historicising as a means of discerning our political responsibilities to a multiplicity of others. I conclude that religious practices have an important role to play in teaching us "how to hear" the Other, and, thus, to think globally (Dussel 2013, 303).

Quantum Physics and Quantum Social Theory

For many in the secular west, science is the new gospel (Taylor 2007, 28; Habermas 2008, 139; Cavanaugh 2009, 42). It preaches empiricism and with it, an implicit materialism. The merit I see in social theorists engaging with quantum physics is that quantum ontologies call this materialist bias into question, and, in doing so, encourage us to open our minds to perspectives, and even entire knowledge-systems, to which our minds were previously closed. To demonstrate this merit, I first need to emphasise the *strangeness* of the quantum world. I will do so by first giving a brief overview of some of the key features of the Copenhagen interpretation, the most dominant, yet still broadly contested, interpretation of quantum physics, before touching on some insights offered by quantum brain theory and quantum social theory, two schools of thought which are still speculative in nature and which, while in no way representative of the scientific orthodoxy, nonetheless offer useful means of further contesting any ontological assumptions which preclude the notion that religious practices might be of use in addressing global crises.

The infamous double-slit experiment is perhaps the best place to begin (see Griffiths & Schroeter 2018, 7-8). If you imagine shining a light through two slits onto a wall, what pattern do you think you would see? The most obvious answer would be two

lines of light. But, on the quantum level, when photons are shot at a screen with two slits in front of it, this is, in fact, not what happens. Instead, we get an interference pattern. This means that, rather than behaving like streams of particles rushing through the slits, the photons of light are behaving like waves, and as the waves that have travelled through each slit meet, they cancel each other out in some spots, and amplify each other in other spots, creating a pattern similar to a barcode. The strange thing is that we get an interference pattern even when photons are shot at the screen one at a time. Gradually the pattern emerges the more photons are shot at the screen. However, if we try to measure which slit the photon travels through, by placing a measurement device in one of the slits, the interference pattern disappears, and instead the photons begin to behave like particles. So quantum particles behave like waves until they are measured… But waves of what?

The answer, according to the Copenhagen interpretation at least, is that they are merely waves of abstract probability. There is actually no photon, only its possibility, until measurement forces a particular possibility to be realised. When we shoot single photons at the two slits, we get dots of light appearing on the screen, but as we continue to shoot more photons, the interference pattern emerges, because each photon has behaved like a wave of probability before it has hit the screen behind the slits. So the quantum wave function does not describe the *physical* properties of a system in a classical sense. Indeed, the particle does not actually exist in classical physical reality until it has been observed. Before observation it is merely a mathematical possibility. This is why Niels Bohr, father of the most commonly accepted interpretation of quantum physics, the Copenhagen interpretation, stated: *“There is no quantum world. There is only an abstract quantum physical description”*

(Herbert 2011, 17). And this is what is so hard to grasp about quantum physics [2], especially to those with a classical physical or materialist bias: much of reality doesn't exist materially, or classically, until it is observed. Rather, it seems there is a realm of abstract probability that lies behind the material world. Werner Heisenberg writes: "The probability wave… introduces something standing in the middle of an event and an actual event, a strange kind of physical reality just in the middle between possibility and reality" (Herbert 2011, 27).

Intuitively, this realm of abstract probability might begin to make more sense when we consider the mathematical foundations of physics, and the logical foundations of mathematics. There are certain rules which determine which potentialities can materialise, and the likelihood of each potentiality materialising is reflected in the notion of a probability wave. Alain Aspect, John Clauser, and Anton Zeilinger were awarded the 2022 Nobel Prize in Physics for experimentally validating Bell's theorem through tests of Bell inequalities (Clauser et al. 1969; Aspect et al. 1981; Zeilinger 1999; Nobel Prize Outreach 2022). Their experiments demonstrated the non-local nature of quantum entanglement. In this context: "body A affects body B *locally* when it either touches B or touches something else that touches B" (Herbert 2011, 212). Non-locality means that entangled particles are correlated regardless of their distance apart, so that a change in one particle's state will instantly correlate with a change in the entangled particle's state, without the need for a causal chain of "touching" interactions. This non-locality only begins to make sense when we remember to think of the abstract realm of probability that subscribers to the Copenhagen interpretation understand as the condition of possibility for the material world. There is a realm of abstraction which lies parallel to the material world, which

[2] And this is only one of many interpretations.

conditions the possibilities of everything that matters, and renders distances in space and time irrelevant. In the words of poet Kae Tempest (2020), “beneath the surface we are connected”.

