### **1AC – Hauntology**

#### **The medical industrial complex is rooted in using disease as a way to reify different modes of colonial and class violence – That make it impossible to imagine medicine as life sustaining because it is haunted by spectres of the past**

Street 18 [Alice Street, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Edinburgh 12-12-2018, "Ghostly Ethics," Taylor & Francis, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01459740.2018.1521400]/ISEE

The hospital ghosts that feature in this issue do not only make the past visible in the present. They also portend the affective and structural uncertainties inherent in how anthropology’s interlocutors engage with hospital infrastructures, and make sense of medical outcomes, in the future. These ghosts disrupt the very notion of the hospital as a site of life-sustaining care. The ghosts we meet in these pages are not external agents that force their way into the institution from outside; they are the progeny of hospital biomedicine. The hospital jinns described by Varley and Varma, for example, are “neither alien to nor separable from medicine, but inextricably bound up with its local practice and outcomes.” What these ghosts make visible, then, are the excesses, harm, and suffering that are integral to hospital medicine, but are commonly excluded from formal accounts (and the accounts that medical practitioners tell themselves) of Hippocratic biomedical ethics. It is apt that many of the articles explicitly attend to iatrogenic suffering. In the public hospital in Cameroon described by Chabrol, haunting takes a pathological form. Irresponsible and racist colonial medical campaigns resulted in widespread infection with viral hepatitis. The patients diagnosed in the hospital today often only find out they have the disease when they attend the blood bank to donate blood for relatives who have been admitted to the hospital with more acute conditions. Here, viral hepatitis appears as a “ghost” from a violent colonial past. But, importantly, Chabrol also employs the concept of haunting to question the ethics of diagnosing people with a disease in the present, for which there is little prospect of treatment, when knowledge of that diagnosis can itself disrupt kinship relationships and affect social and mental wellbeing in the future. In Gilgit Town in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, sectarian violence frequently threatens to erupt inside the hospital and patients voice their concerns that the exclusions generated by everyday triaging and staff neglect follow sectarian lines. Here stories about jinn articulate the precariousness of hospital living in a setting where strangers cannot automatically be trusted to care. In both papers, jinns or ghost-diseases draw attention to the disjuncture of dominant narratives about biomedical ethics, which emphasize the life-sustaining capacities of medicine, and actual practices of biomedical care, which can be disruptive and damaging to social and biological life, in many hospital settings. The effect of bringing these different articles together under the figure of “haunting” is that iatrogenic suffering does not figure as a rare exception to biomedical norms, but is a constant “ghostly” presence that challenges the very notion of the hospital as a site of care. The Papua New Guinea example is a case in point. What, for example, would it mean to understand wori as an iatrogenic disease? In these tragic accounts of iatrogenic suffering, the trope of haunting – especially in fraught postcolonial settings or medical modes – serves as a means for anthropologists to introspectively engage with local understandings and criticisms of hospital medicine, and to scrutinize its intrinsic shortcomings and failures. Even when ghosts themselves do not appear in the articles, haunting is employed as a form of ethical critique. Krauss interprets women’s collective expressions of pain in Mexican abortion clinics as the forced embodiment of the moral paradoxes that lie at the heart of Mexican abortion law, which simultaneously criminalizes all abortion and grants exceptions from prosecution for morally acceptable cases. Krauss conjures pain as a ghost that haunts the law (and anthropological preoccupations with the law) with fundamental ethical questions about the ways in which the moral ambiguity of (Catholic) legal codes affect the wellbeing of women. Kehr employs the concept of “haunting” to describe physicians’ discomfort with the racialized medicine that they practice in the hospital and to capture their desire for a “medicine otherwise”, which might be understood as a desire to build a racially attuned hospital ethics. In Srinagar, the long-term mental health patients that are left behind in the hospital ward in the wake of a policy shift toward care in the community are described as jinn-like, “both their physical existence and the fact of their incarceration are disruptive to the social order, embodying the limited reach of current totalizing projects.” In her recent article on the hauntings of shipyards on the Hoogly River, India, Laura (Bear 2018) argues that the frequent appearances of ghosts – in the form of jinns – help workers to articulate the limitations and exclusions of a labor ethics premised on perpetual growth. Stories about jinns express an alternative ethics of labor, in which work leads to death and suffering as well as growth. In a workplace where horrific accidents and minor injuries alike are daily occurrences, ghosts “draw attention to the excluded element” of a capitalist ethics premised on productivity, growth and vitality – “individual suffering, decay and death” (Bear 2018). The ghosts of popular working class Hinduism “do not manifest a traumatic collective memory—an unacknowledged past does not emerge through their agency. Instead… they allow hidden individual suffering in the present to return as a collective tangible visceral experience” (Bear 2018). I suggest that ghosts fulfill a similar purpose in the hospital environment, giving voice to counter-narratives that challenge the medicine:disease oppositional dyad and making visible the ways in which hospital medicine, precisely because of its embeddedness in colonial institutional histories and social inequalities, may be generative of disease, death and suffering.

#### Intellectual property protections on medicines are haunted by the same specters of the ruptured medical industrial complex

TWAIL 21 [Third World Approaches to International Law, 3-23-2021, "On Intellectual Property Rights, Access to Medicines and Vaccine Imperialism," TWAILR, https://twailr.com/on-intellectual-property-rights-access-to-medicines-and-vaccine-imperialism/]/ISEE

