

# **ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY AS PART OF BROADENING AGENDA OF SECURITY STUDIES**

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## **Abstract**

Mainly all major theories of international relations rely solely on actor's rational estimations and calculations on the basis of cost/benefit analysis to explain the cases related to social phenomena, the events of both linked to cooperation and conflict to the extent that they ignore to consider the role of emotions as essential part of human interactions. Approaching the social phenomena through the glances of positivism without considering the intersubjective nature of social world creates a gap in the field of international relations which prevents to explain major cases of the discipline which would be understood better through the study of emotions and in particular, the role of anxiety. By pursuing ontological security pioneered by R.D Laing and later developed by Anthony Giddens as part of social theory, this study deduces that broadening the agenda of security studies and studying it from different perspectives including psychoanalysis will not contradict, but complement, and therefore contribute the field

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# 1. Introduction

Positivism has been main methodological viewpoint in the field of International Relations throughout significant share of history of the discipline. As Peter Sutch and Juanita Elias points out, by putting precise and strong parameters on the very definition of what would count as a fact in the field and using this to distant any non-positivist views, positivist have played a role of gatekeepers in the discipline<sup>1</sup>. There are several and diverse definitions on what positivist stand for. According to Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, positivism generates knowledge which are supported by a set of foundational assumptions.<sup>2</sup> The first assumption is the very methodology of positivism, which deduces that phenomena which apply in the scientific world, can play a same function in the non-scientific world; The second assumption is about idea that there is a clear distinction between values and facts, and even more importantly belief that facts maintain neutral among diverse theories of International Relations. The next assumption deduces that both social and natural worlds have certain mechanism and consistency which cannot be studied in the framework of theories, and for this reason, the same methodology which scientist use in natural sciences can also be applied in the social world. Last but not least, there is an assumption that the way to study and reveal the truth of theories is through the accumulation of these neutral facts or empirical methods and falsification principles used in natural sciences.

This paper based on the analysis and findings argues that because of the intersubjective nature of social phenomena in which individuals are both participants and observers, it cannot be examined in the same objective way and method of natural sciences. In this regard, opening the discipline to diverse range of thinking regarding the main issues in the field of International

<sup>1</sup> Peter Sutch and Juanita Elias, „International Relations: The Basics (2007), London, United Kingdom, p.14

<sup>2</sup> John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, „The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations (8 December, 2016), p.27

Relations would help discipline to see things from different angles which cannot be seen and measures through the methods applied in natural world. In this regard, by using ontological (in)security as an example, the research extends the debate between positivism and post-positivism, and reveals that by broadening the agenda of security studies including emphasizing the role of psychoanalysis and emotions, would not contradict, but complement the field through enriching its explanatory power.

## 2. Broadening Agenda of Security Studies

### 2.1. Neorealism & Agenda of Security Studies

Recent usage of the concept 'security' covers an enormous variety of definition.<sup>3</sup> It can indicate as Herington points out 'a type of financial instrument, a psychological condition, systems of defense, a physical state of being' and so many other meanings. The field has been the source of tremendous debate in recent literature to the extent that "attempts to broaden and deepen the scope of the field beyond its traditional focus on states and military conflict have raised fundamental theoretical and practical issues."<sup>4</sup> The main question is to accompany the intellectual and pragmatic challenges and transformations followed by the post-Cold War world, should the prospects of security studies be "broaden" or "restricted"? In this regard, the roots of the debate comes from three different sources: a lack of content among some neorealists scholars who set the characteristics of the discipline, a need to address the challenges followed by a security order of post-Cold War, and an intention to make the field relevant and responsive to contemporary issues. As indicated in the analysis done by Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, the study of the debate on 'rethinking security' demonstrates a huge tendency between scholars advocating for critical and neorealist approaches.<sup>5</sup> The foundation of the school of neorealism on the topic of security issues takes its roots from the idea that the field has been improve to the extent that it discover scientifically proven "laws". The perspective of the school of neorealism on the field of security studies has been particularly highlighted in the study of Stephen Walt, namely "Renaissance of Security Studies". Walt by keeping the historic foundation and routine of security studies deduces that the main purpose

<sup>3</sup>In the 2nd edition of the Oxford English Dictionary at least 20 definitions of the term 'security' as a noun and additional 21 definitions of the adverb/adjective 'secure' can be found.

<sup>4</sup>Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, *Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods*, Source: *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 40, No 2 (Oct., 1996). p 229

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 229

of security studies is to identify the war, more precisely, the phenomenon of war. As field takes its foundations from the school of neorealism, Bull and Martin defines the very nature of it by deducing the idea that security studies suggests that there is always possibility for conflicts between states and in this regard, the usage of military has significant effect on states, meanwhile, societies.<sup>6</sup> It is not accidental therefore that by some scholars such as Nye and Lynn Jones security studies has been identified as “the study of the threat, use, and control of military force”.<sup>7</sup> Even if in the cases where the military power is absent, the school of neorealism sticks in its state-centric approach to IR and deduces that although military power is important component of security studies, it is not the only threat that states confront. In addition to this component, they include the term which is sometimes called as “statecraft” – crisis management, diplomacy and arms control for example.<sup>8</sup> However, the reason that these features are still relevant to the fundamental focus of the field is because they carry the likelihood and nature of war. Meanwhile, although scholars of the school of neorealism accept the fact that such issues in nonmilitary nature deserves particular attention from policy makers and scholars, by confirming as Walts himself mention that military power does not guarantee well-being, they at the same time hold the idea that this prescription carries certain risks such as “expanding security studies excessively”.<sup>9</sup> Scholars of the contemporary strategists such as Jominini in particular in his response against the arguments of Clausewitz argue that their critics fail one crucial point, which is considering the need for clarity, utility and rigor as an important component and demand of strategic studies.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, according to neorealists, if one pursues this logic of extension or broadening the agenda of security studies with diverse range of issues and challenges such as disease, child abuse, pollution, or economic crisis one

<sup>6</sup> Hedley Bull, „Martin Wight and the theory of international relations”, (1976), *International Studies* 2, 101-116

<sup>7</sup> Joseph S. Nye and Sean M. Lyynn-Jones, (1988), *International Security*, Vol 12. No 4, p 5-27

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 24

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 29

<sup>10</sup> Shy, John (1986), *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* by Peter Paret, Published by the John Hopkins University Press and the Society for the History of Technology, Vo. N 1, PP-143,145

would face with a possibility of “*destroying intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to devise solutions to any of these important problems.*”<sup>11</sup> Thus, as seen, according to the school of neorealism, adding many other variables to the to security studies distracts the field from its real focus “*...the fact other hazards exist does not mean that the danger of war has been eliminated. However much we may regret it, organized violence has been a central part of human existence for millennia and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.*”<sup>12</sup> It is not accidental therefore that the topic of war have been a central topic politics throughout history.<sup>13</sup> According to this school, any attempt to recognize the evolution of any type of human unions, let alone dimensions for peace, need to be considered military force. In this regard, Walt suggests that from the perspective of scholarly community it would be irresponsible act to ignore the key questions that formulate the basics security studies.<sup>14</sup> These interpretations of the school of neorealism based on the historical evaluation of security studies sets the methods and foundations of security studies which the school see as benchmark against alternative views are judged.