Given the role that the non-local, quantum realm plays in conditioning the possibilities of the material world, why wouldn’t it play a role in consciousness too? Sir Roger Penrose and Stuart Hameroff’s (1996a; 1996b; 2014) “orchestrated objective reduction” model of consciousness postulates that consciousness is produced by the maintenance of quantum coherence within neurons. While critics have long dismissed this as an impossibility in the warmth and wet of the brain, in 2024 Penrose and Hameroff’s theory was bolstered by the finding that networks of tryptophan in microtubules can conceivably support quantum coherence (Babcock et al. 2024). Could the realm of probability that precedes mattering into a particular time and place also help to explain the nature of the mind?

Quantum social theorist Alexander Wendt (2015) builds on Penrose and Hameroff’s quantum brain theory to posit a panpsychist quantum ontology. Wendt understands his ontology, in which mind is in matter “all the way down” (112), as providing a synthesis to a series of theoretical dichotomies which recur across the social sciences and which seem to boil down to an unresolved ontological tension between materialism and idealism (35) [3]. In Wendt’s quantum mind, largely unconscious cognition takes place within the abstract realm of the wave function, and the collapse of the wave function into a particular time and place is accompanied by a flash of consciousness (119-121). By maintaining quantum coherence, human brains provide a continuous, unitary experience of consciousness which rocks and glaciers, for

[3] Wendt’s (2015, 1-37) preface is useful for those looking for a more detailed breakdown of these dichotomies.

example, miss out on (131-147). Wendt is the only quantum social theorist to have drawn explicitly from Penrose and Hameroff's theory, however many others have skipped speculation on the exact mechanism by which quantum physics plays a role in consciousness and instead focussed on social structures and their fruitful analogies (or homologies) to quantum wave functions (see Barad 2007 and Murphy 2021; 2022).

Whilst the literature on quantum social theory is growing, the idea which I am positing here – that quantum ontologies should open minds, especially those closed by materialist dogmatism, to a range of spiritual traditions – has so far remained underexplored [4]. Jungian psychology, and Jung's own quantum ontology, developed with Pauli, are of significant use to these ends. To show this, and to emphasise the relevance of both quantum social theory and religious practices to global thought, it will be necessary to unpack Jung's notion of shadow projection.

Shadow Projection, Global Thought and Religious Practice

The shadow is "the 'negative' side of the personality, the sum of all those unpleasant qualities we like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and contents of the personal unconscious" (Jung [1966] 2014, 66n5). When our conscious ego holds onto too rigid an understanding of itself and does not interface with the unconscious we remain unconscious of our shadow side, and instead project these qualities onto the Other. Jung ([1957] 2010, 52,125) thought that this psychological dynamic contributed to both the Cold War and colonialism, and my point here is that it is clearly an impediment to truly global thought. After all, how can

[4] The exceptions being Fierke (2022) and Bowman (2021).

we claim to be thinking globally if, instead of listening to the voice of the Other, we are locked in confrontation with our own antitheses? If we are blinded from empathy with certain individuals or groups because of our own lack of self-knowledge, then we must seek to address this blindness. Since religious practices facilitate the integration of the unconscious into consciousness, they help us to overcome our tendency to project and, thus, to think globally by listening to the voice of the Other.

As I outlined in the previous section, quantum physics is useful in challenging the implicit ontological biases which close some peoples' minds to spiritual wisdom. Indeed, Norah Bowman (2019) has written optimistically about the role quantum ontologies might play in tackling the ontological roots of epistemic violences inflicted against Canada's Indigenous population by the country's legislature and courts. And since Jung's psychology is coherent with the quantum metaphysics he developed with Pauli, I believe his work can serve a similar purpose: bridging the gap between scientific and spiritual epistemes. In this vein, Native American poet Joy Harjo (2016) has described the affinities shared by Jung's understanding of the psyche and Indigenous and religious thought. Although the Pauli-Jung conjecture is a speculative metaphysics, it combines Pauli's take on the Copenhagen interpretation with Jung's understanding of the psyche to shed new light on spiritual wisdom and deepen our understanding of shadow projection. Furthermore the holism which the Pauli-Jung conjecture describes as underlying the mind-matter divide provides a useful analogy for globality: allowing me to add context to my assertion that global thought is critical holistic thought.