Intellectual property rights (IPRs) are time-limited legal rights granted to inventors and creators. IPRs include copyrights, trademarks, patents, trade secrets, and geographical indications, while protected subject-matters include, but are not limited to, brands, inventions, designs, and biological materials. Importantly, IPRs overlap as a product may be covered by a series of rights. For example, a pharmaceutical medicine, defined by Britannica as a ‘substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of disease’, is protected by patents, trademarks, and trade secrets. Patents are the most common form of IPR used for the protection of innovation in pharmaceuticals. Patents grant inventors limited market exclusivity for their inventions, and, in exchange, the inventor must disclose sufficient information such that competitors will be able to step into the market. This disclosure allows a competitor to make preparation to enter the market at the end of the monopoly period. Due to this legally-mandated exclusivity, patent owners – usually multinational corporations – have the right to prevent others from making, using, or selling a patented invention. The TRIPS Agreement, concluded as part of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiation and in force since 1995, provides a minimum of 20 years patent protection. The belief is that the duration allows corporations to recoup the expenses of developing, testing and upscaling an innovative pharmaceutical product. From the onset, the TRIPS IP regime created imbalance between innovation, market monopoly, and medicines access, because it failed to take into consideration the health burden, development needs and local conditions of the various countries that make up the WTO. This has led to several issues. First, the market monopoly of IP rights, which allows the corporation to set the market for drugs, has created a privileged societal class with access to lifesaving medication distinguishing them from those excluded from access to available medications. This phenomenon is vividly illustrated in the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1990s and early 2000s. While HIV/AIDS patients in developed countries were able to afford antiretroviral (ARVs) treatments, which had been developed, approved and patented as early as 1987, many patients in Africa and other parts of the developing world could not afford the approximately USD 12,000 per annum treatment at that time. By 2001, approximately 2.4 million people in the region had died of AIDS. The South African government intervened to reduce the cost of ARVs by amending its domestic patent laws to allow the authorization of parallel imports of patented pharmaceuticals and to encourage the use of generic drugs, but it was sued by the US industry group Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). Though the lawsuit was eventually dropped, it highlights the measures pharmaceutical corporations, backed by some national governments, are willing to take to protect their profits at the cost of human lives. Significantly, we see how law (or the threat of legal action) is used not only to protect and expand the profitability of a certain kind of property but, as Anjali Vats and Deidré Keller have taught us, also reveals IP law’s racial investments in whiteness and its continuing implications for racial (in)equality, particularly in the way it informs systems of ownership, circulation, and distribution of knowledge. Similarly, Natsu Saito takes up the analysis of IP, race and capitalism by theorizing some of the ways in which ‘value’ in IP law concentrated in the hands of large corporations is calculated in terms of its profitability rather than what it contributes to the well-being of society. However, the proverbial chickens have come home to roost as even rich countries are beginning to feel the bite of the dysfunctional IP system. The issue of excessive pricing for medicines is a growing problem in developed countries as well and has now become the single biggest category of healthcare spending in these states, particularly the US. An empirical report by I-MAK reveals how excessive pharmaceutical patenting is extending monopolies and driving up drug prices. The report, for example, notes that over half of the top twelve drugs in the US have more than 100 attempted patents per drug. Specifically, the report revealed that Humira® by AbbVie (used in the treatment of Crohn’s disease and the US’s highest grossing drug) has been issued 130 patents. The drug costs USD 44,000 annually and generated more than USD 19.2 billion for the company in 2019 alone. The Report also notes that the first patent filed for Herceptin® – used in the treatment for certain breast and stomach cancers – was in 1985 but currently has pending patent applications that could extend its market monopoly for 48 more years. Meanwhile, Celgene has over 105 patents for its oral cancer drug Revlimid® (used in the treatment of multiple myeloma) extending its monopoly until the end of 2036 – a patent lifespan of 40 years. In addition to excessive patenting and pricing, we have also come to understand the power of data in this context. Health inequity and inequalities in vaccine access are not unfortunate outcomes of the global IP regime; they are part of its central architecture. The system is functioning exactly as it is set up to do. Second, regulatory agencies worldwide require drugs to undergo safety and efficacy testing to ensure they are harmless before approval. These tests, known as clinical trials, involve human subjects and are costly because they can run up to three separate phases. The data collected during these clinical trials are the proprietary materials of the company conducting the tests. Because it is expensive and time-consuming, generic drug companies usually rely on the safety and efficacy data of brand name companies to seek regulatory approval as long as they can prove their generic version is chemically and biologically equivalent to the original. Relying on the test data of brand name companies reduces the production cost for generic medicines and allows for quicker market entry. However, recent years have seen a promotion of time-limited, legally mandated protection against the non-proprietary use of such data by generic companies. This is known as data exclusivity. Put differently, data exclusivity is a period when a generic company cannot use the clinical trial data of an innovator pharmaceutical company to receive regulatory approval for a generic medicine. In so doing, data exclusivity provides a layer of protection in addition to patent protection to further delay market entry of generic medicines. Data exclusivity periods vary depending on the jurisdiction. For example, it is twelve years in US and ten years in the EU. While the TRIPS Agreement does not create property rights over registration data, the US and the EU have continued to champion and export data exclusivity through free trade agreements, particularly for biologics. For example, the US Affordable Health Care for America Act in 2009 extended a 12-year exclusivity period for biologics. This US interpretation for registration data was also included in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which sought a 10-year data exclusivity for new biologics. However, after intense negotiations, the data exclusivity protection was reduced to 5 years for new pharmaceuticals. In this instance, we see a crystallising of Euro-American ideas of property and a willingness to promote those property interests through the law, both domestic and international. In fact, certain scholars assert that this pursuit of higher TRIPS standards is driven, in part, by the US desire to achieve levels of protection it anticipated from the TRIPS Agreement but failed to secure. Given the influence of the industry and its representative group, PhRMA, in seeking stronger protection on a global scale, it is not surprising that the US’s post-TRIPS policies continue to rachet up standards in ways that undermine access to affordable medicines, and perpetuate social hierarchy and subordination. Third, patent practices in recent decades have seen pharmaceutical companies engaging in trivial and cosmetic tweaking of a drug whilst still reaping the benefit of 20 years of patent protection. This tweaking sometimes involves making minor changes to patented drugs, such as changes in mode of administration, new dosages, extended release, or change in color of the drug. These changes normally do not offer any significant therapeutic advantage even though pharmaceutical companies argue they provide improved health outcomes to patients. These additional patents on small changes to existing drugs, known as evergreening or patent thickets, block the early entry of competitive, generic medicines that drive medicine prices down. For example, while not mandated by TRIPS, many US led TRIPS-plus free trade agreements have expanded the scope for evergreening. These include the US-Jordan FTA (2000), US-Australia FTA (2004) as well as the US-Korea FTA (2007), which allow for the patenting of new forms, uses, or methods of using existing products. The development discourse often touted by developed nations to help countries in the Global South ‘catch up’ is empty when the essential medicines needed to stay alive are deliberately denied and weaponised. The cancer drug Gleevec®, owned by Novartis, is another example of how pharmaceutical companies often secure patents on new, more convenient versions with marginal therapeutic benefit to patients whilst blocking the entry of generic medicines. In 2013, Novartis’ patent application for Gleevec®– the β crystalline form of the salt imatinib mesylate – was rejected by the Indian Supreme Court because it lacked novelty. However, the company has secured patents for this product in other jurisdictions such as the US and has maintained a high price of Gleevec there. But in India the price of Gleevec® was reduced from approximately USD 2,200 to USD 88 for one month’s treatment in the generic drugs market as a result of the 2013 Indian Supreme Court judgement. Novartis is not the only culprit. The depression drug Effexor® by Pfizer was granted an evergreen patent when the company introduced an extended-release version, Efexor-XR®, even though there was no additional benefit to patients. Eventually, the patent was declared invalid, but by then it had already cost an estimated USD 209 million to Australian taxpayers and kept generic competition off the market for two and a half years. In another instance, Pfizer went on to secure an additional patent for the Pristiq®, which contained identical chemical compound as Efexor-XR®,and again with no added therapeutic benefit. These evergreening practices, of course, have material effects. Apart from delaying the entry of generic versions, they give brand-name pharmaceutical companies free reign in the market, which allows them to set the market price. Recent years have seen monopoly prices rise exorbitantly causing significant financial strain to patients, domestic healthcare services and even insurance companies in developed countries. A notorious example is Martin Shkreli, who in 2015 bought the rights to an anti-malarial drug, then raised the price by 5,000 per cent from a cost of USD 13.50 to USD 750. Similarly, a white paper by I-MAK shows how excessive patenting and related strategies are driving families to overspend on lifesaving medicines. Celgene, the makers of Revlimid® raised the price of the drug by more than 50 per cent since 2012 to over USD 125,000 per year of treatment. Using the example of Solvadi® by Gilead, which costs USD 84,000 per treatment, Feldman notes the drug would cost the US Department of Defense more than USD 12 billion to treat all hepatitis-infected patients in US Veterans Affairs. But the US is not alone. In Europe, expensive drugs have prompted a growing backlash against pharmaceutical corporations. Reacting to these price hikes, Dutch pharmacies are bypassing these exorbitant prices by preparing medicines in-house for individual patients. The broken IP system ranging from an extraordinarily low standard for granting patents to permissions of patent thickets around a single molecule has not only severely distorted the system of innovation, but they have also skewed access to life-saving drugs. As a result, prices for new and existing medicines are constantly rising, making essential medicines inaccessible for millions of people around the world.