## 2.2. Critiques of the School of Neorealism

As a response to their critics neorealists have brought diverse concepts such as collective, cooperative, common, and comprehensive as a qualifier to the term “security” to address diverse range of multilateral forms of state cooperation which could contain security dilemma.<sup>15</sup> Several scholars in the field<sup>16</sup> who are not as satisfied as neorealists from the current dynamic

<sup>11</sup> Is Strategic Studies Narrow

<sup>12</sup> Stephen M, Walt, „The Renaissance of Security Studies” (1991), International Studies Quarterly, Vol 35, 211-239

<sup>13</sup> McNeil, “The Meaning and Use of the Area Under a Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) Curve, 1982

<sup>14</sup> Walt, „The Renaissance of Security Studies”, 1991

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 230 (Advocated by Palme Commission 1982, Kupchan 1991, Dewitt 1994, Perry, Carter and Steinbruner 1992)

<sup>16</sup> such as Richard Ullman (1983), Jessica Tuchman Mathews (1989), Theodore Moran (1990/1991), Brad Roberts (1990), Myron Weiner (1992/93) and Beverly Crawford (1994)



of security studies are suggesting for broadening the scope of neorealist understanding of security beyond its state-centric scope, by suggesting to consider broader range of potential threats, from environmental and economic to migration.<sup>17</sup> This discussion has been accompanied by another suggestion which is deepening the scope of the security studies.<sup>18</sup> This means “moving either down to the level of individual or human security or up to the level of international or global security as possible intermediate points .”<sup>19</sup> Despite neorealist’s strong stand on state-centric approach<sup>20</sup>, who claim that broadening the agenda of security studies leads to lose the traditional focus by making it intellectually incoherent and practically not feasible<sup>21</sup>, on the contrary, scholars who advocate for above-mentioned view on broadening and deepening security studies are holding their conviction that *“neorealist perception of safeguarding the core values of a state from military threats emanating from outside its borders is no longer enough as a means of understanding what (or who) is to be secured, from what threats and by what means.”*<sup>22</sup> In other words, one of the key critiques of the scholars who are advocating for the broadening agenda of security studies is that bringing alternative claims to the security studies will not contradict which neorealist security studies suggest, but in fact fill the gaps, complement and enrich the field. However, in addition to this critique, another objection of the scholars who are suggesting to broaden the agenda of security studies is about the concern for mere confidence of neorealist scholars who by underestimating ‘intersubjective’ concern of post-modernism, assume the possibility to find and ‘objective facts’ in the area of social sciences. According to Waltz, “the most important one among these claims is the centrality of the state as subject of security.”<sup>23</sup> However, even more, paradoxical side of this

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 230

<sup>18</sup> Rubenstein 1988; Waeber et al. 1993, Buzan 1991; Tickner 1992, Grant 1992;

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 230

<sup>20</sup> In particular, the strong emphasis of Posen 1993a: 82, Walt: 1991, Schultz, Godson and Greenwood, 1993)

<sup>21</sup> Robert H. Dorff, A Commentary on „Security Studies for the 1990s” as a model curriculum core, International Studies Notes, Vol. 19, No. 3. (Fall 1994) p-23-24

<sup>22</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 232

claim is that this deduction of neorealists does not come from the sources of *“neither theory of the state nor of “the structure”, but the vague concept of “subject” accepted as an individual person that has been seen as rational and autonomous actor filled in the environment of alike actors”*.<sup>24</sup> The above-mentioned neorealist assumption of objective framing of reality requires to treat the discipline as given phenomena. Meaning that it makes the discipline exclusive to the assumptions of neorealists which can be defined based on the above mentioned standards. It also means giving the school an exclusive right to determine the issues whether they match or not to the frame of security studies evaluated by particular components suggested by the school. This assumption of the school of neorealism to assess the social sciences in the same certainty of natural sciences<sup>25</sup> has been criticized by several scholars in the field who suggest more need for the attention on post-modernism literature in the context of considering ‘intersubjectivity’ of social sciences followed by scholars who suggest not to evaluate social phenomena in the same methods and evaluations of natural phenomena. The reason for this is that since in the context of social phenomena a subject is both participant and observer at the same time, there cannot be a fully distinction between the thinking and reality as *“the two aspects interact in a reflexive fashion; that is to say, the mode of thinking influences the way things are and vice versa, without ever bringing about an actual correspondence between the two.”*<sup>26</sup>

In this regard, scholars like Jessica Tuchman Mathews who suggest the broadening agenda of security studies deduce that threats that are caused by environmental reasons go beyond state boundaries and framework of national security. In this regard, the harsh consequences of ongoing environmental crisis is viewed even more imminent compared to external threats

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 232

<sup>25</sup>As mentioned above, according to the school of neorealism, objective representation of reality has set the very nature of security studies. This claim that the discipline has found and therefore know the objectivity of the field, means the school of neorealism calls to approach the discipline as it is, as given.

<sup>26</sup> Soros, George, Opening the Soviet System, January 1, 1990

which might lead to more chance for organized violence. This understanding, followed by a further demands in the scholarly literature to redefine what constitutes national security. Moreover, it is also worthwhile to mention that scholars who suggest such claims accept the idea advocated by neorealists that the concept of “security” can be deducted to an objective referent object and particular kind of threats. However, they at the same time emphasize the importance of and need for reconsidering the field of security studies, meanwhile, policies so that the field can catch up with contemporary challenges.

As it is seen, the scope of “security” can be interpreted and analyzed differently with different particularities depending on the discipline. However, it is worthwhile to mention the commonality of these suggestions which is related to the very specificity of the term in international relations as it differs from the use of the term in everyday life.<sup>27</sup> The term and the scope of the “Security” has been described by many scholars in different ways. One of the well-known definition of the concept has been defined as “a move that takes politics beyond established rules of the game and frames the issue as a special kind of politics or as above politics.”<sup>28</sup> In this regard, securitization is viewed more intense type of politicization.