The Pauli-Jung Conjecture: Holism and Transcendental Meaning

According to the Pauli-Jung conjecture, mind and matter are complementary aspects of knowable reality, both decomposing from a holistic domain: an unknowable, psychophysically neutral oneness that Jung refers to as the *unus mundus,* or "one world" (Atmanspacher and Rickles 2022, 43; Jung [1955] 1977, 626). Atmanspacher (2020, 144) distinguishes compositional dual-aspect monisms, which view mental and physical reality as composed of different configurations of a neutral common substance; from decompositional, or holist, dual-aspect monisms, which view mind and matter as decomposing out of a common oneness. The Pauli-Jung conjecture is characterised amongst the latter. Atmanspacher (2020, 144) posits that "the holistic picture of the decompositional variant today is strongly reminiscent of the fundamental insight of entanglement in quantum physics. Quantum systems are wholes that can be decomposed in infinitely many complementary ways".

Atmanspacher and Rickles (2022, 43-44) neatly summarise the Pauli-Jung conjecture as follows:

> One has to imagine a layered structure in the psychophysically neutral reality. Descending into it from the physical side leads to entangled quantum states; descending into from the mental side leads to the domain of the personal unconscious – distinct from Jung's collective unconscious populated by archetypes blurring the mental-physical boundary. Moving to lower layers, the distinction between [mental] and [physical] dissolves until finally a universally holistic domain… with no distinctions whatsoever.

When we look more closely at particles of matter, rather than finding smaller and smaller building-blocks, we instead find only waves of mathematical probability. Similarly, the deeper we investigate the psyche, first into the personal unconscious

and then into the collective unconscious, we begin to see the patterns of potential which all psyches share in common: the archetypes. The shadow is a pertinent example: while the characteristics of each person's shadow will be different, we all contain the psychological potential to project repressed, "negative" qualities which we do not want to see in ourselves onto an "evil" Other (Jung [1957] 2010, 53). Although it evolved over the course of his life, Jung's ([1960] 1975, 179, 221, 294, 401-402) mature conception of the archetypes was not of hereditary instincts nor "inborn ideas", but instead psychophysically neutral, transcendental principles which, due to their origin in the holistic domain of the *unus mundus*, can never be known in their entirety (see also Atmanspacher and Rickles 2022, 49-51).

While perceiving the origin of archetypal patterns of potential in the psychophysically neutral oneness of the *unus mundus* is impossible, the archetypes give us glimpses, either symbolically or through immanent experience, which show us what we share in common with others (Main et al. 2020, 9). This knowledge of the whole is possible because of the common origin of both the mental and the physical in the *unus mundus.* Their common origin means that the mental and the physical are correlated a-causally in a way roughly analogous to quantum entanglement (Atmanspacher and Rickles 2022, 43-44 & 49-51). These correlations are difficult to measure or to prove experimentally due to the role of subjectivity in the mental side of the correlation, however, the fascinating commonality shared by the Pauli-Jung conjecture and the quantum ontologies of Eddington, Wheeler, Bohm and Hiley, is the idea that the experience of *meaning* is their result (161). In other words, while the correlations between the mental and the physical do not become apparent through the lens of quantitative statistics, they do appear in the qualitative experience of meaning (Atmanspacher and Rickles 2022, 49 & 51). It is this heightened sensitivity to this

"deep structure" of meaning, to a transcendental meaning, which makes the integration of the unconscious so psychologically valuable and ethically demanding. The more we learn to see past our own limited ego and its antitheses, the more meaningful our lives become. The more that we understand ourselves, the more compassion and responsibility we feel for others.

In understanding global thought as critical holistic thought, I am not advocating a "problematic" holism which pursues and proliferates fixed universal truths (Main 2020, 27). I am positing that to think globally means to cultivate one's sensitivity to a transcendental meaning which can only be experienced through an openness to the unconscious Other within, and to the Other without. Understanding shadow projection in the context of the Pauli-Jung conjecture shows us, of course speculatively, that when we are stuck in an isolated ego wrestling with our own projections, we are cut off from perceiving the acausal correlations across the mental and the physical realms that arise from their common origin in the *unus mundus,* and thus we are cut off from transcendental meaning. Meaning will instead manifest itself merely in conflict with all the qualities which we do not recognise in ourselves, first and foremost the shadow.

Introverted and Extraverted Religious Practice

In the *Undiscovered Self*, Jung ([1957] 2010) argues that religion is defined by the cultivation of a relationship to a transcendent authority, and that its psychological value lies in the point of reference which it offers outside of the world of reason (13-14). In offering a transcendental point of reference, religion encourages interface with, and integration of, the unconscious. While there are non-religious ways to

integrate the unconscious – creative practice, psychotherapy, active imagination, dream analysis and meditation can all be practiced without faith in a transcendent authority – the belief in such an authority can help with the individuation process (the integration of the unconscious into consciousness) by encouraging us to take seriously our intuitions, dreams, emotions, and even chance occurrences, and the possibility that they hold wisdom and insight beyond what is rationally articulable at present.