#### Embracing these specters is key to solve for nationalist and authoritarian violence – anything other method justifies erasing all traces that disturb the self-enclosure of the present and turns all impacts.

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It often appears that a prolonged conflict unsettles the present. Although this is psychologically true,44 politically it is mostly the other way round. According to Derrida, ‘‘every authoritarian regime wants to eternalize its present in order to rule out the possibility of its future disintegration and to erase the barbarity from which it sprang. Such regimes fear ghosts.’’45 Settlers — such as the Turkish settlers in the occupied part of Cyprus46 — have been used by their authorities as a means to an end (against Immanuel Kant’s Categorical Imperative, of course): to effect and consolidate demographic alterations that will erase the past relation of space and rightful (co)habitation. Settlement as a crime against humanity according to international law and settlement as arrangement of situations for purposes of realpolitik create a new, modern space that is disconnected from the past and hostile to a just future. The new ontology of space is haunted only by the memory of those who are in a position to know how the landscape once appeared. If the ‘‘present is unsettled no less by the return of the past than by the imminence of the future,’’47 then educational theory must defend a qualified preservation of memories and a preparation for the revival of unsettling futurity. ‘‘The founders of Israel spoke of making ‘facts on the ground.’ This term refers to shaping material reality in ways that institutionalize and make solid that which is, in fact, a recent innovation’’ (CD, 159). As facts on the ground, authoritarian strategies settle the present and block the advent of a desirable future perhaps far more than the emotional effects of any direct, personal loss (raising barriers to reconciliation) could ever do. ‘‘To reassure and perpetuate themselves, [authoritarian regimes] efface any spectral traces that threaten to disturb the self-enclosure of the present.’’48 As Saltman writes, ‘‘Israel eradicated Palestinian towns, removing all traces, all physical markers from which public memory of the history of the place could be conjured, invoked or referenced’’ (CD, 159). Such material production of faits accomplis creates ‘‘institutional and public memory while also working to conceal that which was there before. The longer it takes to rebuild schools and communities in New Orleans, the more powerful that wreckage becomes as new facts on the ground’’ (CD, 160). In turn, ‘‘the longer [created realities] become facts on the ground, the harder it becomes to remember what was there before’’ (CD, 160). This gives a new meaning to the Greek-Cypriot educational slogan ‘‘I do not forget and I struggle’’ that Zembylas unequivocally disparages as nationalism, pure and simple (PTE, 7). The educational demand for memory and for struggle to reclaim the rights that have been denied cannot be sweepingly dismissed without significant loss of commitment to international justice.

#### It outweighs, Authoritarianism causes extinction via nationalist wars, climate, military robots and makes all impacts more probable.

**Orts ’18** [Eric; June 27; Guardsmark Professor in the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania; LinkedIn Pulse, “Foreign Affairs: Six Future Scenarios (and a Seventh),” https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/foreign-affairs-six-future-scenarios-seventh-eric-orts]

7. Fascist Nationalism. There is another possible future that the Foreign Affairs scenarios do not contemplate, and it’s a dark world in which Trump, Putin, Xi, Erdogan, and others construct regimes that are **authoritarian and nationalist**. Fascism is possible in the United States and elsewhere if big business can be seduced by promises of riches in return for the institutional keys to democracy. Perhaps Foreign Affairs editors are right to leave this dark world out, for it would be very dark: **nationalist wars** with risks of **escalation into global nuclear conflict**, further digital militarization (even Terminator-style scenarios of smart **military robots**), and **unchecked climate disasters**.

The global challenges are quite large – and the six pieces do an outstanding job of presenting them. One must remain optimistic and engaged, hopeful that we can overcome the serious dangers of tribalism, nationalism, and new fascism. These "isms” of our time stand in the way of solving some of our biggest global problems, such as the risks of **thermonuclear war** and **global climate catastrophe**.

#### Thus I affirm that the member nations of the World Trade Organization ought to reduce intellectual property protections for medicines as a form of ghostly ethic.