Although the term ‘security’ in international relations shares certain attributes with daily used notion of ‘social security’, such as security deal with different civilian functions or the role of police, in international relations the term has more concrete and as Buzan mentions, extreme definition.<sup>29</sup> He points out that the distinctive agenda of international relations makes the term more pressing. In the sphere of international relations the fundamental characteristic which makes the term so unique and intense is related to its direct association with survival. It happens when an issue is presented as the one which poses existential threat to a certain referent object.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, Jaap de Wilde, ‘Security: A New Framework for Analysis’, Publisher: Boulder Colo. : Lynne Rienner Pub., 1998, p-21

<sup>29</sup> Jonathan Herington, ‘Philosophy: The concept of security, fear, liberty, and the state, Cambridge University, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316227671.002>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 21

In this regard, this nature of international security links security to a mere existence in the first place which as a result, helps to justify extraordinary measures to handle existential threats. It is not accidental that traditionally, the term 'security' has been identical with emergency condition, which representatives used as a basis of justification for extraordinary measures.

As it was mentioned above, traditional IR theories of international relations whether it is realism or liberalism, despite their difference on viewing the world, share in fact similar methodological paradigm: positivist approach to international relations. Positivism as indicated in the claims of neorealism regarding the social phenomena being a philosophical theory arguing that knowledge can only be gained through properties and their relations. Confirmed data (positive facts) which is gained through the senses known as empirical facts, and thus positivism set its foundation based on empiricism. Thus, information which is received through sensory experience accommodated by reason and logic forms according to positivism all certain knowledge. By this, positivism holds that reliable and valid knowledge can only be identified in a priori and a posteriori.<sup>31</sup> A priori (from the earlier) and a posteriori (from the later) being a Latin phrases, generally applied in the field of philosophy, to determine two forms of knowledge, argument and justification, which is accommodated by the usage of scientific evidence. More accurately, these terms have been used in relation to epistemology for the purpose of distinguishing between the following two phenomena: Necessary prepositions (i.e., the idea should come first even before observation and sensory experience or empirical finding)<sup>32</sup> and (conclusions grounded on these observations)<sup>33</sup>. The crucial point is that all theories of international relations despite seeing the world from different glances approach the

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 24

<sup>32</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, A peer-Reviewed Academic Resource, „A Priori and A Posteriori”, Retrieved from: <https://www.iep.utm.edu/apriori/>

<sup>33</sup> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, „A Priori Justification and Knowledge”, (December 9, 2007), substantive revision May 6, 2020 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/apriori/>

phenomenas accuring in social sciences from rationalist perspective, or in other words, seeking rational arguments to explain complexities of human affairs which as indicated above prevents them to broaden the map of security studies. In this regard, the aim of this paper is to illustrate the idea that since human beings are also emotional beings it is not enough to analyse human affairs with the sole knowledge of empirical basis. In this regard, the research will demonstrate the need for the study of emotions, in particular the role of anxieties in the realm of international relations which can contribute tremendously understanding the complexities of social phenomena.

### 3. Ontological (In)Security

As many other non-material and non-state centric phenomena, the rich and extensive literature of security studies has previously not deeply involved in the concept of ontological security and in particular neglected to pursue the way that elaboration on the field of ontological security may influence to the process of conflict resolution. Since the need for pursuit of ontological security in traditional literature of International Studies has not been emphasized it is crucial to set a groundwork for it in the individual level before analyzing its implication in international politics and in particular, its significant role in the current attitudes towards migrants in Europe. Pioneered by prominent psychiatrist R. D. Laing and later improved as part of social theory by sociologist Anthony Giddens, “*ontological security is security of not of the body but of the self, the subjective sense of who one is, which enables and motivates action and choice*”.<sup>34</sup> In this regard, ontological security or security of the self is achieved though routinizing relationships. The main drive behind ontological security is the need to minimize tough uncertainty on the chaotic environment which resides outside the framework of perceptions of individuals. Individuals achieve this through creating and improving cognitive “cocoon”.<sup>35</sup> Since this cocoon becomes individual’s coping mechanism, Giddens calls it an actor’s “basic trust system”. Because basic trust system functions in a habitual manner to sustain itself, actors becomes attached to it, unconsciously and habitually which them to prevent the chaos outside this cocoon. <sup>36</sup> In short, as it is seen unlike rational choice deduced by realists which gives an

<sup>34</sup> Jennifer Mitzen, „Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma (September 1, 2006), Volume 12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346>, Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178\\_Ontological\\_Security\\_in\\_World\\_Politics\\_State\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_Security\\_Dilemma](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178_Ontological_Security_in_World_Politics_State_Identity_and_the_Security_Dilemma)

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 346

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 347

option to individual to decide to choose A instead of B, routines are not chosen, and reflection is suppressed.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, since these routines are unconscious, choices are not evaluated; information is not renewed.<sup>38</sup> In fact, as Mitzen points out, this suppression is the source of individual's security generating power.<sup>39</sup> In this way, by pacifying mental environment, routines plays a cognitive function which helps individuals to make sense of the world out of chaos, know how to act by providing them with certainty referred to basic trust system.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, as it is noticed, routines also impact emotions by keeping them stable which prevents individuals being paralyzed from deep fear of chaos. For this reason, as routines give a sense of agency to the actors, they become attached to them and it becomes part of their identity. Attempt to abandon routines means sacrificing the feeling of agency which is much harder cope with.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, individual's ontological security is viewed as identical with its stable mental state through which individual makes sense of the world in general which is grounded on a sense of sustainability and continuity about one's life. Moreover, it is also crucial to point out that individual's need for stability does not mean that understanding of self is unchangeable; analytical approach towards self is essential for learning process and personal development, in this regard, such changes are productive and essential.<sup>42</sup> However, the bottom line of the concept of ontological security is that individuals in their daily lives value their sense of personal continuity because it secures their capacity for agency.<sup>43</sup> Since a sense of self produce

<sup>37</sup> James March (January 26, 1999), "The Pursuit of Organizational Intelligence: Decisions and Learning in Organizations ISBN: 978-0-631-21102-0

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 346

<sup>39</sup> Jennifer Mitzen, „Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma (September 1, 2006), Volume 12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346>, p. 345 Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178\\_Ontological\\_Security\\_in\\_World\\_Politics\\_State\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_Security\\_Dilemma](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178_Ontological_Security_in_World_Politics_State_Identity_and_the_Security_Dilemma)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 347