Jung ([1957] 2010, 15; [1958] 1975, 344) understands religions as expressions of an "instinctive attitude" which help to "maintain the psychic balance" between the conscious and the unconscious. While religious dogma, the product of institutionalised creeds rather than individual religious experience, serves the opposite purpose by concretising good and evil into rigid categories; religious practice is psychologically balancing (Jung [1953] 2010, 22). Introverted religious practices begin with the unconscious Other within, while extraverted religious practices address the Other without. A focus on either extraverted or introverted religious practices exclusively will have slightly different merits. Introverted religious practices bring "riches of knowledge", and extraverted religious practices "fulness of works" (Jung [1921] 2014, 178-179). The point I want to make in this section is that looking both inwards and outwards is essential to thinking globally. Opening one's mind to diversity and difference does not only mean going out and finding diverse and different people to listen to. It should also involve reflection: on whose suffering does my privilege depend? Which perspectives is my mind closed to, and why? My broader argument is that, in this secular age, our minds are too often closed to religious practices, and that this closure means that we fall into forms of unexamined dogmatism which further close us off to the Other.

Meditation is a good example of an introverted religious practice, although it can also be practiced without any explicit reference to a transcendent authority. When we meditate, we may notice previously unconscious patterns which structure our thoughts and actions, and by making these patterns conscious we afford ourselves a degree of agency over areas about which we were previously unthinking. In noticing these patterns, we learn compassion, noticing the sorts of implicit assumptions and hidden feelings motivating behaviours which might previously have baffled us in others, and gone unexamined in ourselves. Often these patterns in thought will reflect aspects of social structures. By bringing implicit structural biases and assumptions to consciousness we are presented with the opportunity to change our behaviour and thus challenge the patterns in discursive practice and materiality which constitute these structures. The critical mindfulness literature and "engaged Buddhist" movement have done well to make clear the structural and ethical insights offered by mindfulness practice (King 2009; Stanley 2012; Hyland 2017, 346-351).

Conversely, the Christian principle of *caritas*, or neighbourly love, exemplifies an extraverted religious practice. *Caritas* represents the unconditional, sacrificial love that God has for humanity, modelled in the life and teachings of Jesus. Christians are called to reflect this love by turning their attention outward, particularly towards the poor and marginalized. In doing so, they recognize what they share in common with these individuals and confront how dominant social structures obscure and normalize suffering. As I will discuss in more detail later, liberation philosopher Enrique Dussel builds on Emmanuel Levinas's ethics of exteriority, applying it to systemic injustices. This means that core-periphery dynamics, race and gender inequality, class struggle, and epistemic violence are all understood as manifestations of self-other relations where dominant groups remain closed off to the

suffering on which their privilege depends (Dussel 2004, 26). To abide by the principle of *caritas* in this context, is to attune oneself to these structures of privilege and to seek justice by addressing the root causes of suffering.

Through making aspects of the unconscious conscious, both introverted and extraverted forms of religious practice prevent shadow projection (Jung [1957] 2010, 36; [1938] 1984, 87, 88 & 236; [1958] 1975, 344). This means that we learn to recognise qualities in ourselves which previously did not fit with our ego's sense of self. We thus cease to project these qualities onto the Other and become able to listen in a way which we previously could not, quieting the din of our own projective narratives.

While this is a personal process and each of us has a different shadow, shadow projection does also take place on the collective level and will reflect the sorts of values and identities which the social collectives of which we are part encourage and discourage.[5] For example, Jung believed that shadow projection was the psychological dynamic which lay behind the Cold War, with each side projecting the traits they did not want to see in themselves onto the Other: "it is the face of our own shadow that glowers at us across the Iron Curtain" (Jung [1957] 2010, 125).

To endorse this psychological understanding of the Cold War as collective shadow projection does not preclude a materialist focus on the very different distributions of resources that characterised the communist East and the capitalist West, and the role that these differing materialities played in both producing and reflecting distinct structural qualities. As Jung's student, Marie-Louise von Franz (1997, 11) writes: "if your approach is extraverted and you observe it from without, you call it matter. If

[5] Capital plays a significant role in defining what is socially esteemed, as Axel Honneth's recognition theory demonstrates (see Honneth and Fraser 2003, 147-150).

your approach is introverted and you observe it from within, you call it the collective unconscious". Pauli (in von Meyenn 1996, 593) concurs, writing that he considers "the old distinction between materialism and idealism as obsolete". This is indeed what the dual-aspect monism of the Pauli-Jung conjecture implies.