Street 18 [Alice Street, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Edinburgh 12-12-2018, "Ghostly Ethics," Taylor & Francis, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01459740.2018.1521400]/ISEE

Hospital futures Ghosts have fulfilled a dual analytic function in the articles that feature in this special issue. In one mode, often dubbed “hauntology” (following Derrida 1994), and influenced by psychoanalytic and postcolonial theory, they make affectively present the unextinguishable, deferred remnants of repressed violence and wrongdoing that took place in the past. The contributing articles show hauntology to be a singularly productive means of drawing attention to the “multidimensional and multiply temporal” nature of hospital space (Varley and Varma, this issue). In the second mode, which I term “ghostly ethics”, they reveal the excesses, limitations, and impossibilities of a biomedical ethics that is premised on care, trust, and medicine as a life-sustaining force, when it is embedded in hospital infrastructures. Ghostly ethics reveal the abusive relationships that shadow hospital care in places of sectarian conflict, the fruitless pursuit of diagnostic knowledge in places without therapeutic resources, the uncertainty and unpredictability that perpetually haunts medical claims to authority, and the moral ambiguities that saturate medical law. In all these instances, ghosts give voice to people’s experience of hospital medicine as the cause of suffering, uncertainty and death, as well as their amelioration. From the perspective of ghostly ethics, hospitals are haunted because hospital medicine is always shadowed by unresolved ethical questions about the good or harm that institutional care can do. In Papua New Guinea spirits frantically travel through hospital corridors because people die in the wrong place: institutional relationships between patients, doctors, nurses, and kin are experienced as prohibiting the production of healthy bodies. As ethical critique, haunting gives voice to concerns about the intrinsic failings of hospital medicine and generates conversation about what “medicine otherwise” (as Kehr puts it, this issue) might look like for the future.

#### The aff is spectrality – only a critical interrogation of the present and the past as singular, totalizing, and complete can prevent the obstruction of possibility.

Zembylas 13 – Associate Professor of Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies at the Open University of Cyprus (Michalinos, “Pedagogies of Hauntology In History Education: Learning to Live with the Ghosts of Disappeared Victims of War and Dictatorship,” DOI: 10.1111/edth.12010, February 2013)//DD

One way of addressing the past and its representations is through the concept of the specter. In Specters of Marx, a book that initiates the perceived ‘‘ethical turn’’ in his work, Derrida argued that any rethinking of the past and any possibility of a just future depends on whether we can ‘‘learn to live with ghosts’’ (SM, xviii), the specters of the past, particularly the ghosts of victims of atrocities. The spectral is what haunts and returns in a society because the ghosts have unfinished business, something that needs to be corrected. However, the resolution of this unfinished business is not to abolish the specters — for example, through (uncritical) spectacle pedagogies — because, as Derrida warned, this would amount to eliminating the possibility of a different future.32 In addressing the issue of spectrality, Derrida introduced the term hauntology — a near homophone of ‘‘ontology’’ in French — to interrogate and replace the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost. Unlike ontology, which is fixed to the present and to what is representable (the traditional Western ontological and epistemological position), hauntology draws attention to specters that are neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive.33 Hauntology, then, occupies a peculiar ‘‘in-between’’ space that ‘‘reclaims the unspoken and neglected.’’34 For Derrida, specters are both ‘‘revenants’’ and ‘‘arrivants’’ (SM, xix), that is, spirits that come back and spirits that are to come, respectively; both of these temporal dimensions, as Ross Benjamin and Heesok Chang observe, are essential to spectrality.35 ‘‘Spectrality,’’ Fredric Jameson explains in his reaction to Derrida’s book, does not involve the conviction that ghosts exist or that the past (and maybe even the future they offer to prophesy) is still very much alive and at work, within the living present: all it says, if it can be thought to speak, is that the living present is scarcely as self-sufficient as it claims to be; that we would do well not to count on its destiny and solidity, which might under exceptional circumstances betray us.36 Spectrality denotes what is no longer or not yet living, which is not something present or absent, but something that is possibly everywhere, ‘‘bear[ing] traces of a lingering past and hover[ing] in suspense of an unforeseeable future.’’37 Being neither fully present nor fully absent, ghosts do not have an ontological status, but rather exceed all ontological oppositions between presence and absence, visible and invisible, living and dead.38 The concept of the spectral, then, has much to do with the concept of ‘‘trace’’ and thus time is always already spectral;39 in this sense, hauntology abolishes the concept of linear time as an ontological category of historical understanding. A society that has experienced disappearances — such as Argentina or Cyprus, for example — must come to terms with the specters of the disappeared, the traces left by them in the stories and images that are circulated, the societal habits of remembering and forgetting that are no longer noticed, and the public or private rituals that still take place to recognize the victims. The disappeared are ghosts whose stories and images reach from memory and absence; this is to say that ‘‘disappearance’’ as such — as a particular form of relationality between individuals within a society — reaches from a place and time that was and is no longer and records, recalls, and reinscribes remembrance in the aporetic of memory.40 A commonsense yet ideological response to the ghosts of the disappeared, as noted earlier, is a desire to remember and simultaneously a wish to ontologize the ghosts of the disappeared by categorizing them within what is representable — an action that aims at abolishing or reducing them to spectacles. Derrida argued, however, that a society can come to terms with specters without abolishing or reducing them to a spectacle, that is, to a kind of ontology. As he explained in a paragraph that concerns schools and educators in particular, The last one to whom a specter can appear, address itself, or pay attention is a spectator as such. At the theater or at school. The reasons for this are essential. As theoreticians or witnesses, spectators, observers, and intellectuals, scholars believe that looking is sufficient. Therefore, they are not always in the most competent position to do what is necessary: speak to the specter. (SM, 11) To come to terms with the specters of the past, there needs to be an engagement with the past that is not reduced to its totalizing representation and that does not fall into the delusion of a timeless understanding that is ever present. Derrida called on us to speak and listen to the specter not because the specter will reveal some kind of a secret; rather, speaking with and listening to the specter may open us to the experience of unknowing that underlies a productive engagement and a turning away from that which is supposedly determined content to be uncovered by representational practices.41 The ghost of the disappeared, then, pushes at the boundaries of language, thought, and emotion to open new possibilities for the future, possibilities that do not reduce the ghost’s ethical injunction to an object of knowledge.42 The specter signifies, therefore, a critical interrogation of the present and the past as singular, totalizing, and complete; the specter reminds us that the past is incomplete because there are always elusive remnants that cannot be articulated in the languages available to us. This is why it is suggested, for example, that commemorative or justice projects that rely too heavily on epistemological accounts or seek merely redemption become too totalizing to be open to the view that specters can be anything other than obscure forms of representation. Finally, it is important to point out how Derrida linked the specter to the theme of justice and advocated a politics of memory and responsibility that is directed not only to the living, but also to the dead and to the not yet born: No justice ... seems possible or thinkable without the principle of some responsibility, beyond all living present, within that which disjoins the living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead, be they victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence, nationalist, racist, colonialist, sexist, or other kinds of exterminations, victims of the oppressions of capitalist imperialism or any of the forms of totalitarianism. (SM, xix) Derrida chose, as noted earlier, to speak about ghosts in the name of justice because, he observed, ‘‘one cannot speak directly about justice, thematize or objectivize justice, say ‘this is just’ and even less ‘I am just,’ without immediately betraying justice.’’43 Since justice entails ‘‘an experience of the impossible’’ and thus is aporetic — because it is implicated with law, although it cannot be reduced to it44 — spectrality becomes valuable in determining how to address justice demands. It is in this spectral sense that justice is the ‘‘experience of absolute alterity,’’45 an openness toward a radical otherness, to ‘‘the coming of the other, the absolute and unpredictable singularity of the arrivant as justice’’ (SM, 28). The specter’s ethical injunction is that we remain open to the radical otherness of the arrivant as arrivant, what remains to come — for example, a ‘‘democracy to come,’’ ‘‘hospitality without reserve,’’ and ‘‘alterity that cannot be anticipated’’ (SM, 65–66). As Derrida pointed out, ‘‘without this experience of the impossible, one might as well give up on both justice and the event’’ (SM, 65) — that is, the event to come. The responsibility of the haunted is this, then: to be open to justice as unrepresentable, as always to come, as a trace of directionality rather than as a fixed destination.46 Hence justice for disappeared victims, for example, is not a calculable and distributive justice that ends with trials and punishments but an agonistic justice that contests legalistic settlements. In this sense, justice is a critical force that helps to articulate an alternative vision that is motivated by the infinite obligation to the other — in this case, the ghost of a disappeared victim who cannot be assessed by a finite set of qualities, representations, or legal arguments.