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 347

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 348

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 340

actions (routines) to sustain itself, it responds accordingly to the actions supported or denied by outside towards it. In this regard, identity is more dynamic process and functions like a circle in which first, action flows and in turn sustain identity. <sup>44</sup> From this perspective scholars of ontological security considers it as one of the basic needs of human beings. Since the opposite, deep level of uncertainty would create obstacles for the individuals to continue their daily activities. Ontological insecurities is a condition of deep, paralyzed state of mind: not knowing the source of anxieties so that to deal with it, which dangers to confront with and how to pursue daily life duties. In a condition of ontological insecurities individual's basic aim is to meet his/her immediate needs.<sup>45</sup> She cannot connect ends to means which prevents individuals to make rational choices because of the anxieties generated by ontological insecurity. From this perspective, one can also notice the reverse causation, where to the contrary of rational choice theory which deduces that rationality produces practices and preferences, ontological security illustrates the importance of routines in the first place, which in in return, produces individual's preferences. As Steel points out, at times when actors face with uncertainty, which causes them desperate anxiety, and a sense of disconnection with the self, they tend to "choose a course of action that is incongruent with their sense of identity."<sup>46</sup> As further Roe points out, actors feel ontological insecurity, or a sense of uncertainty, because they fail to recognize the possibilities and the nature of the situation they are in.<sup>47</sup>As it is seen, ontological security provides actor

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 344

<sup>45</sup> Jennifer Mitzen, „Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma (September 1, 2006), Volume 12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346>, p. 345Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178\\_Ontological\\_Security\\_in\\_World\\_Politics\\_State\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_Security\\_Dilemma](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178_Ontological_Security_in_World_Politics_State_Identity_and_the_Security_Dilemma)

<sup>46</sup> Brent J Steele (13 June, 2005), „Ontological Security and The POver of Self-Identity: British Neutrality and the American Civil War”, Online Cambridge University Press,

- DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210505006613>

<sup>47</sup> Paul Roe (2002) "Misperception and Ethnic Conflict: Transylvania's Societal Security Dilemma", Review of Interantional Studies, Retrieved from:

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/20097779.pdf?ab\\_segments=0%252Fbasic\\_SYC-5187%252Ftest&refreqid=excelsior%3A9894e1a28060c04bc4323e5930b27fdc](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/20097779.pdf?ab_segments=0%252Fbasic_SYC-5187%252Ftest&refreqid=excelsior%3A9894e1a28060c04bc4323e5930b27fdc)



with a tool to maintain a sense of “self” by ensuring stable emotional condition, and only then agents are capable to take rational actions, evaluate the preferences and continue daily activities.

As it is seen, the dynamics of ontological security which explain the social phenomena, human motivation is different from the explanations of school of realism which opens a new window in the field of international relations. In traditional IR theory, states are seen as rational actors which scholars refer to in their explanations of state behavior. Rational choice theory being a theory of social science deduce that it is possible to explain human behavior and his motivations that stimulates his actions from the perspective of rationally made choices of individuals.<sup>48</sup> According to this theory, all types of interactions of society, including the sphere of international relations is considered a form of interaction in which individuals will be in favor to interact with each other if only their expected gains from these interactions will exceed expected costs. By this, rational choice theory highlights that individual choices do not come from the vacuum, but a set of preferences based on self-interest calculated in a rational manner in which the aim is to maximize gain while minimizing the loss. In this regard, they deduce individuals refer to empirical phenomena accommodated in their rationality while defining their preferences. While several critics of this theory emphasizing logical fallacies<sup>49</sup> and cognitive biases<sup>50</sup> illustrated the gaps of rational choice in the area of social sciences, the concept of ontological security by going beyond these critics helps to see rational agency as a effect of

<sup>48</sup> Shown Grimsley, Rational Choice Theory: Definition and Principles, Political Science 101: Intro to Political Science/ Social Science Courses, Retrieved from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/rational-choice-theory-definition-principles.html#:~:text=Rational%20choice%20theory%20has%20been,self%2Dinterested%20and%20rational%20matter.>

<sup>49</sup> Cognitive biases are errors in thinking and usually related to attention, memory, attribution. It happens during evaluation of the information or interpreting it which affects the judgments. It is usually a product of simplifying complex reality. While fallacies derives from an error in making logical argument. Despite the fact that fallacies and biases differ, they have important commonality which both are concerned – resasoning errors.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 224

practices. In this regard, it is not accidental that for the scholars of ontological security consider it as not extra but one of the basic needs that stimulates and therefore predicts human behavior and in this regard deserves attention to pursue as a crucial area of research in conflict resolution.

### **3.1. States and Ontological Security: Questioning Security Dilemma**

As it was illustrated, the mechanism of ontological security works through the process of routinization.<sup>51</sup> Since states are not humans according to realists, their behavior should be referred to different logic, or they prefer to approach it as a black box without a need for considering its internal parts. The idea of ontological security, is the other way around. It argues that states as much as individuals also ontological security. In the literature of ontological security it is described in three different ways.<sup>52</sup> Firstly, as illustrated above, IR scholars consider that what states seek only is physical security, while critics argue that states also have ontological security and it plays as crucial (if not more) role as physical security in their preferences. In this regard, the key issue here is not to determine physical versus ontological, rather, personhood of state in more generally speaking. To argue that state is a person, it is crucial to illustrate to components of a person which makes him so, the way one conceptualize the term 'person'. In this regard, from this perspective, Wendt, one of the scholars maps the personhood as such<sup>53</sup>: there are two ways that persons are constituted, inside and outside, inside constitution is the structure that constituted inside of human body, his biological and cognitive structure. In contrast, outside constitution is about social recognition of a person, it is about the question, of whether an individual is recognized as an individual outside by the society? If yes, then he will be able to benefit from social privileges, if not, he will be deprived.<sup>54</sup> It is also

<sup>51</sup> Alexander Wendt, „The State as Person in International Theory”, *Review of International Studies* (2004), 289-316