Whether we begin by looking inwards or outwards, and whether we think materialistically or idealistically, thinking globally means maintaining an openness to the voice of the Other. The God's-eye view of globality, the ultimate totality, a sort of universal language in which every perspective is understood at once, is impossible to attain, and any pretence or delusion as to its attainment will cast a shadow. Global thought is rather a process, an ongoing openness to a transcendent that lies beyond one's own limited understanding.

When Jung ([1957] 2010, 36, 124) imagines "mankind as one individual", he posits the Iron Curtain as a "boundary line bristling with barbed wire" running through the psyche. This image aptly describes a global thought in crisis. And while the Iron Curtain has fallen, we can see the same dynamic at work both within and outwith states today, in the forms of political polarisation and antagonistic foreign policy. Both extraverted and introverted religious practices can be of utility to "healing the split" in the contemporary psyche, thus moving global thought out of a state of crisis (133). Each offers a different form of openness to the unconscious, but both challenge the ego's self-identity and thus prevent shadow projection, with its Manichean ontologies of "them" and "us", from taking root.

Collective Shadow Projection, Coloniality and History

While shadow integration can be of personal benefit, helping us to synthesise what were previously antitheses and thus accessing a sense of deeper meaning, we might feel that, on the political level, there are certain aspects of our identity which we do not want to let go of, certain injustices about which no amount of psychologising should convince us to relinquish our anger. Furthermore, we might have material reasons for feeling this way: while the integration of the unconscious can teach us to let go of a rigid sense of self, the collective identities which partially constitute us often have a material basis in the physical world that we cannot simply "integrate". In this section, I want to argue that, given the role we play in larger political bodies, and the role which they play in constituting us, opening ourselves to transcendental meaning and thus *thinking globally* involves not only understanding how these bodies inflict various forms of injustice, and how the material legacies of past injustices continue to shape contemporary social structures, but discovering a sense of responsibility for the Other through this understanding.

Exemplifying the atrocities collectives can perpetrate when others come to represent only the qualities which we do not wish to see in ourselves, Jung ([1957] 2010, 52) understands colonialism as the result of European shadow projection:

> Quite apart from the barbarities and blood baths perpetrated by the Christian nations among themselves throughout European history, the European has also to answer for all the crimes he has committed against the [dark-skinned peoples] [6] during the process of colonization. In this respect the white man carries a very heavy burden indeed. It shows us a picture of the common human shadow that could hardly be painted in blacker colours… Since it is

[6] I have amended R.F.C Hull's translation "coloured peoples" in line with a translation provided in the November 1957 issue of The Atlantic (Jung 1957).

> universally believed that man is merely what his consciousness knows of itself, he regards himself as harmless and so adds stupidity to iniquity. He does not deny that terrible things have happened and still go on happening, but it is always "the others" who do them.

Building on this insight, in this section I want to posit that shadow projection might provide a psychological explanation for what decolonial scholars call “coloniality”. Furthermore, I posit that religious practices and the transcendental meaning which they unveil might serve to motivate collective decolonial political praxis and thus offer a means of addressing an ongoing crisis in global thought exemplified by Israel’s genocide in Gaza (Albanese, 2024), and by the West’s recurring, yet selective, proclivity for so-called liberal interventionism.

Anibal Quijano’s (2000, 216) concept, the “coloniality of power”, describes how the core-periphery dynamics of global capitalism are intertwined with the naturalisation of structural domination through the construction of racial hierarchies. Quijano (2000, 218) explains how “Europe, as colonial dominator of the world, could impose a process of reidentification of the other regions of the world as new geocultural identities”. Shadow projection and the collective European egocentrism which it resulted from, imprinted itself on the materiality of the world. Racism was the shadow cast by capital. And, as Quijano highlights, while “’race’ and ‘racist’ social relations in the everyday life of the world population have been the most visible expressions of the coloniality of power during the last 500 years, the most significant historical implication is the emergence of a Euro-centered capitalist colonial/modern world power that is still with us”.

Expanding upon the ontological dimension of coloniality, “the coloniality of being”, Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007, 263) explains how coloniality depends on the “paradigm of war”, by which colonised peoples are dehumanised so that the colonisers have no ethical responsibility for them. For the colonised, life thus becomes a constant state of war in which they are perpetually struggling to escape death. This dehumanisation means that the modern/colonial world is divided into Dasein (who, according to Heidegger’s philosophy, discover authenticity by facing death) and damnée (a Fanonian term understood here as referring to those who are constantly facing death) (254-256). Maldonado-Torres attributes this split to what he calls the *ego conquiro,* which “provides the ground” for Descartes’ *ego cogito* (245). The *ego conquiro* is defined by a scepticism regarding the humanity of the colonised, which is reflected in the shadow of Descartes’ *ego cogito:* “I think (others do not think, or do not think properly), therefore I am (others are-not, lack being, should not exist or are dispensable)” (252). Thus, “the hyperbolic expression of coloniality includes genocide, which is the paroxysm of the ego cogito - a world in which the ego cogito exists alone” (247).