#### **The role of the ballot is to frontline reconciling with the past and the present**

Auchter 12 [Jessica Auchter “Ghostly Politics: Statecraft, Monumentalization, and a Logic of Haunting” Jessica Auchter teaches UHON 3550/3590—Topics in Behavioral and Social Science and Topics in Non-Western Cultures: Global Humanitarianism. Her main research and teaching interests lie in the field of International Relations. She has published articles in Review of International Studies, International Feminist Journal of Politics, Journal of Global Security Studies, Hyperrhiz, Ethnicity Studies, Journal for Cultural Research, andCritical Studies on Security, and several chapters in edited volume projects. Her book, The Politics of Haunting and Memory in International Relations, was published by Routledge in 2014.]

**The task** here, then**, is to trace the political effects of haunting** and hauntings**, and acknowledge that** there may be **some bodies** and some ghosts that **are unknowable,** but that **this is** itself **a hauntological status with** political **significance and disrupts the** previously **accepted order of knowledge.** It is **an ethical practice** undertakenhere**: to find ghosts without rendering them visible** and knowable **within a logic that replicates the subjugation and marginalization** of specters and the construction of certain lives and bodies as ungrievable. Why Bodies? Bodies are not themselves exclusive from ghosts. As Kas Saghafi writes, ‘a “ghost” is a spectral apparition, a magic appearance. Yet, it is a body—the most abstract of bodies. It is a becoming-body, a prosthetic body, an artifactual body, a body without body, a spectral body. **This phantomatic body,** animproperbody **without property or flesh, has the most intangible tangibility.**’85 Derrida’s own work on spectrality similarly gestures to a focus on the body. He states, ‘for there to be a ghost, there must be a return to the body, but to a body that is more abstract than ever. The spectrogenic process corresponds therefore to a paradoxical incorporation.’86 Here we begin to see the role of corporeality in spectrality, the importance of the ‘corps’ in Derrida’s gesturing to ‘incorporation.’ In this sense, understanding corporeality, or a focus on bodies in memorialization, can help us understanding the logic of haunting. **A focus on bodies has** perhaps **come to the attention of scholars** ofpolitics through the work of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Giorgio Agamben, largely centered on the emergence of the concept of biopolitics. Agamben explores the centrality of the body in modern political thought through **the idea that democracy has come to be** considered **the presentation of the body**: hence the term ‘habeas corpus ad subjiciendum, “you will have to have a body to show”’.87 Corpus, he says, is **the bearer** both **of individual liberties and the ultimate subject of sovereign power.**88 This is also why we see the centrality of the body in philosophy and science of the Baroque age. He reads the emergence of the body in Leviathan through Hobbes’s distinction between man’s natural body and his political body: ‘the great metaphor of the Leviathan, whose body is formed out of all the bodies of individuals, must be read in this light. The absolute capacity of the subjects’ bodies to be killed forms the new political body of the West.’89 Foucault similarly has discussed the way in which the emergence of biopolitical technologies have placed the body at the center of political life, focused on ensuring the spatial distribution of individual bodies through separation, alignment, serialization, and surveillance.90 Foucault is one of the most influential thinkers in terms of theorizing how sovereign power acts on bodies, particularly in the form of disciplinary practices. As Foucault states, ‘**the body is** also **directly involved in a political field; power relations** have an immediate hold upon it; they **invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks,** to perform ceremonies, to emit signs.’91 Foucault emphasizes the importance of techniques of visibility in control over bodies, including his key theorization of the panopticon. One of the key features of this project as a whole will be in exploring the politics of visibility: what it might mean to display certain bodies in certain contexts and not others, why some spaces are rendered invisible and others hyper-visible. Monica Casper and Lisa Moore also emphasize the importance of visibility when it comes to bodies, arguing that not all bodies are equally visible. Some bodies are hyperexposed and magnified, others hidden or missing.92 Judith Butler has similarly focused on the body, specifically in terms of the relationships between gender and sex and bodies. She acknowledges that the body is material. But it is how some bodies and parts of bodies come to matter that renders bodies a focal point of an analysis based on social construction.93 As Lauren Wilcox characterizes Butler’s perspective: ‘the materialization of bodies is theorized as a product of discursive practices of gender, rather than gender being a social formation that is applied to pre-existing sexed bodies.’94 What she gestures at here is that while we can view bodies as material, this materiality is in fact produced by discourse in an iterative performative process. Bodies matter not simply because things happen to them, but also because they are themselves coconstitutive of the discourses within which they circulate. Like Butler, Casper and Moore argue that bodies are material entities, but ‘our interpretations and explanations of bodily processes give meaning to their materiality.’95 Butler thus explores the materialization of bodies, and how this is productive of a ‘domain of abjected bodies’ which sustains the normalization of other bodies. This articulation of bodies is productive of norms that qualify some bodies as ‘bodies that matter, ways of living that count as ‘life,’ lives worth protecting, lives worth saving, lives worth grieving.’96 It bears exploring here why political inscription on the body is so important for understanding the politics of memory in the instances I explore, and how this relates to the field of international relations. Why the body? Why dead bodies? ‘Dead Bodies have enjoyed political life the world over’97, and embodied practices have recently come to the attention of scholars of international politics as well. Rosemary Shinko theorizes embodied practices by looking at the body as a surface for resisting power in the framework of autonomy. She theorizes bodily enactments as way to challenge ‘sovereign powers’ efforts to render certain forms of suffering invisible, meaningless and not worth troubling over’.98 She critiques the way in which International