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 351

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid* 352

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 354

worthwhile to mention that two types of determinants are not identical, meaning that a person's social recognition from the outside does not mean that a person is capable to function inside, similarly, just being not recognized outside, does not mean a person is not.<sup>55</sup> The traditional internal and external sovereignty in IR is a good example to this. While internal sovereignty is referred to state's de facto control or ability to function over its territory, external sovereignty is about its recognition by other member states, or international community in general. <sup>56</sup> Another determinant according to Wendt, is distinguishing psychological (possessing certain mental and cognitive qualities) ,legal personality (having rights and obligations in a law community) and moral personalities (being accountable for one's own actions and behavior under a moral code) which together attributes the elements of humans.<sup>57</sup> It is not accidental that, although all three components are important, among all of the types of personalities, in his study Wendt deal with states as psychological persons. In addition to states as person, the second reason to argue that states seek ontological security as Mitzen points out, because of ontological security needs of its members.<sup>58</sup> It is achieved through routinizing relationships to other groups which helps to sustain a sense of self of each members of the group.<sup>59</sup> A final reason to deduce that states seek ontological security is related to the fact that this micro level assumption helps

<sup>55</sup> Ibid 354

<sup>56</sup> Michael Fowler and Jule Marie Bunck, „What Constitutes the Sovereign State?” (October 1996), Review of International Studies , British International Studies Association, pp. 381-404, (the book emphasizes that two concepts of sovereignty are not identical. For example, some states which are sovereign internally, or in other words, have an effective control over their territories meaning that could make and enforce rules within the border of their territories (for example, Taiwan), are not sovereign externally, meaning that not recognized by the international community. While others fail internationally to effectively take control or enforce their rules within their borders, is considered sovereign externally because of the recognition (Somalia).

○ DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210500118637>

<sup>57</sup> Alexander Wendt (April, 2004), „The State As A Person In International Theory, Review of International Studies”, (Vol. 30, No. 2), pp 289-316 British International Association, URL: [https://www.jstor.org/stable/20097917?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/20097917?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents)

<sup>58</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 352

to understand macro level map which explains according to Mitzen the decisions of different decision makers look similar over time.<sup>60</sup>

### **3.2. Paradox of Security: Ontological Security Dilemma**

As first introduced by John Herz in 1950, security dilemma gives an explanation for the idea that why states with no intention to harm one another still end up with competition and conflicts. Butterfield by using an interesting metaphor calls this situation as “tragedy”.<sup>61</sup> According to security dilemma theory, in an anarchic international environment successfully providing security is not possible, since each state’s efforts for self-help through increasing its capabilities to survive will be perceived as threat to others. The core reason behind this logic is uncertainty. Since states as described above, can never be assured each other’s present or future intentions, or read each other’s perceptions the mere security seekers can take such measures unintentionally which might threaten others and thus end up with conflicts. To understand fully the way security dilemma works, realists illustrates two criteria for states. According to neorealists, states reflect their need for security in one of two ways, and the scholars of school of realism distinguish these states by conceptualizing them as such, “status quo” or “security-seekers or “conditionally aggressive” states.<sup>62</sup> The dilemma and puzzle according to neorealists happen when parties are looking for security, appears to seems as if they seek conflict by missing opportunities and exploiting and so on.<sup>63</sup> Mitzen argues that, the gap in neorealist’s assumption of security dilemma is related to the fact that the theory focuses only on motives

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 353

<sup>61</sup> Herbert Butterfield,(1951) „History and Human Relations”, Collins, London

<sup>62</sup> Jason W. Davidson, “The Enduring Importance of Revisionism and Status-quo Seeking”, (January, 2006), p.1-18, DOI: [10.1007/978-1-137-09201-4\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-09201-4_1) , Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314640092\\_The\\_Enduring\\_Importance\\_of\\_Revisionism\\_and\\_Status-quo\\_Seeking](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314640092_The_Enduring_Importance_of_Revisionism_and_Status-quo_Seeking)

<sup>63</sup> Jennifer Mitzen, „Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma (September 1, 2006), Volume 12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346>, p. 345Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178\\_Ontological\\_Security\\_in\\_World\\_Politics\\_State\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_Security\\_Dilemma](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178_Ontological_Security_in_World_Politics_State_Identity_and_the_Security_Dilemma)

without focusing enough attention on intentions or types which might extend mere motive of security seeking. In, this content, ontological security helps to fill these gaps. In other words, parties end up with conflicts not because of misunderstanding of each other's motives (external condition) but once own intentions or type (internal condition), which is driven from ontological insecurities.<sup>64</sup> Ontological security provides understanding that rational actor's a sense of self is a product of routines, and rational actors constantly refer to and even attached to these routines as a coping mechanism against uncertainty. By this, ontological security gives different explanations for the cause of conflicts which creates another dilemma or paradox; since routines which takes physical security away by providing ontological security in exchange, rational agents become attached to it which functions as an endless circle.

Another necessary point to highlight is the source of type which is more intersubjective. According to neorealists, type is "purely given by nature", but ontological security theory argues that it is not. In fact, types are product of interactions. The creation of it is explained in two ways. According to Mitzen, identities or types are constituted as a product of two process. The first is they rise through social interactions.<sup>65</sup> The cycle of security dilemma confirms this hypothesis. If the type wasn't a social element, parties would not be depended on social relationships and thus they would not be attached to those relationships. By this, parties will choose relationships in which brings those types meaning, and confirming. Role theory, in particular, explains the this phenomena of attachment to routines and need for confirmation better. Being a perspective of sociology and social psychology it deduces that major part of our social activities and socially defined categories that is derived from the idea of "role" or in other words, sets of duties, rights, norms and expectations that a person fulfills during everyday interaction as part of socialization process. In this regard, the theory deduces that individuals' behavior is predictable and it is context specific. In this regard, James Rosenau puts the

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 354

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 354

interpretation of the term as such “attitudinal and behavioral expectations that those who relate to its occupant have the expectations that the occupant has of himself or herself in a given situations”.<sup>66</sup> As it is seen, the theory emphasizes the intersubjectivity of the social phenomena, in which it considers actor’s subjective understanding of behavior (role conception), society’s demand (role expectations) and particular objective environment where the role takes its meaning from.<sup>67</sup> Second constitution of the sense of self or identity is about the process of internalization. In this regard, as Mitzen points out, interactions do not only affect others but also constitutes the self, and as a result, both parties’ identities is constituted through the relationship.<sup>68</sup> By this, ontological security introduces another dilemma or paradox to the study of international relations by deducing that the source of conflicts by being intersubjective in nature, are driven not from physical insecurities caused by uncertainty but rather due to ontological insecurities which drive anxieties.

