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Ontological security and securitisation theory: identifying overlaps and divergences

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Ontological security studies (OSS) and securitisation theory have introduced innovative insights and compelling concepts to the discipline of International Relations (IR). Whilst ontological security closely relates to a "security of being" that casts anxiety away, securitisation refers to the political practices of security undertaken whenever an issue is feared and perceived to be existentially threatening to a referent object. Despite their common intersubjective understanding of security and shared emphasis on threats to individual and societal identity, there has not yet been a comprehensive discussion on how these two frameworks intersect, complement each other, and differ. This round table aims to explore potential synergies and points of contention both theoretically and empirically between these two frameworks. It will focus on, but it is not limited to questions such as:

• What factors have contributed to the popularity of these two theories in IR and what does it tell us about the explanatory capacity of their core concepts to understand current global affairs?
• Can fear and anxiety be regarded as compatible notions in the way they are conceptualised by securitisation and ontological security theories respectively?
• What are the central differences between ontological security and securitisation theories, and in which way does this difference allows for broadening their theoretical and empirical scope?
• What are the socio-political implications of viewing ontological security through securitisation lenses and vice-versa?

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