The hierarchical binary constructed between the ego-centric coloniser and the dehumanised colonised “provided a new model to understand the relationship between the soul or mind and the body; and likewise, modern articulations of the mind/body are used as models to conceive the coloniser/colonised relation” (245). Dualist ontologies which give the mind primacy over the body were thus instrumental to colonialism and the maintenance of the oppressive power structures it precipitated. This is a key merit of the Pauli-Jung conjectures and other quantum ontologies like it: neither mind nor matter is given primacy. Furthermore, the ontologisation of colonial difference means that those who sit at the top of racialised

and gendered hierarchies are closed off to the difference of the Other. They are deprived of the trans-ontological ethical encounter with the Other, because the egocentrism at the root of shadow projection reduces the Other to a sub-ontological, dehumanised status.

Maldonado-Torres (2007, 258) draws inspiration from the ethics first approach to philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas here: “the ontological, the realm of being, comes to exist out of the introduction of justice into the trans-ontological relation, which introduces measure and synchronicity in the order of the fundamentally diachronic”. For Levinas, the face-to-face encounter with the Other should be the starting point of philosophy. The sense of ethical responsibility experienced in this encounter is diachronic, meaning that it occurs in a temporal flow that cannot be totalised into historical chronology. In other words, this ethical responsibility is always becoming, it is eternally now. However, the demands of justice in a political world in which there are a multiplicity of others mean that we must ontologise, grasping a snapshot summary of being as it stands and thus entering into synchronic time in order to measure and compare our various responsibilities to a range of others. In doing so, we lose the immediacy of the face-to-face encounter: what Maldonado-Torres calls the “trans-ontological”. “The ontological thus carries with it the marks of both positive achievement and betrayal of the trans-ontological relation” (258). However, “it is the forgetting of the self-Other relation that characterizes the return of ontology as fundamental” which can result in “a renunciation of responsibility and justice”. The challenge is to hold the tension between the ethical and the ontological in the service of justice. Shadow-projection, and any other form of ego-centrism, amounts to alienation from responsibility and justice. The ongoing crisis in global thought, demonstrated by Israel’s genocide in Gaza with material and diplomatic support from

the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany, demonstrates the failure to give primacy to this self-Other relationship, and the collapse into a dominant ontology in which Palestinians are considered less than human.

Levinas (1989, 294) himself failed to apply the radical implications of his own ethics to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, notoriously referring to Palestinians as simply "people who are wrong" in a political context. This stance appears to prioritize a particular ontological narrative (Israeli security/survival) over the immediate ethical demand of the Palestinian Other, exemplifying the very tension and potential for betrayal he described. Liberation philosopher Enrique Dussel (1976, 15-16) draws on Levinasian ethics but goes further to show how our ethical responsibility towards the Other is revealed in history. Dussel's Christian Marxist approach, which influenced Maldonado-Torres's understanding of the coloniality of being, concretised Levinas's notions of totality and exteriority, giving them material form in the core-periphery dynamics of global capitalism. Dussel's thought is invaluable to understanding how "enduring cultures and structures of colonialism that have sedimented in the Americas and elsewhere" have shaped contemporary materiality and discourse (Maldonado-Torres 2017, 549).

The nation-state is perhaps the political body through which the materiality and discourse of coloniality as collective shadow projection can most clearly be seen. Jung ([1957] 2010, 55) writes:

> Even today people are largely unconscious of the fact that every individual is a cell in the structure of various international organisms and is therefore causally implicated in their conflicts. He knows that as an individual being he is more or less meaningless and feels himself the victim of uncontrollable

> forces, but, on the other hand, he harbours within himself a dangerous shadow and adversary who is involved as an invisible helper in the dark machinations of the political monster. It is in the nature of political bodies always to see the evil in the opposite group, just as the individual has an ineradicable tendency to get rid of everything he does not know and does not want to know about himself, by foisting it off on somebody else.

The unintegrated, or might we say unrecognised, or even unmeasured, shadow leaves us liable to manipulation by political bodies, and this manipulation manifests in ontologies which dehumanise the Other and justify their murder and exploitation. Capital's influence on the state and on the media allows for the manufacturing of consent for self-interested, neocolonial interventionism, with liberal ideals twisted and hollowed out to serve as marketing slogans for war [7].