### **3.3. Ontological (in)Security in Conflict Resolution**

As illustrated above, mainly all major theories of international relations rely solely on actor’s rational estimations and calculations on the basis of cost/benefit analysis to explain the cases related to social phenomena, the events of both linked to cooperation and conflict to the extend that they ignore to look a careful look on the role of emotions as part of the field. In this regard, while focusing on rational assumptions these scholars lack proper response that can explain why post conflict peacebuilding usually fail. However, ontological security sheds light to this puzzle by highlighting that conflicts reoccur again because such efforts trigger emotional fire

<sup>66</sup> James N. Rosenau (1990), „Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity”, p.220, Princeton University Press

<sup>67</sup> Flenn Chafetz, Hillel Abramson, Suzette Grillot (1996), „Role Theory and Foreign Policy: Belarussian and Ukranian Compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime, Poilitical Psychology, Vol. 17, No.4.

<sup>68</sup> Jennifer Mitzen, „Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma (September 1, 2006), Volume 12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346>, p. 345Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178\\_Ontological\\_Security\\_in\\_World\\_Politics\\_State\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_Security\\_Dilemma](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241065178_Ontological_Security_in_World_Politics_State_Identity_and_the_Security_Dilemma)

which practitioners rarely understand or manipulate.<sup>69</sup> In fact, as seen above analysis, scholars of international relations underestimate to take proper consideration on the area of “passion” and its sources.<sup>70</sup> As being essential components of emotions, anxiety is a promising field which might bring multiple research areas to the field of international relations. Despite its obvious significance and relevance, the impact of anxieties and its link with fear has got less attention in the academic literature of IR. Needless to say, even realists who frequently emphasize insecurities that produce fear and nationalism (hate and love), have not sufficiently and systematically worked on the area of emotions<sup>71</sup>. As Robert Keohane points out, “Both realism and liberalism are consistent with the assumption that most state behavior can be interpreted as rational, or at least intelligent, activity.” In this regard, realism and liberalism are not fundamentally far schools from each other arguing completely different paradigms. <sup>72</sup> Even when in the scholarly literature of IR where to study emotions would apparently be necessary and to the point, it has been interpreted as “cold” cognitive processes, cognitive biases or information processing limits without considering the role of emotions (in the context of ontological (in)security) in any case.<sup>73</sup> Even when as mentioned above, emotions that the scholars of school of realism consider to be relevant such as hatred and fear they accept it as self-evident, and “normal” without emphasizing a need to problematize it, and seek for cure. It is not accidental therefore that this as Crawford puts, taken-for-granted approach has pernicious

<sup>69</sup> Crawford, Neta C. “The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships” (spring 2000), *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 4, published by The MIT Press, Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2539317.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A2152c31385403d96096a2144dd9e14f2>

<sup>70</sup> As an exception to this, Jonathan Mercer’s “Approaching Emotion in International Politics” can be indicated. Mercer points out that the role of emotions in the international relations theories has been underestimated, undertheorized.

<sup>71</sup> Crawford, Neta C. “The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships” (spring 2000), *International Security*, p. 116, Vol. 24, No. 4, published by The MIT Press, Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2539317.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A2152c31385403d96096a2144dd9e14f2>

<sup>72</sup> Robert O. Keohane, and Joseph S. Nye, “Power and Interdependence Revisited”(Autumn, 1987), Vol. 41, No. 4, pp 725-753, Retrieved from

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2706764.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A6be50d60b936f8c5c80e3cb704f25208>

<sup>73</sup> <sup>73</sup> Crawford, Neta C. “The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships” (spring 2000), *International Security*, p. 116, Vol. 24, No. 4, published by The MIT Press, Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2539317.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A2152c31385403d96096a2144dd9e14f2>

effects.<sup>74</sup> Nor scholars of traditional IR theorists have presented or examined other alternative emotions, including empathy and love which limits their view of the world by seeing thing only one sided. Notwithstanding with the fact that there might be some methodological concerns to study emotions due to empirical examination as emotions are deeply internal, there also might be difficulty in terms of distinguishing between “genuine” from instrumental ones, neither it is an easy task to determine how actors felt and how they reacted, nor it is easy to analyze the role of emotions on individual and group behavior, these might be valid concerns, but not necessarily fatal to theorize a research on the field of emotions. In this regard, there are several important reasons which makes studying emotions essential in the field of international relations which might shift the dynamics of the field tremendously. These potential contributions to field has been illustrated by Crawford as followings: Firstly, the common element of agents would move from agent regarding being mainly rational. By this, indeed, rational-irrational debate in the field of international relations would gain a secondary importance since “emotional revolution” in psychology would enter the field of security studies. Secondly, it be more accurate and effective to attribute emotions as a drive of security dilemma rather than mainly structural attributes or offense-defense balance. Last and but not least, the field of conflict management, diplomacy, and confidence-building would consider emotions in their analysis which this paper argues would be more effective in the field of international relations and in particular, conflict resolution.<sup>75</sup>

In this regard, ontological security not only focuses on psychology of individuals, but at the same time, emotions that leads towards actions. In the extending literature of international relations, the relationship between fear anxiety is usually misinterpreted and often confused. Although several scholars in the field of security studies emphasized the role of emotions in in conflict management in general, they have not clarified sufficiently the role of anxieties as a

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 118

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 119



key component of emotions in particular. In this regard, ontological security sheds light to the importance of anxiety in the field of security studies. As discussed above by following Giddens' main argument that how sustaining habits and routines contributes to "to constitute a formed framework" by producing a sense of being and distinction from non-being.<sup>76</sup> He argues that this framework enables individuals to find an answer for as he calls "basic parameters of human life" including the methodology of existence, the relationship between human life and the world, the existence of other human beings, and sense of self.<sup>77</sup> According to Giddens "all individuals develop a framework of ontological security of some sort, based on routines of various forms" which enables them to "bracket out questions about themselves, others and the object world, which have to be taken for granted in order to keep on with everyday activity."<sup>78</sup> In addition to practical awareness, ontological security rests on reflexive consciousness – knowing the reason of one's actions and apparently a stable sense of self image.<sup>79</sup> What exist outside of the framework of ontological security from Giddens' point of view is chaos; a condition being exhausted by anxieties which reach to the extend of the roots of our sense of "being in the world".<sup>80</sup> Despite the fact that the circumstances of late modernity help to regulate many forms of anxiety which might as Rumelili puts would threaten ontological security, however, "in some fateful moments, when these anxieties can no longer be contained, ontological security comes under immediate strain."<sup>81</sup> On this note, to understand the mechanism of ontological (in)security it is crucial to highlight the difference between anxiety

<sup>76</sup> Anthony Giddens, „Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age" (July, 1991), Oxford Polity Press