Relations has failed to theorize the body, specifically in ignoring the relational autonomy of bodies. By paying attention to relational autonomy, we can look at both the physiological materiality of bodies and the discursive materiality of bodies. Her emphasis on the way in which power is both inscribed on bodies, yet bodies can also offer resistance to power, emphasizes the way in which the body is not a fixed referent, but rather is both shaped by and shapes discourses of power and materiality.99 Lauren Wilcox identifies the body as the constituent outside to International Relations, in that it is not explicitly theorized yet it at the same time functions to define the parameters of the discipline in the sense that excluding the body from our theorizations maintains the status quo operations of international relations.100 She similarly explores the role of the body in international relations in a variety of contexts, including the force-feeding of prisoners at Guantanamo as a literal instantiation of a biopolitical ‘make live’ exercise of power. As she argues, ‘the production of bodies by regimes of sovereign/discipline/governmentality are never total—there may be no outside of power, but bodies are also capable of exceeding their production.’101 In this way, Wilcox emphasizes the way in which bodies are not simply to be considered as sites for political inscription of sovereign power; they are not simply victims of power, rather we can theorize bodily resistance and bodies as resistance as well. Anna Agathangelou has also explored the role of bodies in terms of the war in Iraq. She argues that liberal theory presupposes that the West is the subject of reason and those outside are considered to be mere corporeality.102 The strategy in Iraq was thus to decapitate the head while leaving the body in place. She focuses on the ways certain bodies are deemed structurally impossible and ontologically dead in order to sustain a certain (re)construction of the liberal order focused on these racial and gendered corporeal reconstructions. By doing so, she offers a framework for considering marginalized bodies through this notion of ontological death, those bodies that are not biologically dead but do not count as politically viable lives. I argue that by using the framework of hauntology we can start to consider the politics of visibility that render the ontologically dead as such. Renee Marlin-Bennett, Marieke Wilson, and Jason Walton specifically discuss the role of dead bodies by exploring commodified bodies and the politics of display.103 They explore the exhibition of plasticized human cadavers in museums for educational purposes, arguing that in these exhibits, dead bodies are being depoliticized and commodified in a morally troubling way. Though regulations exist for dead bodies and body parts, plasticized bodies are couched in discourses of specimens rather than human beings. The spectacle of their display in often provocative positions invokes scientific authority to legitimate a specific representation of these bodies which silences and depoliticizes their histories. Spectators walk through scenes in which the plasticized bodies enact a particular moral economy which is only possible with the base assumption that they are no longer considered to be human. Viewers are instructed not to engage emotionally with the bodies, and this, coupled with the disbelief that what is being exhibited is actually a human body, creates a cognitive dissonance which is coopted by the exhibit to condone objectification of things whose difference we cannot understand.104 Their analysis of the objectification and commodification of corpses gestures to the political importance governance of bodies, even dead ones, has in the contemporary biopolitical era. My project takes this basis as a starting point, and draws on this notion of a politics of display to look at bodies displayed for the purposes of memorialization rather than science or education. **All** of these international relations **scholars demonstrate in various ways and contexts the role bodies play** both **in being inscribed with sovereign power and in acting as resistance.** But they also all share the sentiment that the body is an under-theorized part of international politics and should be brought in to explore how power works. In short, bodies matter! Indeed, as Casper and Moore argue, ‘we live in an age of proliferating human bodies…bodies are made visible and seen…via a range of globalized practices.’105 They explore the emergence of globalized technologies such as MRIs and sonograms which render bodies both enhanced and amplified. But there are also ways in which traditional bodily and embodied practices such as death and burial are enhanced in a globalized age, not by emergent technologies, but by existent and emergent political and social practices which render these bodies a complex part of social and political identities and identity practices. This makes sense when we consider that bodies often serve as symbols of political order, where political transformation is symbolized by what is done to bodies, as in the expression ‘cutting off the head of the king’, pomp and circumstance regarding burial and reburial of political leaders, and even the idiom ‘body politic’.106 Dead bodies themselves are significant for politics, especially since as Henry Giroux lays out, ‘cadavers have a way of insinuating themselves on consciousness, demanding answers tto questions that aren’t often asked’.107 The idea here is that what is done with dead bodies is a key part of our identity, whatever that may be. In the case of Rwanda, dignified burial of the corpses of the victims of the genocide becomes essential to memorialization and reconciliation. Rwandan identity becomes dependent on the way they treat these dead bodies: the products of the genocide, and what they do with society: the other product of the genocide. In the case of undocumented immigrants who die crossing the US-Mexico border, their bodies themselves becomes sites of political practices and political contestation. Many believe that their bodies should not be buried on US soil, and thus their bodies themselves become the locus of contestation over the meaning of citizenship. This scenario also results from the increased mobility of bodies in the contemporary age.108 And in the case of 9/11, the disappearance of bodies and the creation of rubble and ruin become key to imagining national identity and concepts of power.

#### Epistemology comes first---their model of debate risks extinction and turns their framing arguments.

Heron 8. Taitu Heron, The Planning Institute of Jamaica. "Globalization, neoliberalism and the exercise of human agency." International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society 20.1-4 (2008): 85-101.

