

Ontological security between existentialism and psychoanalysis: The anxiety of the liberal international order

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The rather large literature on ontological security can be seen as being divided into roughly two camps: those that read ontological security through the insights of existentialism, and those that draw on psychoanalysis to make sense of the concept. The papers in this panel not only interrogate this divide in the literature, but also point to ways in which it can be overcome, showing that existentialist and psychoanalytical scholarship are not necessarily opposed to each other. Empirically, they do so by investigating one of IR's core interests: the liberal international order. From how it is made to the effects of its demise on Western and non-Western states alike, this panel illuminates the various anxieties currently shaping the dynamics of the international system. In the process, the contributions assembled here also introduce new concepts, like absurdism and authenticity, to drive the study of ontological security in international orders, and thereby IR, forward.

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