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p 48-55

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 37

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 53

<sup>80</sup> Anthony Giddens, „Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age" (July, 1991), Oxford Polity Press

<sup>81</sup> Bahar Rumelili (2015), „Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution" from the book „Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security", Routledge, London <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315796314>

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and fear which is usually confused in the traditional literature. While fear is reflection and response to a given threat and for this reason, has precise object, anxiety is considered as accumulation of generalized emotions of the individual. In this regard, fear has a precise object which can be identified, faced, endured, analyzed.<sup>82</sup> To the contrary, anxiety is internal process, it is unconsciously organized rather than reflected outside. As Heidegger points out, there is no source of threat in the condition of anxiety, the source is nowhere; in other words, anxiety is unconscious trigger which is not aware the reason it face that makes an individual anxious.<sup>83</sup> In this regard, anxieties of meaninglessness, death, and condemnation which derives from nowhere creates a source of fear which produce a set of meaning through which an individual distinguishes himself from enemies and by that strengthening a sense of self, setting order in chaos which is essential for survival. In contrast, conflict resolutions, although provides physical security, causes ontological insecurity by increasing anxieties through eliminating fears, most importantly, concerning the routines and habits which were a source where these anxieties have been oppressed in everyday life.<sup>84</sup> Thus, as Rumelili puts, *“the anxieties that are unleashed by conflict resolution and peace processes can be aptly referred to as “peace anxieties”*.<sup>85</sup> As a response to ontological insecurities to deal with “peace anxieties” an individual develops fear which unlike anxiety has a known source in the face of enemy to release anxieties and as a result return back to a condition of feeling a sense of agency. In this regard, anxieties become an essential part of conflict resolution which produces longing to

<sup>82</sup> See Soren Kierkegaard „The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Oreinting Deliberation ont he Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin (February 1, 1981), (Kierkegaard’s Writings), v. 8, Princeton Universtiy Press and Paul Tillich, „The Courage to Be” (15 July, 2014), Yale University Press

<sup>83</sup> Martin Heidegger, John Macquarrie, Edward Robinson, „Being and Time”(1962), Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

<sup>84</sup> Bahar Rumelili (2015), „Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution” from the book „Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security”, Routledge, London <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315796314>

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid,15

return to conflict to constrain those anxieties and gain the sense of control in one's life back again. This means in the case of conflict resolution, anxiety becomes essential part of it which also explains long lasting conflicts and even those which physical security is provided but peace still failed. I argue that although having physical security, rising negative attitudes towards refugees in Europe is part of these anxieties, indicates ontological insecurities which is a gap for manipulation. In this regard, I offer solution to put more emphasis not material, but rather ontological needs of individuals, or in other words, new narratives which offers inclusion and solidarity in opposed to exclusion and dehumanization.

## 4. Securitization Theory as a Generator of Ontological

### Security: Analyzing Attitudes towards Migrations in Europe

Despite its historical bases as a natural part of human life as William H. McNNeill points out, “when it is safe to assume that when our ancestors first become fully human they were already migratory, moving about in pursuit of big game” yet recently, migration is increasingly interpreted as part of security problem in Europe. As a response to this puzzle Didier Bigo asks, what is the reason that migration is conceptualized and framed as risk? He attempts to answer this question in his famous article “Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of The Governmentality of Unease”. He explains this phenomena through the help of securitization theory which is different from realist understanding of security. The major point in securitization theory is that actors and audience securitize certain issues over another as a particular form of act. Actors who securitize, do not necessarily call it or use the term ‘security’, nor their usage of term security constitute a security act. It is rather, seen when securitization happens, as Buzan calls it ‘politics of existential threats’ in which argument that covers the issue becomes priority over all other issues and therefore allows for breaking rules. In this regard, Bigo points out that the popularity of this prism “is not an expression of traditional responses to a rise of insecurity, crime, terrorism and the negative effects of globalization; it is the result of the creation of a continuum of threats and general unease.”<sup>86</sup> As mentioned by Buzan, it is important procedure in terms of gaining legitimacy it brings. <sup>87</sup> Despite sharing some crucial aspects on the very nature of securitization, Copenhagen and Paris schools do differ in terms of their interpretation on methodology of the phenomena although both explain ontological security construction and its continuation. In this regard, as mentioned above the process of

<sup>86</sup> Didier Bigo, Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease, Alternatives 27 (2002), Special Issue 63-92

<sup>87</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde. Security: A New Framework for Analysis, 1998,

integrating an issue into a security paradigm is done through two logics – the logic of exception and the logic of routine for the purpose of acquiring legitimacy to deal with existential threats through exceptional measures.<sup>88</sup> The benchmark of securitization theory which set analytical framework for the theory suggested by the Copenhagen School (CoS), advocates for the logic of exception taken based on the views of Carl Schmitt's work on the field. According to this school, labeling something as an issue of security legitimizes the use of force and therefore grants to take exceptional measures. Moreover, speech act on the matter of security, not only creates an image and maps a state of affairs, but meanwhile, it also identifies appropriate method to act and involve in the affairs.<sup>89</sup> In contrast, Paris school views securitization as routine, not an exception, meaning that the scholars of this school argue that securitization is accumulation of routines usually has been managed by bureaucrats and security professionals with the participation of individuals being part of society, in which technology appears to hold an important place<sup>90</sup>. Inspired from Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu in particular, according to the logic of routine, securitization is about setting and writing meaning through the process of governmentality and practices.<sup>91</sup> Didier Bigo argues that securitization is not necessarily about survival as realists point out, nor it is about urgency as Copenhagen School argues, but rather it is more about a procedure covers the daily lives of individuals through the active engagement of security professions and bureaucrats.<sup>92</sup> Bourbeau argues that rather than seeing the two logics as completely contradictory to each other, it is important to notice their commonalities. In other words, the two logic without each other lacks huge proportion of the way securitization sustains, however, only together they complete each other and contribute the field. I argue that the same two processes happens not only in securitization, but at the same