\*\*\* card edited for gendered language

While hunger and malnutrition haunts the poor, over nutrition imperils the affluent demonstrating the commonality of human misery of different types. The scale of human suffering in an increasingly technologically advanced, well-networked, informed world is made more disturbing by surmounting contempt for the poor and structural biases against women (Coronel and Dixit 2006, p. 17). Globalization and neoliberalism, being twin processes at both ideological and empirical levels, often overlap in terms of policy prescriptions that dominate the development agenda in this twenty-first century. With its emphasis on economic growth, it becomes evident that social development is not being enhanced; rather human dysfunctionality is increasingly more prevalent. The current international policy environment does not appear to recognise the weaknesses in deviating away from a socially oriented development model. As long as this environment is dominated by issues such as free trade, intellectual property rights, financial and capital liberalisation as well as investment protection, and the role of the state is continually relegated to the guardian of law and order in the midst of a socially hostile policy environment, there is great risk. A range of possibilities for resisting these changes exist and not all positive. This may take the form of social implosion or social explosion with increasing use of force as a method of solving problems. The implosion or explosion may be acted out against the state, whether directly or indirectly through sabotage. Alternatively, possibilities exist for the opening up of spaces for dialogue and transformative change. It will remain a risk as long as the neoliberal response to resistance to globalization is dismissive of inequalities and clamps down on law, order and civil liberties as an expression of power and control of the status quo. This dismissive approach toward humanity harbours resentment and promotes the resort to desperate measures and may not be sustainable or positive for any one. Human agency therefore, is expressed through the interactions which are fundamentally constructed through social and cultural structures and power relations; each comes with their own position, and is implicated by patterns of power predicated on structures of global injustice.

Heilbroner (1985, p. 46) argues, that the nature of capitalism will always rest on considerations of power especially where the possibility of wealth maximization resides, there will always be a drive to accumulate more. He argues that “the additional stimulus given to the drive for wealth by its generalization as capital does not supplant its unconscious meanings of personal pre-eminence and social domination but sharpens and intensifies its energies that must be devoted to its protection and to its accumulation” (Heilbroner 1985, p. 58). In this regard, is it pointless to question the use of this kind of agency which at its base is greed, especially if it entails a structural inequality of life conditions? Is it sustainable?

There is a need for the actors, who lead the process of globalization, to recognise and accept responsibility for their dysfunctional acts of agency. The blind transposition of economic, political and cultural structures harms people and affects their own agential capacity to chart their life course. When global actors exercise this kind of dysfunctional agency, be they the analysts at the World Bank and the IMF, officials of the WTO, CEOs of transnational corporations, trade and finance ministers at summits, make decisions to compel a nation to adopt Western economic systems and practices they should bear the responsibility of the outcome of those decisions. More so, high-ranking officials and advisers of the developing world need to question their own agency in agreeing to policies that exacerbating their countries' impoverishment; and their role in limiting the agency of their own populations.

The rhetoric of inevitability and the promise of profit if we leave the market to work its magical wonders, allows proponents to push aside the ethical responsibility for the consequences. The agency is misplaced and driven by greed; indeed the agency is not very humane. What it also indicates is the extent to which the West dominates and leads the process of globalization, the individualism which stands at their cultural core, which marks their manifestation of human agency, works to the detriment of the developing world. It also points to the possibility of excessive dependency on the part of the developing world, and their acts of agency, in certain quarters, where political elites may have the power to do otherwise. While it may be dependency, insofar as, political elites of developing countries cannot foresee any other way of relating to the developed world, we also have to consider greed and the financial benefits that may accrue to politico–economic elites if they sustain the status quo. This agency is distorted and ambivalent, for at the same time, we may also hear cries from some political elites of the developing world of unequal trade relations, and the wretchedness of globalization, and where many of their elites are not really interested in affecting, for the better, the relations of inequality and exploitation internally.

The complexity of exercising human agency also reflects the extent which, regardless the problems of capitalism, many have bought into it as a model. The controlling elites of this process of global capitalist development become more and more exploitative, constantly trying to find people (read: markets and untapped or ‘undertapped’ regions of the world). There is a lack of compassion in the model. Instead of using this as an opportunity to improve the social aspects of capitalism, the agency is being directed to deepen inequalities and relations of domination and exploitation. The dysfunctional forms of how human agency is manifested demonstrate a problem of dealing with the real reality, rather than the ideological one. The willingness of those who adhere to the model to more aggressively seek ways in which to discard life when it is not related to the business of accumulating capital demonstrates the urgency of addressing this absence of spiritual base for living and an absence of universal love for the diversity and value of human life in the capitalist model of development.

The raison d'etre of capitalism is purported to be profit generation and maximization. It is the continuous generation of profits that promotes this euphoric atmosphere often found in neoliberal dogma. From this perspective, there is no other way and is evidence that the regime is fulfilling its mission—namely to organize the world according to the principles and ends for which it exists. Heilbroner (1985, p. 76) succinctly gives the reminder that “profits are for capitalism the functional equivalent of the acquisition of territory or plunder for military regimes, or an increase in the number of believers for religious ones....” Thus while capitalism still functions as an economic system; albeit it's exploitative tendencies, it would be difficult to envision a radical overturning as possible or even practical. The model has been accepted by the exploiters and well as the exploited. But disgruntling will be there because of the absences of social justice, equity and compassion in the model, which, at the level of human development, are basic requirements; one has to have a love for humanity in order to develop it. This is the dilemma that needs to be addressed in capitalism at socio–economic, epistemological and political levels. We will have to reconsider the way in which human agency is exercised, while recognising the complexity of it.

We have to not only look at the outcomes of exercising human agency but also what produced the outcomes both internally and externally and the relationship between the two. Acting out agency is an independent act driven by decision-making capacities. Therefore, while the current international trade and financial system as adopted in most countries is severely limited in terms of opening up new policy spaces, policies are not fixed in stone. Girvan (2000, p. 84) suggests that universalistic neoliberal policies need to be replaced with policies that respect economic and cultural diversity as well as creating policies that seek to reduce social exclusion, marginalization and poverty. We therefore, have to question the ideological framework that gives power to globalisation as a model of development, and weakens and distorts the positive potentiality of human agency. In other words, one has to deconstruct the epistemological conditions that made neoliberalism possible and offer alternatives outside of mainstream thinking. Efforts offered by the World Social Forum and the “What Next Project” by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation are cases in point, where alternative proposals to the hegemonic model of globalization are put forward; and these emphasize equity, social justice structural transformation, self-reliant economic participation and ecological sustainability.3

