

The Role of Elites in Ontological Security Studies

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Until recently, Ontological Security Studies (OSS) in IR has primarily been concerned with how states react to various forms of negative rupturing effects to their identities, usually caused by experiences of trauma, shame, fear, and anxiety. This focus on the unitary state was then challenged by a new wave of scholarship exploring the ontological (in)security of individuals and their everyday experiences of ontological (in)security. Yet what is the role of elites in OSS? The scholars on this roundtable have engaged with this question in other way or other, implicitly or explicitly – the purpose of this roundtable is therefore to assemble their different insights on the role of elites in OSS to answer questions such as the following: what is their role in the identification of crises and the ontological security-seeking process? How can we conceptualise elites and how does analytically prioritising elites help us expand the research programme of OSS? And finally, what is the relationship between elites as distinct actor vis-à-vis other existing levels of analysis in OSS? In doing so, the roundtable will further our understanding on the relationship between the level-of-analysis and ontological (in)security and.

Track Classification: Interpretivism in International Relations Working Group