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 87

<sup>89</sup> Philippe Bourbeau, 2014

<sup>90</sup> Didier Bigo, "The Mobius Ribbon of Inter

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 190

<sup>92</sup> Didier Bigo, „The Mobius Ribbon of International

time in triggering ontological security in the context of migration. As discussed above, to understand the root cause of peace anxieties they cannot be studied separately from their constitutive social and political processes. Since these processes are important as they trigger the state and society in the construction of ontological security.<sup>93</sup> In this regard, as it was discussed above, the role of securitization is particularly relevant to this topic, as it creates definite object where unknown anxieties without having particular source can be referred to and released by sustaining ideational stability and building narratives for self-identity and self/other distinctions.<sup>94</sup> Despite its significance and explanatory power, securitization theory has less been discussed in terms of its link to ontological security. By establishing an object of fear that can be managed because of having direct referent, it replaces anxieties in which the source is unknown and therefore cannot be contained, attacked or endured. In this regard, conflicts help to sustain ontological security, through legitimizing and regularizing securitization which generates ontological security. Thus, securitization is significant process in containment of anxiety and construction of ontological security.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, according to Rumelili, nationalism and religion, despite being important signifiers, conflicts create much clear-cut ontological security through establishment of fear and friend/enemy distinction. In addition to objects of fear, other references such as biographical narratives and memories can also create stable ontological security. I argue that recent securitization of migration in Europe fits best to all of these categories as they being important signifiers in this context through which anxieties are contained and ontological security is provided. From ontological security perspective, it is not accidental to see a tectonic shift in the growth of populism and xenophobic discourse in Europe, and it is not surprising already framing migration as an exaggerated threat to the societies' of Europe a main populist narrative: evaluation of the impacts of migration

<sup>93</sup> (Check Huysman 1998 and Marlow 2002)

<sup>94</sup> Bahar Rumelili, *Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution*

<sup>95</sup> Bahar Rumelili, *Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution*

and its effects on local economies and societies.<sup>96</sup> Researches done by the scholars of school of realism refers to material estimations or numbers of migrants to understand anti-migration centimes in Europe. However, according to the data from the European Social Survey (ESS) – a biannual survey of Europe’s societies and people’s attitudes since 2002 – “it is not the presence of migrants as that generates anti-migrant sentiments: these are strongest in countries with very few migrants. Similarly, on an individual level there is a strong negative correlation between personal contact with migrants and attitudes.”<sup>97</sup> Research done by the practitioners and academics working in the of migration end up with the conclusions which are directly related to ontological security concerns (internal anxieties) and anti-migration sentiments. According to the research done by Vera Messing, a research fellow at the Center for Policy Studies at Central European University, as well as associate of the Institute of Sociology at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Bence Sagvarei an associate of the same institution, “Anxieties over migration are rooted in real concerns but they stem from a different source: perception of control”. In other words, the study deduces that, citizens who feel in control of their lives and personally responsible for what happens, and by this who are able to contribute to themselves, their family and wider society are less hostile towards immigrants.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, the study also shows that in countries where related institutions in the countries are in control over economic processes, including migration – both its flows and benefits are also less hostile or feel threatened. Meanwhile, citizen who also consider that migrants become contributive members of their society are also less hostile and more welcoming in this context. In other words, citizens who feel a sense of control in their own lives and institutions are less likely to feel threatened by migration compare to others who don’t. To sum up, all the things being equal,

<sup>96</sup> Vera Messing and Bence Sagvari, (28 May, 2019), „What drives anti-migrant attitudes?”, Retrieved from: <https://www.socialeurope.eu/what-drives-anti-migrant-attitudes>

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 3

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 1

or by controlling all the other variables that might affect the data, the research found that demographic characteristics of individuals who rejected migration homogenously and extremely did not differ. Where they did differ however in fact, in terms of their subjective sense of feeling control (anxieties/ontological insecurities) alienated from their experience in either personal life, or lack of trust in institutions (accumulated anxieties). Securitization discourse by focusing on memory politics and other signifiers triggers personal anxieties by shifting them into fear through friend/enemy distinction thus, providing ontological security for individuals. In this regard, Giddens calls it basic trust which is improved between caregiver and infant to illustrate the way that sustaining routines, habits and biological narrative play role in sustaining “a formed framework” for a mere existence with accumulation of sense of being.”<sup>99</sup> However, although as individuals we all have basic trust system which creates a sense of meaning for our existence, order and continuation, it is important to consider a thin line between as scholars call, rigid versus healthy basic trust. As Willmott puts, healthy basic trust is an ability in which an individual is able to step back and reflect on routines which creates an opportunity to learn. In other words, individual does not treat routines as ends, but means for his goals. In contrast, rigid basic trust prevents individual to distance himself from routines and therefore he approaches them as ends but not means which prevents him from personal development. In this regard, the very nature of securitization, anxieties and ontological (in)security is deeply intertwined.

<sup>99</sup> Anthony Giddens (1991), „Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age”, p.38-39



## 5. Conclusion: Contributions of Studying Ontological Security

The traditional academic literature in the field of international relations while investing huge amount of time and effort on identifying rational explanations for social phenomena, pays relatively less attention the way that the pursuit of ontological security may influence conflict resolution which mere empiricism unable to explain. This paper deduces that such analysis on emotions, specifically, studying the role of anxieties would benefit tremendously the field of security studies in particular, and IR as a discipline in general. Without considering the role of emotions for example, realists argue that the puzzle of security dilemma can be solved through dealing with uncertainty, or in general conflicts might be eliminated through dealing with interests, material needs, which they assume will simultaneously make everyone better off. However, studying ontological security opens a new window for understanding that physical security alone is not enough, what is also need is socio-cultural process of reconciliation, in which “members of society able to reflect and change their opinions and emotions about former adversary, and about the relationship between two parties.<sup>100</sup> In this regard, ontological security highlights the intra-party process of commonalities, compare to inter-party dialogue and negotiation.<sup>101</sup> The process of reconciliation, in particular the role of narratives, media representation and public debate do make a difference which can be shown in the context of migration in which people in some countries in Europe have more tolerant attitude towards migrants while in others not. Proving only material well being is also as illustrated in the data is not enough, as provided above. As it is seen, anxiety carries two elements of emotions simultaneously within itself, it is both productive and counter-productive emotion; as Rumelili

<sup>100</sup> Bar-Tal, „Ethos of Conflict: The Concept and Its Measurement” (February, 2012), *Peace and Conflict Journal of Peace Psychology*, 18(1): 40-61

<sup>101</sup> Bahar Rumelili, *Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution*

puts “*on the one hand, by unsettling the formed frameworks of ontological security, it opens up the possibility of their reconstruction, on the other, it creates a setting conducive to the re-manufacturing of established fears and the re-activation of conflict*”.<sup>102</sup> In this regard, as it seen, ontological security is not a bonus or extra need which can be covered within the framework of traditional understanding of security which ignores the role of emotions, but rather fundamental and independent need from other security types (material/physical) that needs to be addressed separately through dialogue and bargaining arise from bottom-up.

<sup>102</sup> Bahar Rumelili, *Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution*

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