In advocating that we theorise "from the planetary horizon", Dussel (2013, 25, 48) states that "it is necessary to be explicitly conscious of this ever-present 'horizon' of the colonial or barbarous Other, and of the cultures in an asymmetrical, dominated, 'inferior', excluded position, as an essential, permanent source or resource in the joint configuration and constitution of the identity of the 'modern self'". In failing to do this, hegemonic Eurocentric philosophy has not "attempted to be the expression of a truly global experience… it has been trapped instead in a regional perspective with claims of universality" (52). Key to understanding this self-centredness is an acknowledgement that "egoism is the ideal model required by the competition of the market place" (76). Capital creates a "totality" in which the "exteriority" of living labour is objectified and thus permanently alienated from the worker (230). Capital chooses

[7] See Herman and Chomsky's (2021) classic.

which characteristics are recognised and made conscious, and which remain alienated and unconscious [8]. For centuries this process has involved the exteriorisation of any thought which does not fit a Eurocentric understanding of rationality. Indeed, this is a significant merit of the quantum ontologies which I explored earlier: they offer an immanent point of critique to this limited understanding of rationality. To address both the psychological and material imprints of the totality's self-centredness, Dussel shows that we must go beyond Levinas's conception of responsibility, towards "a re-cognition of the Other, as an other, and as a victim of the system that produces him or her" in order to subject "the system or totality to critical questioning" (279).

Key to this critical questioning is the revelation of a "new history" written by the victim of the dominant totality who "discovers that she has been covered over, ignored" and thus "begins to gain awareness of her-self in positive terms" (302). This is a discovery of the subject's "negative relation with the system", the collective realisation of which motivates liberatory struggle: "the popular Other is now able, as trans-ontological 'source' ,to 'interpellate' those with 'ethical conscience' or those who know how to hear in the current system: 'I *interpellate* you on the basis of the justice that you should have accomplished for us!'". By interpellation Dussel (2013, 303) means an ethical summons from the oppressed Other to those upholding oppressive power structures. Religious practices, as means of addressing our tendency towards shadow projection, teach us "how to hear in the current system".

Key to this is an engagement with history as a potential source of transcendental meaning. This is what Dussel (1976, 138) means when he states:

[8] Again,see Honneth and Fraser (2003, 147-150).

> If a person opens up his newspaper and comprehends God's revelation in the concrete course of salvation history, then he really is praying; for it is in concrete history that God reveals himself. But the truly important news may not be in the headlines; it may be buried away on the fourth or sixth page of the newspaper. Faith has to discern where the important news, the concrete revelation, truly is… God reveals himself before our eyes – in our neighbour and in history. That is the privileged place of divine revelation, for God reveals himself in our neighbour and in the poor.

He clarifies that faith entails accepting the words of the Other, not necessarily taking them as truth, but accepting them "because behind the Other's word is found the very reality of someone, immediate, open and exposed in a metaphysical openness of which the ontological openness of the world is a distant imitation" (2003, 46). Indeed, the Pauli-Jung conjecture offers a very apt imitation, but the point here is that "faith is something that opens me to a whole new horizon of understanding" (1976, 17). "And this new horizon of understanding must be *dialectical*, in the sense that the original Greek word *dia-logos* suggests 'moving from one horizon of comprehension to another horizon of comprehension'. As a form of understanding or comprehension, faith can never get to its last and ultimate horizon because that horizon is historical" (18). "History is a collective psychoanalysis in which we examine our cultural traumas… the very act of seeing what has been going on is a major part of the cure" (17). Through faith we learn how to listen to the Other and thus our understanding is constantly challenged, taking on new meaning and calling us to new responsibilities.

It is worth noting that the dialectical evolution in understanding that results from the cultivation of faith in the Other - through the integration of the unconscious both individually and collectively - amounts to a process of recognition. Mirroring both the

Copenhagen Interpretation view of quantum measurement as productive of material objects, and Jung's ([1959] 1981, 184) assertion that "all cognition is akin to recognition" (meaning that conscious thought is merely the explication of previously unconscious intuitions [9]), Dussel (2013, 384) asserts that human life, "natural life", and "the objective reality of nature" are constituted by "processes of recognition between subjects". When he asserts, as I quoted above, that "behind the Other's word is found the very reality of someone, immediate, open and exposed in a metaphysical openness of which the ontological openness of the world is a distant imitation" (2003, 46), he is stating that our ethical responsibility for the Other precedes any ontological convictions, and that our response to this call will, in large part, determine these convictions. As Maldonado-Torres (2007) has helped us to see, one way in which coloniality persists is through ontologies which reify closure to the difference of the Other. But this recognition-ontology relationship is not unidirectional. Just as new historical perspectives might deepen or obscure our recognition of difference, new ontological convictions can do the same. My contention here has been that different forms of dogmatism, whether materialist, religious or political, can serve to close minds to religious practices, and that this closure will reify our closure to the difference of the Other. Religious practice can teach us to listen to the words of the Other, challenging our understanding of history and, in doing so, making possible a deeper recognition of the Other's difference. Through this continuous process of recognition, our transcendental responsibility for the Other is perpetually renewed.