Invariably an alternative policy environment has to not only question neoliberalism and its rules and terms of engagement, but it also has to deemphasize economic growth and embrace social policies that improve the agential capacity of human beings. Further more, such alternatives has to envision possibilities; ones that seek to make structural transformation of political and economic arrangements within and among states that are more equitable in nature; and most importantly has the political will to move from alternative ideas on development to implementation and social practice. Four core principles to guide policies and programmes for an alternative development are suggested here:

1. Agential capacity—enhancing basic agential capacity as measured by education, health and nutrition. These capabilities are fundamental to human well-being and are the means through which individuals access other forms of well-being. 2. Access to resources and opportunities—enhancing equality and equity in the opportunity to use or apply basic capabilities through economic assets (e.g. land and/ or housing) and resources (e.g. income and employment) as well as political opportunity (representation in parliament etc.). Without these opportunities, both political and economic, neither **~~[~~**~~women nor men] [~~people] will be able to employ their capabilities for their well-being and that of their families. 3. Human security—that is, freedom from violence and the threat of violence and conflict. Violence and conflict result in physical and psychological harm and lessen the ability of individuals, households and communities to fulfill their potential. 4. Rights facilitation—enhancing a basic legislative/judicial and programmatic framework that facilitates the granting of human rights as outlined by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Plan of Action, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and guided by other rights-based approaches, among others.

A policy or group of policies can be changed, if a country or group of countries want to alter the way in which their society addresses this technological era of capitalist development. It is clear that a new paradigm for development is necessary, one that aims to satisfy or facilitate basic human needs on the basis of independence, intergenerational equity, environmental sustainability, rights facilitation and adequate access to health, education and living conditions—the very things that facilitate the positive expression of human agency. It is not so clear how the transition will occur whether from people participating in social movements or from people within governments, or even a variety of combinations. The very nature of how new paradigms emerge for development transformation is structural, complex and tense as it speaks to the heart of interactions between people and nations and the social relations of power within and the way in which human agency is exercised. However, what is clear is that the neoliberalism and globalization as a model of development is unsustainable. So when “the centre” may no longer hold, the question is what will “the periphery” do?

#### Our offense turns policy making --- Our ontology is key to policymaking because it’s the baseline to the process --- they effect one another

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Conclusions: relationship between policy, ontology and enactment

Bologna policy recommendations, envisaging convergence rather than harmonisation, act as broad-brush references which allow flexible interpretations and adaptations. The effectiveness of Bologna, construed as a linear policy process, to achieve intended outcomes has been questioned (Amaral et al. 2009; Gornitzka et al. 2005a), especially in light of its steering through soft law. A focus on its discrete elements—the policy objects—and how they are conceptualised and enacted reinforces further the difficulty of convergence. This paper has illustrated the wide variation in the ontology of one specific policy object— the master degree—on account of national and departmental idiosyncrasies, thus adding complexity to the policy process. Identifying absolute references to define the nature of the policy object, or its ‘reification’ (Berger and Luckmann 1967), becomes therefore problematic.

‘Ontology’ has been the term employed to designate what policy actors believe the policy object is and how they conceive of it. Using the post-Bologna master degree as a case in point, the analysis opened insights into the situated nature of ontology, despite common reference points meant to act as guidance for degree design and despite the choice of a convergent discipline. Except similar structural features in which the sampled degrees comply with Bologna guidelines (i.e. second-cycle qualification or credit range), variation in degree ontologies, both between countries and between levels of analysis, has been observed. In addition, learning and teaching regimes (i.e. their tacit assumptions and rules of appropriateness) conceive differently of knowledge codification, transmission and evaluation, suggesting the existence of departmental-level pedagogic ontologies.

The paper suggests that **public policy, ontology and enacted ontology mutually influence each other**. At national/political level, novel understandings shape policies imperatives. New ontologies find expression in new policy. Thus, legislation or recommendations could be seen as enacted ontologies at the national level of analysis. An example in this sense is the recent preoccupation with the change in pedagogic paradigm towards student centred learning in Portugal which has been encoded in the legal requirement that degrees should be described in terms of competences (or learning outcomes). **At institutional level, in turn, policy object ontologies exert influence on the interpretation and accommodation of new policies, hence on enacted ontologies**. Such an example is the continued persistence of the master as the university degree in Denmark. However, public policies as enacted ontology at national level have the power to shift institutional-level ontologies. The new political discourse and the inevitable compliance, even if formal, with regulations can act as catalysts and determinants of new academic practice (Trowler et al. 2012), as has been observed in the Portuguese degrees. The introduction of student-centred methods, although maybe experimental at the beginning, appears to gradually shape a new ontology as regards the pedagogic model to inform the degree’s delivery. That is, academic enactment, or practices, can trigger changes at the level of conceptualisations—so enacted ontology can, in an unusual way, precede ontology. Summing up, while it can be stated that ontology always influences enacted ontology irrespective of analysis level, enacted ontology at the national/political level—in the form of new public policy—can also cause changes in academic enactment, which in turn can influence ontologies at institutional level.

One can therefore argue that **the examination of the ontology of the policy object(s), manifest in context-determined understandings, tacit assumptions and rules, is likely to bring more depth and nuance to the analysis of policy and its outcomes**, in the case of the Bologna process or any other policy initiative. Insights into policy object ontologies could complement the analysis of policy processes and the actors involved, especially when the concern lies with outcomes in specific areas. While these findings refer specifically to the master degree, the paper argues that the proposed conceptual-theoretical stance has relevance beyond, as it provides a new, focused, object-centred lens for policy research. The epistemological underpinnings of this study suggest links between socially-constructed meanings and practices (Bamber et al. 2009; Berger and Luckmann 1967; Reckwitz 2002), corroborated by the findings on the relationship between situated ontology and enactment. Having adopted an object-focused approach, a potential contribution of this research is an illustration of how the policy object itself (in its different guises and conceptualisations) can shape enactment and, consequently, policy outcomes. One could argue that policy itself as a whole, not only the policy objects, is a construct, and that conceptualisations of the policy object are indirectly addressed by actor-centred theories. Whilst this might be the case, it could be that a concern with actors’ interpretation and adaptation of policies based on their beliefs, preferences and constraints will not capture the richness and depth of understanding about how the different elements of a policy—its object(s)—are conceived of and enacted. This insight could, nonetheless, be obtained when we zoom in on a specific component and the primary concern lies with the policy object per se.