[9] See McGilchrist (2019, 97).

Conclusion

In this paper, through a quantum social theoretic exploration of the Jungian notion of shadow projection, I have argued that religious practices offer a means of "healing the split" between the self and the Other, and thus of helping us to think globally (Jung, [1957] 2010, 133).Listening to the voice of the Other, and recognising their difference, is challenging in a media environment in which the interests of capital and the military-industrial-complex are better represented than those of the marginalised. However, it is easier to notice the villainization of others when you have managed to cease denying and projecting your own villainous potential. Shadow projection leaves us stuck in the egoistic, one-sided logic of coloniality which keeps us divided and conquered, cut off from the Other and trapped in a self-centred world. This is the value of religious practice, whether introverted or extraverted. Jung and Pauli's quantum ontology helps us to understand these different approaches to the transcendent as offering different perspectives: one psychological, the other materialist. Just like mind and matter in the Pauli-Jung conjecture, these insights are complementary. Both offer means of deconstructing the dominant totality and opening ourselves to the transcendental responsibility evoked when we learn to relate to the words of the Other with faith.

A significant part of understanding "how to hear in the current system", and thus recognising the difference of the Other, is acknowledging that coloniality has sedimented into material power structures which cast their own shadow (Dussel 2013, 303). Our understandings of self and Other are thus inevitably entangled with the shadow cast by capital. Our shadows are, to repeat Jung's ([1957] 2010, 55) words, "involved as an invisible helper in the dark machinations of the political

monster". When we integrate them, recognising our own capacity for evil, we are less susceptible to othering discourse which dichotomises the world into "good guys" (us) and "bad guys" (them). Learning about the atrocities and injustices perpetrated or supported in our own name by the governments who are supposed to represent us also poses less of a threat to our sense of self. Instead, we are motivated to question the material and discursive patterns which caused these injustices, and to work towards systemic change. In doing so, we are acting on the transcendental responsibility which is revealed to us when we cease projecting and are able to find faith in the words of the Other.

This faith, and the recognition of difference which it makes possible, reveals new political responsibilities. Exemplifying this currently are calls to bring an end to military Keynesianism in order to fund climate action (Rogaly 2024). Could increases in military spending be put to better use fighting a genuinely existential threat? While the trend towards increased defence spending [10] might seem like a necessary reaction to an increasingly dangerous world, we must examine our own role in the growing antagonism.

Doing so, we will necessarily risk being called apologists, whether for Putin, Hamas or whoever the latest villain is, but this should not deter us from seeking a deeper understanding of the relevant context. This sort of labelling is the byproduct of shadow projection, indicating that the mind is closed to any information which might call into question one's sense of self. Through the cultivation of faith in the words of the Other, we will necessarily gain an understanding of historical context which is antithetical to that of the dominant totality. Such faith, which, as Dussel makes clear,

[10] See SIPRI (2025).

does not amount to believing that the Other's words equate to objective fact, offers us the opportunity to understand the role of our own governments in producing conflict, and to prevent repetition of the same mistakes. Rather than apologism, this is about taking responsibility for the governments which we elect and the allies with which they are entangled, and, where possible, holding them to account. The perpetrators of atrocities are not absolved of responsibility for their actions when we seek to understand our own role, if any, in motivating them. This applies whether we consider actions that may have influenced Russia's invasion of Ukraine - like US funding of pro-Western opposition before the 2014 Maidan rebellion (Mearsheimer 2014, 80) or NATO expansionist rhetoric from US officials, including President Biden in late 2021 (Mearsheimer 2022, 21) - or ongoing Western military support for Israel despite its perpetration of genocide in Gaza and its long-running project of ethnic cleansing and apartheid throughout Palestine (Pappe 2007; UN ESCWA 2017; Albanese 2024).

In listening to the Other we face up to our own role in conflicts around the world and the egoistic colonial power structures which are too often at play, and we take away a useful tool from those who weaponize liberal democratic ideals to manufacture consent for endless war. By turning our attention to the suffering in the shadows of the dominant dogma, and finding there a transcendental responsibility for the Other, religious practice helps us cultivate truly global thought.

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